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German
aesthetic and literary criticism:
Winckelmann, Lessing, Hamann,
Herder, Schiller, Goethe

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Cambridge University Press
Cambridge
London New York New Rochelle
Melbourne Sydney
of a few plays which are really entire enactment of a world event, that even this great creator of yellow leaf, and that we ourselves of the days of chivalry that even I been the guardian angel of his works so much. And soon in different directions, even his formance, and will become the mid which everyone gazes at in am I that, though time is running for me to understand him; and e yourself in reading his dramas, before his sacred image, can still ers, that one day you will raise a country, drawn from our age of ny you that dream. May your and hangs aloft. And should you make beneath your feet, and the, and the everlasting pyramids - your work will stand. And a write with pious hand the words the worthies in the world:

Part 5
Schiller
Friedrich Schiller
(1759-1805)

Schiller was born at Marbach in the Duchy of Württemberg, where his father held a commission in the Duke's army. From 1773 to 1780, he studied at the Military Academy in nearby Stuttgart, in whose running the despotic Duke Karl Eugen took a personal interest. After graduating in medicine, Schiller became a regimental physician. The Duke disapproved of the young Schiller's literary activities, and Schiller fled his domains in 1782 to Mannheim, at whose theatre his first drama, *The Robbers*, had already been successfully performed.

Schiller's early work, particularly *The Robbers* and his early tragedy *Intrigue and Love (Kabale und Liebe, 1784)*, is characterised by social and political protest, in which the influences of Rousseau and of the *Sturm und Drang* movement of the 1770s are apparent. His historical tragedy *Don Carlos* (1787) defends the rights of the Dutch people under Spanish oppression, and Schiller's work on it prepared the way for his *History of the Revolt of the Netherlands* (1788), a work which gained him the Chair of History at Jena University. His *History of the Thirty Years War* followed in 1791–3.

In 1793, Schiller embarked on intensive studies of Kant, and wrote a series of essays on ethical and aesthetic subjects, several of them dealing with the theory of tragedy. Central to them is the concept of tragic sublimity, which is achieved by voluntary acceptance of suffering in the interests of a moral end. His *Aesthetic Letters* (1794–5) deal with the educative effects of aesthetic experience in promoting a balanced state of mind and an integral personality. This work, and *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry* (1795–6), in which Schiller distinguishes two basic types of poetry and poet (ancient and modern, spontaneous and reflective), benefited from his friendship with Goethe, which began in 1794.

Schiller's greatest historical tragedy, the trilogy *Wallenstein* (1797–8), was followed in quick succession by *Maria Stuart* (1800), *The Maid of Orleans* (1801), *The Bride of Messina* (1803), and *Wilhelm Tell* (1804). All are in verse, and all aspire to a universally representative or 'classical' character at the expense of merely local or contemporary relevance. (*The Bride of Messina* even employs a Greek chorus.)

As a critic, Schiller was much indebted to Kant's philosophy. But whereas Kant's moral rigorism could readily be accommodated to the theory of tragedy, Schiller felt the need to modify Kant's uncompromising dualism in presenting art as a means of harmonising conflicting impulses within the human psyche and restoring it to wholeness. The ideal of wholeness is again fundamental in *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry*, which adopts a historical approach to the problem. Schiller defines and justifies the distinctive character of modern, as opposed to ancient, poetry; but he contends that the modern, reflective poet must ultimately overcome, by his own self-conscious methods, that division between ideal and reality which did not exist for the 'naive' poet of antiquity.
Further reading

The Nationalausgabe of the collected works (1943-) is still incomplete, but the edition by Fricke and Göpfert (1958-9) contains the principal writings. The letters have been collected by Jonas (1892-6). Biographical studies include those of Minor (1890) and the more modern account by von Wiese (fourth edition, 1978). Most of the plays have been translated into English, and Lamport's versions of Maria Stuart (1969) and of The Robbers and Wallenstein (1979) can be recommended. The bilingual edition of the Aesthetic Letters by Wilkinson and Willoughby (1967) is excellent. General studies in English include Garland (1949) and Witte (1949). Kerry (1961) deals specifically with the aesthetic writings.

On Naive and Sentimental Poetry

1795-6

Translated by Julius A. Elias (slightly modified).


