

within it as function of the goal, and the goal opens up as substance in the path, in the path explored towards its conditions, visualized towards its openesses. Matter is latent in these openesses according to the direction of their objective-real hope-contents: as the end of self-alienation and objectivity encumbered with alien material, as matter of Things For Us. On the path towards this, the objective surpassing of what currently exists in history and world occurs: this transcending without transcendence, which is called process and is accelerated on earth so forcefully by human work. Forward materialism or the warmth-doctrine of Marxism is thus theory-practice of reaching home or of departure from inappropriate objectification; through it the world is developed towards the No-Longer-Alienation of its subjects-objects, hence towards freedom. Undoubtedly only from the vantage point of a classless society does the goal of freedom itself come clearly into our sights as definite Being-in-possibility. Nevertheless it is no great distance from that self-encounter which has been sought in images under the name of culture; with so many ideologies, but also with so many kinds of pre-appearance, anticipations in the horizon. The means by which man first became human was work, the basis of the second stage is the classless society, its framework is a culture whose horizon is surrounded purely by the contents of founded hope, the most important, the positive Being-in-possibility.

Artistic appearance as visible pre-appearance

We say of the beautiful that it gives pleasure, that it is even enjoyed. But its reward does not end there, art is not food. For it remains even after it has been enjoyed, even in the sweetest cases it hangs over into a land which is 'pictured ahead'. The wishful dream goes out here into what is indisputably better, in doing so, in contrast to most political wishful dreams, it has already become work-like, a *shaped* beauty. Only: is there anything more in what has been shaped in this way than a game of appearance? Which may be extremely ingenious but, in contrast to the childlike, does not prepare for anything serious, nor signifies it. In aesthetic ringing or even jingling* is there any hard cash, any statement which can be signed? Paintings prompt us less often to this question, since paint only stands in sensory certainty and is otherwise more weakly burdened with the claim to truth than the word. Since the word not only serves literature,

* Here Bloch is playing on the old German expression 'in klingender Münze': 'in coin of the realm'.

but also truthful communication; language makes us more sensitive to the latter than paint, even than drawing. All good art, of course, finishes its materials in shaped beauty, renders things, people, conflicts in beautiful appearance. But what is the *honest* status of this finish, of a ripeness in which only invented material ripens? How do things stand with a richness which communicates itself in a merely illusionary fashion, as mere appearance to the eye or to the ear? Conversely, how do things stand with Schiller's nevertheless prophetic statement that what we experience here as beauty will one day approach us as truth? How do things stand with Plotinus' statement, and then Hegel's, that beauty is the sensory manifestation of the *idea*? Nietzsche, in his positivist period, sets against this assertion the much more massive one that all poets lie. Or: art makes the aspect of life tolerable by throwing the veil of impure thought over it. Francis Bacon sees the golden apples in silver bowls as really not that far from being an illusion, they belong to the *idola theatri* that have been handed down to us. He compares the truth to the naked bright daylight in which the masks, mummeries and resplendent features of the world do not appear half so beautiful and magnificent as in the candlelight of art. According to this, all artists are from beginning to end in league with appearance, they have no inclination towards truth, but just the opposite inclination. In the whole of the Enlightenment there are premises for this antithesis between art and truth, and they have made artistic imagination an object of suspicion from the factual standpoint. These are the *empirical* objections to the insidious gloom, to the golden mist of art, and they are not the only ones which derive from the Enlightenment. For alongside them stand the *rational* objections which of course originally belong to the Platonic conceptual logos and to its especially celebrated, especially radical hostility to art, but which made themselves fashionable again as objections to art in the trend towards calculating reason in the new bourgeois age. Even where the specific hostility to art, described by Marx, of capitalism in the nineteenth century (with *l'art pour l'art* as the counterblow and with the Goncourts' declaration of war on 'the public') could not yet make its presence felt. Even the droll inquiry of that French mathematician is relevant here who asked after listening to Racine's *Iphigénie*: 'Qu'est-ce que cela prouve?'^{*} Droll and fetishistically pedantic though this question looks, it still stands as a *purely rational* question in a separate and great school of alienation from art, equal to that of the empirical school. The aesthetic dimension is conspicuously absent in all the great systems of reason of

* 'What does that prove?'

