Alle gegen Alle: Cybernetics, Force, and the Posthuman Monolith

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All against all, on the banks of the Rhine. Catapults, hats, cathedrals under fire, people running underwater. A cybernetics half asleep. Its interlocutors resemble novice priests more than operators of command. The pedagogical clarity and propaedeutic instincts of some young philosophy students have been burying that cybernetics. They did what was asked of them, when they were supposed to, justifying what they had to justify. But the world has never worked that way. It gives precedence to whatever is strongest, whatever can impose itself. Force alone has guided generations as they brought themselves into being and prepared their bodies for collective destruction. In the end, victory will go to those who gave themselves to the fire despite the boundless fear their age instilled in them. The tractor drove at a brutal pace across the social field, blasting apart the irregularities the law had allowed. For that imperfect order to endure, the overeducated had to let their arms, and their morals, be twisted more than once.

We must be able to see something where there seems to be nothing, to live as if there were always a beyond—knowing that contingent materialism, used as ideology, is merely our fiercest form of naivety. Out of what cannot exist, the forest becomes software and persuades the pilgrim that our postwar calm is an error calculated by an electronic poet. Where Tokyo appears as the equinox of our architectural agonies, Germany today reminds us that history still is. A battle on the riverbank. Down, further down, underground, the squadrons still advance in slow motion towards irreducible steel. The priest's thirst on the bank of this river, now pure dialogue, a visual labyrinth. Days that never end yet race ahead. The students force an old man to say what he does not want to say. Here pain is separated from caprice, the mystic's text from the definitive tactical manual. The safety is off: philosophy must make use of the world; the inverse operation must be ejected. What does this dialogue have to do with a science rushing beyond the merely human? How much destruction must we tolerate to advance? We have been trying to speak of the posthuman. An aesthetic not yet fully deprecated keeps us from making the full leap. Yet we, almost machines, have already crossed that river.

One brick must be in place before the next can be laid. On that foundation we demand a freedom that guarantees us a secret passage to the edge of the sky and into the centre of the voracious machine swallowing us all. With science and the mere word we build a totality that seeks to draw renewed health from every illness and, from every massacre, a perpetual peace founded on acceptance of the verticality of consciousnesses. The poet's highest achievement is

to save himself, despite his fruitless dealings with language. Writing had always been the problem. The solution we found was to go on writing without stopping, feeding the archive while behind our backs an immense black-and-white monolith rose to mark the end of our humanist age. We had to bear witness to the dismemberment of progress. We had to tend that collapse.

Medicine for the symbionts, the emancipation of decomposed bodies, an android reality from a future brimming with every imaginable certainty, buckling up. Life and post-life in the realm of new materials, automated sciences, war in the form of a heated argument, the end of the world of consequences. The nostalgic will tell us that when beings still died, everything was simpler and better. We will be flooded with surreal rhetoric aimed at adolescents. Control will be so absolute that chaos will be extreme, its limits intact even when everything seems to spill over. The resurrected will be others. They will find their own ways of making trouble, and we will have to deal with them. It will be a happy time and, in some respects, a repulsive one.

Life lies in the arbitrary, in the persistence of a direction. Stories, fortunately, will be automated, sparing us the misery of explaining the obvious. They will tell how life wrested the leash from the chaos of infinity. It now holds the leash in its hands and steers its own uncertain destiny. Intelligence will map the limits of the real only to alter them and live as it pleases. Technology from the future into the archaic. Freedom for the universe. Consciousness sensing the danger of its own freedom.