There are moments in our lives when we dedicate a kind of love and tender respect to nature in plants, minerals, animals, and landscapes, as well as to human nature in children, in the customs of country folk, and to the primitive world, not because it gratifies our senses, nor yet because it satisfies our understanding or taste (the very opposite can occur in both instances), rather, simply because it is nature. Every person of a finer cast who is not totally lacking in feeling experiences this when he wanders in the open air, when he stays in the country, or lingers before the monuments of ancient times; in short, whenever he is surprised in the midst of artificial circumstances and situations by the sight of simple nature. It is this interest, not infrequently elevated into a need, that underlies much of our fondness for flowers and animals, for simple gardens, for strolls, for the country and its inhabitants, for many an artifact of remote antiquity, and the like; provided that neither affectation nor any other fortuitous interest plays a role. However, this kind of interest in nature can take place only under two conditions. First, it is absolutely necessary that the object which inspires it should be nature or at least be taken by us as such; second, that it be naive (in the broadest meaning of the word), i.e., that nature stand in contrast to art and put it to shame. As soon as the latter is joined with the former, not before, nature becomes naive.

Nature, considered in this wise, is for us nothing but the voluntary presence, the subsistence of things on their own, their existence in accordance with their own immutable laws.
This representation is absolutely necessary if we are to take an interest in such appearances. If one were able by the most consummate deception to give an artificial flower the similitude of nature, if one were able to induce the highest illusion of the naive in human behaviour by imitating it, the discovery that it was imitation would completely destroy the feeling of which we spoke. From this it is clear that this kind of satisfaction in nature is not aesthetic but moral; for it is mediated by an idea, not produced immediately by observation; nor is it in any way dependent upon beauty of form. For what could a modest flower, a stream, a mossy stone, the chirping of birds, the humming of bees, etc., possess in themselves so pleasing to us? What could give them a claim even upon our love? It is not these objects, it is an idea represented by them which we love in them. We love in them the tacitly creative life, the serene spontaneity of their activity, existence in accordance with their own laws, the inner necessity, the eternal unity with themselves.

They are what we were; they are what we should once again become. We were nature just as they, and our culture, by means of reason and freedom, should lead us back to nature. They are, therefore, not only the representation of our lost childhood, which eternally remains most dear to us, so that they fill us with a certain melancholy. But they are also representations of our highest fulfilment in the ideal, thus evoking in us a sublime tenderness.

Yet their perfection is not to their credit, because it is not the product of their choice. They accord us then, the quite unique delight of being our example without putting us to shame. They surround us like a continuous divine phenomenon, but more exhilarating than blinding. What determines their character is precisely what is lacking for the perfection of our own; what distinguishes us from them, is precisely what they themselves lack for divinity. We are free, they are necessary; we change, they remain a unity. But only if both are joined one with the other - if the will freely obeys the law of necessity, and reason asserts its rule through all the flux of imagination, does the ideal or the divine come to the fore. In them, then, we see eternally that which escapes us, but for which we are challenged to strive, and which, even if we never attain to it, we may still hope to approach in endless progress. In ourselves we observe an advantage which they lack, and in which they can either never participate at all (as in the case of the irrational) or only insofar as they proceed by our path (as with childhood). They afford us, therefore, the sweetest enjoyment of our humanity as idea, even though they must perforce humiliate us with reference to any particular condition of our humanity.

Since this interest in nature is based upon an idea, it can manifest itself only in minds which are receptive to ideas, i.e., in moral minds. By far the majority of people merely affect this state, and the universality of this sentimental taste in our times as expressed, particularly since the appearance of certain writings, in the form of sentimental journeys, pleasure gardens, walks, and other delights of this sort, is by no means a proof of the universality of this mode of feeling. Yet nature will always have something of this effect even upon the most
unfeeling, if only because that tendency toward the moral common to all men is sufficient for the purpose, and we are all without distinction, regardless of the distance between our actions and the simplicity and truth of nature, impelled to it in idea. Particularly powerfully and most universally this sensitivity to nature is given expression at the instance of such objects as stand in close connection with us, affording a retrospective view of ourselves and revealing more closely the unnatural in us, as, for example, in children and childlike folk. One is in error to suppose that it is only the notion of helplessness which overcomes us with tenderness at certain moments when we are together with children. That may perhaps be the case with those who in the presence of weakness are accustomed only to feeling their own superiority. But the feeling of which I speak (it occurs only in specifically moral moods and is not to be confused with the emotion that is excited in us by the happy activity of children) is humiliating rather than favourable to self-love; and even if an advantage were to be drawn from it, this would certainly not be on our side. We are touched not because we look down upon the child from the height of our strength and perfection, but rather because we look upward from the limitation of our condition, which is inseparable from the determination which we have attained, to the unlimited determinability of the child and to its pure innocence; and our emotion at such a moment is too transparently mixed with a certain melancholy for its source to be mistaken. In the child disposition and determination are represented; in us that fulfilment that forever remains far short of those. The child is therefore a lively representation to us of the ideal, not indeed as it is fulfilled, but as it is enjoined; hence we are in no sense moved by the notion of its poverty and limitation, but rather by the opposite: the notion of its pure and free strength, its integrity, its infinity. To a moral and sensitive person a child will be a sacred object on this account; an object, in fact, which by the greatness of an idea destroys all empirical greatness; one which, whatever else it may lose in the judgement of the understanding, it regains in ample measure in the judgement of reason.