the new rationalist age; the ideas which inhabit it are not considered worthy of the least scientific discussion. Predominantly only *technical* aesthetic theories, albeit of a significant kind, chiefly concerning poetics, blossomed in French classical rationalism, and only the mathematical side of music was of interest to Descartes. Otherwise we do not know either in Descartes or even in Spinoza that there is an art in the ordered connection of ideas and things. Even the universal philosopher Leibniz at best only cited a few examples from art, such as those concerning the harmony-enhancing effect of shadows and dissonances, because such examples were serviceable for something much more important: for the proof of the best of all possible worlds. In Leibniz the harmoniously beautiful is in fact a kind of hint of a scientifically recognizable world-harmony, but it is only a confused hint, and the truth can thus dispense with it. Consequently the aesthetics of rationalism began in a very strange way when it was finally made into a philosophical discipline very late by Baumgarten,* the follower of Wolff; † in fact it began with a decidedly low opinion of its Object, indeed with apologies for its existence. The aesthetic Object was solely the so-called lower cognitive faculty at work in sensory perception and its ideas. And though beauty also represented perfection in this area, it was not comparable in terms of value with the complete clarity of conceptual cognition. The *rationalist* debasement of art thus lines up with the empirical positivist kind after all; – but the list of enemies is still not complete. Indeed, hatred of art only becomes totally glaring when it derives not from reason but, often conversely, from belief, at least from the positing of something *spiritually* true. Then a storm of iconoclasm breaks out – in this case not against the golden mist of art, as was usual in the empirical and ultimately also in the rationalist approach, but against the mainland of art, i.e. against the over-accentuated appearance within it. Beauty, the verdict reads here, seduces us to the superficial, falls for the hollow exterior and thus diverts from the essential nature of things. ‘What good is there in imitating the shadows of shadows?’ asks Plato, already making his conceptual logos almost clerically curt. On the other hand: ‘Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth’, ‡ commands the fourth commandment in the Bible and gives the cue for the iconoclasm of the invisibility of Yahweh, of the banning of all idolatry.

* Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, 1714–62.

† Christian Wolff, 1679–1754, philosopher of the German Enlightenment.

‡ Exodus 20, 4.

Art in general thus becomes gleaming, ultimately luciferian fulfilment which stands in the way of the true undissembling kind, indeed which denies it. This is hostility to art in its *religious* and *spiritual* form; what corresponds to it in morality is, not without reason, the turning away from the all too great visibility of 'works', the turning towards the invisible, genuine dimension of 'convictions'. Puritanism in this extensive sense (reaching back as far as Bernard of Clairvaux) finally culminated in Tolstoy's monstrous hatred of Shakespeare, of the lascivious work of beauty in general. Even in Catholicism a horror pulchri led, under Pope Marcellus, to the planning of a ban on elaborate church music, and this horror, applied to what is visible, gave to Protestantism the bare God who wishes to be worshipped in moral belief, in the word that is the truth. Thus the claim to truth comes out against beauty in so many different forms, empirical and rationalist, spiritual and religious. And however much these different claims to truth (for subjectively the spiritual was one as well) were at variance with themselves and in extreme conflict with one another, they are nevertheless united in the will towards a seriousness opposed to the game of appearance.

This has always affected artists too, precisely because they themselves were serious. They themselves felt committed to the question of truth, because they did not want to be game-players, either immured or decadent ones. How amply the beautiful seeks also to be pictorially true in the descriptions and stories of great realistic writers. Not only in terms of sensory certainty, but also in terms of broadly revealed social contexts and natural processes. How legitimate Homer's realism is, a realism of such exact fullness that almost the whole of Mycenaean culture can be visualized from it. And admittedly not a French mathematician, but Alexander von Humboldt, the naturalist, tells us of the Book of Job, Chapter 37: 'The meteorological processes which take place in the cloud cover, the formation and dispersal of the vapours during various wind changes, their kaleidoscope of colours, the generation of hail and of rolling thunder are described with individual graphicness; many questions are also raised which our modern physics is able to formulate in more scientific terms, but not to solve satisfactorily' (Kosmos II, Cotta, p. 35). Such precision and reality is undoubtedly peculiar and essential to all great literature, often also in decidedly spiritual-religious literature, as in the imagery of the Psalms. And the demand of significant realism to which all surface, but also all extravagance is alien, this glory in Homer, Shakespeare, Goethe, Keller, Tolstoy, is so greatly recognized in art (at least in the novel in recent times), if not actually

fulfilled at high points, as if there had never been a mistrust born of the love of truth towards the Magister Ludi and his box of tricks. And yet artists, however concrete they are, have not *settled* the aesthetic question of truth; at best they have extended it in a desirable and significant way and made it more precise. For precisely in the realistic work of art we see that as a *work of art* it is still nevertheless something other than a source of historical and natural historical knowledge, or even insights. It is characterized by exquisite words which do after all also exaggerate what is so tellingly described by them beyond its given station, it is characterized above all by fantasizing, which bustles around between characters and events with a degree of licence highly alien to science. Fantasizing and in addition, in both senses of the word, art-fullness, by means of which invented material fills up the gaps in what has been concretely observed and rounds the plot into well-curved arches. An appearance of rounding, over-rounding, is in any case unmistakable even in the most realistic artistic creations, particularly in artistic novels. And great appearance has a quite 'surpassing' effect in those works of art which do not offer themselves primarily as realistic, either because they consciously romanticize alongside or beyond available existence, or because, far beyond a mere 'subject', they fructify – myth, which is the oldest sustenance of art anyway. Giotto's 'Raising of Lazarus', Dante's 'Paradiso', Heaven in the final part of Faust: how do these stand – beyond all detailed realism – in relation to the philosophers' inquiry after truth? They are undoubtedly not true in the sense that the knowledge we have acquired of the world is true, but then what does the enormous wonderment at the after all inseparable form-content of these works mean, in a legitimate, world-related manner? Thus, astonishingly, although on a completely different level, the 'Qu'est-ce que cela prouve?' of that French mathematician becomes irrefutable, even without mathematics and completely without drollery. In other words: the question as to the truth of art becomes philosophically the question as to the possibly available depictability of beautiful appearance, as to its degree of reality in the by no means single-layered reality of the world, as to the location of its object-correlate. Utopia as object-determination, with the degree of existence of the Real Possible, thus encounters in the shimmering phenomenon of art a particularly fruitful problem of probation. And the answer to the aesthetic question of truth is: artistic appearance is not only mere appearance, but a meaning, cloaked in images and which can only be described in images, of material that has been driven further, wherever *the exaggeration and fantasizing represent a significant pre-appearance, circulating*

in turbulent existence itself, of what is real, a pre-appearance which can specifically be represented in aesthetically immanent terms. What habitual or unblunted sense can hardly still see is illuminated here, in individual processes as well as social and natural ones. This pre-appearance becomes attainable precisely because art drives its material to an end, in characters, situations, plots, landscapes, and brings them to a stated resolution in suffering, happiness and meaning. Pre-appearance is this attainable thing itself because the *métier* of *driving-to-the-end* occurs in *dialectically open space*, in which any Object can be aesthetically represented. Aesthetically represented, this means: immanently more achieved, more thoroughly formed, more essential than in the immediate-sensory or immediate-historical occurrence of this Object. This thorough formation remains appearance even as pre-appearance, but it does not remain illusion; instead, everything that appears in the artistic image is sharpened or condensed to a decisiveness which the reality of experience in fact only seldom shows, but which is most definitely inherent in the subjects. Art clearly indicates this with founded appearance, in the theatre regarded as paradigmatic institution. It remains virtual, but in the same sense as a reflection is virtual, i.e. reproduces an Object outside itself with all its dimensions of depth on the reflecting surface. And the pre-appearance, in contrast to religious pre-appearance, remains immanent despite all transcendence: it expands, as Schiller in fact defined aesthetic realism using Goethe as an example, it expands 'nature, without going beyond it'. Beauty, even sublimity are thus representative of an existence for Objects which has not yet become, of thoroughly formed world without external chance, without unessentiality, unrenderedness. The motto of aesthetically attempted pre-appearance runs along these lines: how could the *world be perfected without this world being exploded and apocalyptically vanishing, as in Christian-religious pre-appearance* (cf. also: Ernst Bloch, *Geist der Utopie*, 1923, p. 141). Art, with its formations which are always individual and concrete, seeks this perfection only in these formations, with the Total as penetratingly viewed Particular; whereas religion, of course, seeks utopian perfection in totality and places the salvation of the individual matter completely in the Totum, in the: 'I make all things new'.* Man is supposed to be born again here, society transformed into *Civitas Dei*, nature transfigured into the celestial. Whereas art remains rounded, when 'classical' it loves the coastal trip around the given, even when it is Gothic, despite all venturing beyond, it has something balanced, homogenized in