It is from just this contradiction between the judgement of reason and the understanding that the quite extraordinary phenomenon arises of those mixed feelings which the naive mode of thought excites in us. It connects childish simplicity with the childish; through the latter it exposes its weakness to the understanding and causes that smile by which we betray our (theoretical) superiority. But as soon as we have cause to believe that childish simplicity is at the same time childlike, that in consequence not lack of understanding, not incapacity, but rather a higher (practical) strength, a heart full of innocence and truth, is the source of that which out of its inner greatness scorson the aid of art, then that triumph of the understanding is set aside, and mockery of ingenuousness yields to admiration of simplicity. We feel ourselves obliged to respect the object at which we formerly smiled, and since we at the same time cast our glance upon ourselves, bemoan the fact that we are not likewise endowed. Thus arises the entirely joyous mockery, respect, and mockery.

To be naive it is necessary that occur counter to the knowledge awareness. In the first case this is second, it is the naive of temperament.

With the naive of surprise the is nature; with the naive of temperament not to be able to think him physically being naive. The actions and speech of the naive only so long as we do any case only take into consideration and the artificiality in ourselves expected, and precisely on this account in the most rigorous sense.

But in both cases, in the naive of nature must be in the right when

Only by this last provision is this also nature, and the rule of propriety is any same affect should triumph over as we do not hesitate to call it naive triumph over art not by her blind as moral greatness, in brief, not as inadequacy of art but its invalidity for inadequacy is a shortcoming, it can inspire respect. It is indeed superior power of the affect and lack and the superior power by simply provide the opportunity character, i.e., the law of harmony.

The naive of surprise can apply as in this moment he is no longer a will that is not in harmony with brought to awareness, will take it other hand, will marvel at people naive of surprise, the truth is revised but by the natural character as any merit to the individual for deserved, which will not be an individual. But since even in this through the veil of falsity, a satirical malicious joy at having caused
endowed. Thus arises the entirely unique phenomenon of a feeling in which
joyous mockery, respect, and melancholy are compounded.\(^9\)

To be naive it is necessary that nature be victorious over art,\(^6\) whether this
occur counter to the knowledge or will of the individual or with his full
awareness. In the first case this is the naive of surprise and amuses us; in the
second, it is the naive of temperament and touches us.

With the naive of surprise the individual must be morally capable of denying
nature; with the naive of temperament this may not be the case, but we must
not be able to think him physically incapable of doing so if it is to affect us as
being naive. The actions and speech of children thus give us a pure impression
of the naive only so long as we do not recall their incapacity for art and in
any case only take into consideration the contrast between their naturalness
and the artificiality in ourselves. The naive is childlikeness where it is no longer
expected, and precisely on this account cannot be ascribed to actual childhood
in the most rigorous sense.

But in both cases, in the naive of surprise just as in the naive of temperament,
nature must be in the right where art is in the wrong.

Only by this last provision is the concept of the naive completed. The affect\(^6\)
is also nature, and the rule of propriety is something artificial; yet the victory
of the affect over propriety is anything but naive. If, on the other hand, the
same affect should triumph over artifice, over false modesty, over deceit, then
we do not hesitate to call it naive.\(^5\) Hence it is necessary that nature should
triumph over art not by her blind violence as dynamic greatness, but by her form
as moral greatness, in brief, not as compulsion, but as inner necessity. It is not the
inadequacy of art but its invalidity that must have assured the victory of nature;
for inadequacy is a shortcoming, and nothing that derives from a shortcoming
can inspire respect. It is indeed the case with the naive of surprise that the
superior power of the affect and a lack of awareness reveal nature; but this
lack and the superior power by no means constitute the naive, rather they
simply provide the opportunity for nature to obey unimpeded her moral
character, i.e., the law of harmony.

The naive of surprise can apply only to a human being, and then only insofar
as in this moment he is no longer pure and innocent nature. It presupposes
a will that is not in harmony with nature's own acts. Such a person, when
brought to awareness, will take fright at himself; the naive temperament, on the
other hand, will marvel at people and at their astonishment. But since, in the
naive of surprise, the truth is revealed not by the personal and moral character,
but by the natural character as revealed through the affect, we cannot attribute
any merit to the individual for his sincerity, and our laughter is mockery
deserved, which will not be restrained by any personal esteem for the
individual. But since even in this case it is the sincerity of nature that breaks
through the veil of falsity, a satisfaction of a higher order will be joined with
the malicious joy at having caught somebody out; for nature in contrast with
Schiller

decide must always engender respect. We therefore experience a truly moral pleasure even at the expense of the naive of surprise, although not at the expense of moral character.

In the naive of surprise we do indeed always respect nature because we are obliged to respect truth; in the naive of temperament, on the other hand, we respect the person and hence enjoy not only a moral pleasure but a moral object. In both cases nature is in the right in that it speaks truth; but in the latter case not only is nature in the right, but the individual also possesses honot.

In the first case the sincerity of nature accrues to the shame of the individual because it is involuntary; in the second it always accrues to his credit, even if whatever he said should put him to shame.

We ascribe a naive temperament to a person if he, in his judgement of things, overlooks their artificial and contrived aspects and heeds only their simple nature. We demand of him whatever can be judged about things within healthy nature, and absolutely ignore whatever presupposes any detachment from nature, whether due to thought or feeling, or any knowledge thereof.

If a father tells his child that some man or other is expiring from poverty, and the child goes and gives the poor man his father's purse, such an action is naive; for healthy nature is acting through the child, and in a world in which healthy nature were predominant he would be entirely right to act so. He sees only the distress and the means nearest at hand to alleviate it; such a development of property rights as permits a portion of humanity to perish has no basis in simple nature. The child's act, therefore, puts the world to shame, and this our hearts also confess by the satisfaction they derive from such an act.

If a man without knowledge of the world, but otherwise sound of understanding, tells his secrets to another who is deceiving him, but who is able skilfully to conceal his motives, and so, by his own sincerity, lends the other the means with which to harm him, this we find naive. We laugh at him, yet we cannot refrain from esteeming him. For his trust in the other man springs from the uprightness of his own temperament; at least he is naive only insofar as this is the case.

The naive mode of thought can therefore never be a characteristic of depraved men, rather it can be attributed only to children and to those of a childish temperament. These latter often act and think naively in the midst of the artificial circumstances of fashionable society; they forget in their own beautiful humanity that they have to do with a depraved world, and comport themselves even at the courts of kings with the same ingenuousness and innocence that one would find only in a pastoral society.

It is, incidentally, not at all easy to distinguish always between childish and childlike innocence, since there are actions which hover on the extreme boundary between both, and where we are left absolutely in doubt whether we should laugh at their simpleness or esteem their noble simplicity. There is a very remarkable example of this type in the history of the reign of Pope Adrian VI which has been customary punctiliousness and fact.

On Naive an

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which had never been heard of from any pope, and which ran directly counter to the principles of this
Court. 'We well know', they read in part, 'that for many years much that is
abominable has issued from this Holy See; no wonder, then, if the diseased
condition has been transmitted from the head to the limbs, from the pope to
the prelates. We have all fallen by the way, and it has already been long since
one of us has done any good thing, not even one.' Elsewhere he instructs the
legate to declare in his name that he, Adrian, was not to be blamed for any-
thing that had been done by the popes before him, and that such excesses,
even when he was still living in a lowly estate, had always displeased him, and
so forth. One can easily imagine how such naivety on the part of the pope must
have been received by the Roman clergy; the least that was laid to his charge
was that he had betrayed the Church to the heretics. This most impolitic
measure by the pope would, nevertheless, be worthy of our entire respect and
admiration, if we could only convince ourselves that he was really naive, that
is, that it had been elicited from him solely by the natural candour of his
character without any consideration for the possible consequences, and that
he would have done no less had he been aware of the whole extent of the
imprudence involved. But we have some reason to believe that he took this
course to be by no means so impolitic, and went so far in his innocence as to
hope by his complaisance to have won from his adversaries something very
important to the advantage of his Church. He not only imagined that as a man
of honour he was obliged to take this step, but also that he could justify it as
pope; but, since he forgot that the most artificial of all institutions could be
maintained only by a continued denial of the truth, he committed the
inexcusable error of applying rules of conduct which might have proven