* Rev. 21. 5: 'Behold, I make all things new'.

it. Only music works explosively, occurring in open space, for which reason this art always carries something eccentric in it compared with the other arts, just as if it were only transposed on to the level of the beautiful or the sublime. All other arts pursue the representation of the pure carat in individual figures, situations, plots from the world, without exploding this world; hence the perfect visibility of this pre-appearance. Thus art is non-illusion, since it works along a line of extension from the Become, in its formed, more commensurate expression. This goes so far that a writer from antiquity, Juvenal, in order to express all the possible horrors of a storm, calls the storm 'poetica tempestas'. This goes so deep that Goethe, in his commentary on Diderot's 'Essay on Painting', posits concentration as realism, against merely reproductive naturalism: 'And thus the artist, grateful to nature, which also produced him, gives her a second nature in return, but one that is felt and thought and humanly perfected.' This humanized nature is however at the same time one that is more perfected in itself; not of course in the manner of sensory appearance of an idea which is finished anyway, as Hegel teaches, but rather in the direction of increasingly entelechetic expression, as Aristotle states. In fact, precisely this entelechetically or, as Aristotle also says, typically resolving force is powerfully remembered afresh in Engels' statement that realistic art is representation of typical characters in typical situations. Whereby the typical in Engels' definition obviously does not mean the average, but the significantly characteristic, in short, the essential image of the matter, decisively developed through exemplary instances. Along this line, therefore, lies the solution of the aesthetic question of truth: *Art is a laboratory and also a feast of implemented possibilities*, together with the thoroughly experienced alternatives therein, whereby the implementation and the result occur in the manner of founded appearance, namely of worldly perfected pre-appearance. In great art, exaggeration and fantasizing are most visibly applied to tendential consistency and concrete utopia. Though whether the call for perfection – we can call it the godless prayer of poetry – becomes practical even only to a small extent and does not merely remain in aesthetic pre-appearance is something which is not decided in poetry, but in society. Only controlled history, with an incisive counter-move against inhibitions, with active promotion of tendency, can help essential material in the distance of art to become increasingly also appearance in the dealings of life. This is then of course the same as – iconoclasm that has become correct, not as destruction of artistic images, but as a breaking into them – for the purpose of fructifying what is possibly contained in them, not only typically,

but paradigmatically, i.e. in exemplary fashion. And wherever art does not play itself out into illusion, beauty and even sublimity is that which mediates a premonition of future freedom. Often rounded, never closed: this life-maxim of Goethe's is also that of art – with the accent of conscience and substance ultimately on the unclosed.

False autarky; pre-appearance as real fragment

Often rounded: it does not suit a beautiful image to present itself as incomplete. What is unfinished is external to it, does not belong to it, and the artist who has not finished what he had to do is unhappy about it. This is quite correct and obvious, in so far as and as long as it is merely a matter of sufficient strength of form. The source of artfulness is the ability which understands and thus totally wants to acquire its subject-matter. But of course, precisely for the sake of non-isolated acquisition, the threat of that artfulness must also repeatedly be noted which arises not out of ability but out of the share of *mere appearance* which even pre-appearance has. The appeal of pleasing perception and its representation, however imaginary what is represented may possibly be, is enough to satisfy mere appearance. Indeed, the imaginary or what has become imaginary can lend mere appearance a particularly decorative roundedness, one in which the seriousness of the subject-matter hardly disturbs, let alone interrupts, the beautifully coherent game. Precisely because mere appearance lets images live alongside each other so easily, so unreally, it guarantees that pleasing superficial coherence which shows no interest and presence whatever of a subject-matter beyond sheer illusion. The lack of belief in the represented subject-matter can even be a help to the smooth illusion, even more so than scepticism. This showed itself in Renaissance painting with regard to the gods of antiquity, in depicting whom the painter did not need to fear he had not behaved sufficiently discreetly towards the sacred; the same thing showed itself a little later in mythologically rounded poetry. Camões in the 'Lusiads' has his goddess Themis say quite ironically and yet in the most luxuriant verse that she herself and Saturn, Jupiter and all the other gods that appear are 'vain creatures of fantasy born to mortals out of blind madness, only serving to lend charm to the song'. Through the use of beautiful appearance mythological substance was indeed held in memory here, in fact introduced into the possible allegories of a pre-appearance, but by means of that finished fullness especially invited