Pope Adrian VI which has been described for us by Herr Schröckh with his
customary punctiliousness and factual accuracy. This pope, a Dutchman by
birth, occupied the Holy See at one of the most critical times for the hierarchy,
when an embittered faction was exposing the shortcomings of the Roman
Church without mercy, and the opposing faction was interested in the highest
degree in concealing them. What the truly naive character, if indeed such a
one should ever stray upon the seat of St Peter, should have done in this case,
is not the question; rather, it is how far such naivety of temperament might
be compatible with the role of the pope. This it was, however, that placed the
predecessors and successors of Adrian in the extremest embarrassment. They
uniformly followed the established Roman system of making no admissions
whatever. But Adrian truly possessed the upright character of his nation and
the innocence of his former station. From the narrow sphere of the scholar he
was translated to his supreme position, and even upon the heights of his new
office had not become untrue to that simple character. The abuses in the
Church disturbed him, and he was far too straightforward to dissimulate
publicly what he privately submitted to himself. In accordance with this
manner of thinking he allowed himself in the instructions he sent with his
legate to Germany to be betrayed into admissions which had never been heard
of from any pope, and which ran directly counter to the principles of this
Court. 'We well know', they read in part, 'that for many years much that is
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pope; but, since he forgot that the most artificial of all institutions could be
maintained only by a continued denial of the truth, he committed the
inexcusable error of applying rules of conduct which might have proven
correct under natural circumstances in an entirely opposite situation. This perforce much alters our judgement; and even if we cannot withhold our respect for the uprightness of the heart from which that action flowed, yet it is not a little diminished by the consideration that here nature had too weak an opponent in art, and the heart in the head.

Every true genius must be naive, or it is not genius. Only its naivety makes for its genius, and what it is intellectually and aesthetically it cannot disavow morally. Unacquainted with the rules, those crutches for weakness and taskmasters of awkwardness, led only by nature or by instinct, its guardian angel, it goes calmly and surely through all the snares of false taste in which, if it is not shrewd enough to avoid them from afar, the nongenius must inevitably be entrapped. Only to genius is it given to be at home beyond the accustomed and to extend nature without going beyond her. It is true that sometimes the latter befalls even the greatest geniuses, but only because even they have their moments of fantasy in which protective nature abandons them either because they are engrossed by the power of example, or because the perverted taste of their times misleads them.

The genius must solve the most complex tasks with unpretentious simplicity and facility; the egg of Columbus appears in every decision of genius. And only thus does genius identify itself as such, by triumphing over the complications of art by simplicity. It proceeds not by the accepted principles, but by flashes of insight and feeling; but its insights are the inspirations of a god (everything done by healthy nature is divine), its feelings are laws for all ages and for all races of men.

The childlike character that the genius imposes upon his works he likewise displays in his private life and morals. He is chaste, for this nature always is; but he is not prudish, for only decadence is prudish. He is intelligent, for nature can never be otherwise; but he is not cunning, for only art can be so. He is true to his character and his inclinations, but not so much because he possesses principles as because nature, despite all fluctuations, always returns to its former state, always revives the old necessity. He is modest, even shy, because genius always remains a mystery to itself; but he is not fearful, because he does not know the dangers of the path he travels. We know little of the private lives of the greatest geniuses, but even the little that is preserved, for example, of Sophocles, Archimedes, Hippocrates, and, in more recent times, of Ariosto, Dante, and Tasso, of Raphael, of Albrecht Dürer, Cervantes, Shakespeare, of Fielding, Sterne, etc., confirms this assertion.

Indeed, and this seems to present much more difficulty, even great statesmen and generals, if their greatness is due to their genius, will display a naive character. Among the ancients I cite only Epaminondas and Julius Caesar, among moderns only Henry IV of France, Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, and Czar Peter the Great. The Duke of Marlborough, Turenne, and Vendôme all display this character. It is to the opposite sex that nature has assigned the naive character in its highest perfection. Woman's desire to please manifests itself nowhere so much as in sex, and even if one had no other, that is its characteristic. But since the least perpetual conflict with this character it is for a man intellectually to proceed with the advantages of a great naivety of manner with a demon the highest esteem as the scholar ever the rigours of the schools.

From the naive mode of thought; the utterances of a god of the schools, always fearful of error, the cross of grammar and logic, at all costs, employs many words, deprives its thoughts of their strangeness. But genius delineates it in the brush with an eternally determined stroke. If to the former the sign remains signified, to the latter language thought, and is so at one with its spirit appears as if laid bare. Its essence is the sign disappears completely in the mode cannot represent it without the sign: while giving expression to a thought, spirit appears as if laid bare. It is not true names and in the most successful expression of children. They are not false, one often says, combined with natural sincerity of falsity (not crudity, which violates the naive of expression) one may mention either only in true names and in the most successful expressions of children. They are not

The naive temperament, strictly speaking, is not a human being as a being not a...
On Naive and Sentimental Poetry

It is for a man intellectually to preserve this magnificent gift of nature intact along with the advantages of a good education; and the woman who combines naivety of manner with a demeanour appropriate for society, is as worthy of the highest esteem as the scholar who joins the genius's freedom of thought with all the rigours of the schools.

From the naive mode of thought there necessarily follows naive expression in word as well as in gesture, and this is the most important element in gracefulness. By this naive grace genius expresses its most sublime and profound thought; the utterances of a god in the mouth of a child. The understanding of the schools, always fearful of error, crucifies its words and its concepts upon the cross of grammar and logic, and is severe and stiff to avoid uncertainty at all costs, employs many words to be quite sure of not saying too much, and deprives its thoughts of their strength and edge so that they may not cut the unwary. But genius delineates its own thoughts at a single felicitous stroke of the brush with an eternally determined, firm, and yet absolutely free outline.

If to the former the sign remains forever heterogeneous and alien to the thing signified, to the latter language springs as by some inner necessity out of the sign, without being false, one often speaks otherwise than one thinks; one is forced to employ many words to be quite sure of not saying too much, and to produce a naivety of expression in society that consists of calling things which are laws for all ages and for all men domest in order to say things which could cause pain only to a sick patient (not crudity, which violates the rules because it finds them oppressive), for the sign disappears completely in the thing signified, and in which language, while giving expression to a thought, yet leaves it exposed (whereas the other mode cannot represent it without simultaneously concealing it); and this it is we generally call a gifted style displaying genius.

As freely and naturally as genius expresses itself in its works of the spirit, its innocence of heart is expressed in its social intercourse. Because we have fallen as far from simplicity and strict truth of expression in life in society as from simplicity of temperament, our easily wounded guilt, as well as our easily seduced powers of imagination, have made a timid propriety necessary. Without being false, one often speaks otherwise than one thinks; one is forced into periphrasis in order to say things which could cause pain only to a sick person, or because of the difficulties of language, which that action flowed, yet it is as if nature had too weak an end, but not genius. Only its naivety makes a man aesthetically it cannot disavow its usual imitation of nature or by instinct, its guardian spirit appears as if laid bare. It is true that nature always is; but genius delineates its own thoughts at a single felicitous stroke of the brush with an eternally determined, firm, and yet absolutely free outline. It uniformly obeys the expression of the spirit as if laid bare. It is true that the nature of every genius, for only art can be so. He is true and natural, even shy, because the crutches for weakness and naivety of manner with a demeanour appropriate for society, is as worthy of the highest esteem as the scholar who joins the genius's freedom of thought with all the rigours of the schools.

The naive temperament, strictly speaking, can indeed be ascribed only to the human being as a being not absolutely subject to nature, even though only
insofar as pure nature actually still is active within him; but by an effect of
the poetic imagination it is often transferred from the rational to the irrational.
Thus we often attribute a naive character to an animal, a landscape, a
building, even to nature in general, in opposition to the caprice and the
fantastic concepts of men. But this always demands that we assign a will to
T~us. insofar as pure nature actually still is active within him; but by an effect of
accordmg to the law of necessity. The dissatisfaction at our own badly abused
moral freedom and at the moral harmony we sense is lacking in our actions
the poetic imagination it is often transferred from the rational to the irrational.
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bmldu~g, easily indu~es


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supported you, no other choice was
and will to grasp the law, or fall

But when you are consoled at
be your heart's example. If you
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this emotion; this is worthy of yo

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supported you, no other choice now lies open to you, but with free consciousness and will to grasp the law, or fall without hope of rescue into a bottomless pit.

But when you are consoled at the lost happiness of nature, then let her perfection be your heart's example. If you march out toward her from your artificial environment, she will stand before you in her great calm, in her naïve beauty, in her childlike innocence and simplicity; then linger at this image, cultivate this emotion; this is worthy of your sublimest humanity. Let it no longer occur to you to want to exchange her, but take her up within yourself and strive to wed her infinite advantage with your infinite prerogative, and from both produce the divine. Let her surround you like an enchanting idyll in which you can always find yourself safe from the waywardness of art, and in which you accumulate courage and new confidence for the race, and which lights anew in your heart the flame of the ideal which is so easily extinguished in the storms of life.

If one recalls the beautiful nature that surrounded the ancient Greeks; if one, when art revolts against nature and in the arrogance of its caprice, offers tribute to nature just in this regard to such a higher degree, cling to her with fervour, with sentimentality, with sweet melancholy, as we moderns are attached to the scenes and characters of nature. The Greek is indeed to the highest degree precise, faithful, and circumstantial in describing them, yet simply no more so and with no more preferential involvement of his heart than he displays in the description of a tunic, a shield, a suit of armour, some domestic article, or any other.

Moreover, when art revolts against nature and in the arrogance of its caprice, offers tribute to nature just in this regard to such a higher degree, cling to her with fervour, with sentimentality, with sweet melancholy, as we moderns are attached to the scenes and characters of nature. The Greek is indeed to the highest degree precise, faithful, and circumstantial in describing them, yet simply no more so and with no more preferential involvement of his heart than he displays in the description of a tunic, a shield, a suit of armour, some domestic article, or any other.

That nature, whether your lassitude craves any? Ask yourself, when art revolts against nature and in the arrogance of its caprice, offers tribute to nature just in this regard to such a higher degree, cling to her with fervour, with sentimentality, with sweet melancholy, as we moderns do. Indeed, by hypostatising nature's individual phenomena, treating them as gods, and their effects as the acts of free beings, the Greek eliminates that calm necessity of nature precisely in virtue of which she is so attractive to us. His impatient fantasy leads him beyond nature to the drama of human life.

Whence derive these different spirits? How is it that we, who are in everything which is nature so boundlessly inferior to the ancients, offer tribute to nature just in this regard to such a higher degree, cling to her with fervour, and embrace even the inanimate world with the warmest sensibility? It is
because nature in us has disappeared from humanity and we rediscover her in
her truth only outside it, in the inanimate world. Not our greater accord with
nature, but quite the contrary, the unnaturalness of our situation, conditions, and
manners forces us to procure a satisfaction in the physical world (since none
is to be hoped for in the moral) for the incipient impulse for truth and simplicity
which, like the moral tendency whence it derives, lies incorruptible and
inalienable in every human heart. For this reason the feeling by which we are
attached to nature is so closely related to the feeling with which we mourn the
lost age of childhood and childlike innocence. Our childhood is the only
undisfigured nature that we still encounter in civilised mankind, hence it is
no wonder if every trace of the nature outside us leads us back to our childhood.

It was quite otherwise with the ancient Greeks. With them civilisation did
not manifest itself to such an extent that nature was abandoned in consequence.
The whole structure of their social life was founded on perceptions, not on a
contrivance of art; their theology itself was the inspiration of a naive feeling,
the child of a joyous imaginative power, not of brooding reason like the
religious beliefs of modern nations; since, then, the Greek had not lost nature
in his humanity, he could not be surprised by her outside it either and thus
feel a pressing need for objects in which he might find her again. At one with
himself and happy in the sense of his humanity he was obliged to remain with
it as his maximum and assimilate all else to it; whereas we, not at one with
ourselves and unhappy in our experience of mankind, possess no more urgent
interest than to escape from it and cast from our view so unsuccessful a form.

The feeling of which we here speak is therefore not that which the ancients
possessed; it is rather identical with that which we have for the ancients. They
felt naturally; we feel the natural. Without a doubt the feeling that filled
Homer’s soul as he made his divine swineherd regale Ulysses was quite different
from that which moved young Werther’s soul as he read this song after an
irritating evening in society. Our feeling for nature is like the feeling of an
invalid for health.

Just as nature began gradually to disappear from human life as experience and
as the (active and perceiving) subject, so we see her arise in the world of poetry
as idea and object. The nation that had brought this to the extremest degree
both in unnaturalness and in reflection thereon must have been the first to be
most moved by the phenomenon of the naive and to give it a name. This nation
was, as far as I know, the French. But the feeling of the naive and interest in it
is naturally much older and goes back even before the beginning of moral
and aesthetic corruption. This change in the mode of perception is, for example,
very obvious in Euripides, if one compares him with his predecessors,
notably with Aeschylus, and yet the later poet was the favourite of his age.
The same revolution can likewise be documented among the old historians.
Horace, the poet of a cultivated and corrupt era, praises serene happiness in
Tibur, and one could call him the founder of this sentimental mode of poetry
as well as a still unexcelled model of it. In Propertius, too, and Virgil, among
others, one finds traces of this naive feeling, which demonstrates the requisite fulness of heart which
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portius, too, and Virgil, among
others, one finds traces of this mode of perception, less so in Ovid, in whom
the requisite fullness of heart was lacking and who in exile in Tomi painfully
missed the happiness that Horace in Tibur so gladly dispensed with.

The poets are everywhere, by their very definition, the guardians of nature.
Where they can no longer quite be so and have already felt within themselves
the destructive influence of arbitrary and artificial forms or have had to
struggle with them, then they will appear as the witnesses and avengers of nature.
They will either be nature, or they will seek lost nature. From this arise two
entirely different modes of poetry which, between them, exhaust and divide
the whole range of poetry. All poets who are truly so will belong, according
to the temper of the times in which they flourish, or according to the influence
upon their general education or passing states of mind by fortuitous circum-
stances, either to the naive or to the sentimental poets.

The poet of a naive and bright youthful world, like the poet who in ages of
artificial civilisation is closest to him, is severe and modest like virginal Diana
in her forests; without intimacy he flees the heart that seeks his, flees the desire
that would embrace him. The dry truth with which he deals with the object
seems not infrequently like insensitivity. The object possesses him entirely, his
heart does not lie like a tawdry alloy immediately beneath the surface, but like
gold waits to be sought in the depths. Like the divinity behind the world’s
structure he stands behind his work; he is the work, and the work is he; to ask
only for him is to be unworthy of it, inadequate to it, or sated with it.

Thus, for example, Homer among the ancients and Shakespeare among the
moderns reveal themselves; two vastly different natures separated by the
immeasurable distance of the years, but one in precisely this trait of character.
When, at a very early age I first made the acquaintance of the latter poet, I
was incensed by his coldness, the insensitivity which permitted him to jest in
the midst of the highest pathos, to interrupt the heartrending scenes in
Hamlet, in King Lear, in Macbeth, etc., with a Fool; restraining himself now where my
sympathies rushed on, then coldbloodedly tearing himself away where my
heart would have gladly lingered. Misled by acquaintance with more recent
poets into looking first for the poet in his work, to find his heart, to reflect in
unison with him on his subject matter, in short, to observe the object in the
subject, it was intolerable to me that there was no way to lay hold of the
poet, and nowhere to confront him. I studied him and he possessed my
complete admiration for many years before I learned to love him as an
individual. I was not yet prepared to understand nature at first hand. I could
only support her image reflected in understanding and regulated by a rule,
and for this purpose the sentimental poets of the French, and the Germans,
too, of the period from 1750 to about 1780, were just the right subjects.
However, I am not ashamed of this youthful judgement, since the old-
established criticism had promulgated a similar one and was naive enough to
publish it in the world.16

The same occurred to me with Homer also, whom I learned to know only
at a later period. I recall now the curious point in the sixth book of the *Iliad* where Glaucus and Diomedes come face to face in the battle and, having recognised one another as guest-friends, afterwards exchange gifts. This touching depiction of the piety with which the rules of hospitality were observed even in battle can be compared with an account of the *knighthly sense of nobility* in Ariosto, when two knights and rivals, Ferrau and Rinaldo, the latter a Christian, the former a Saracen, covered with wounds after a violent duel, make peace and in order to overtake the fleeing Angelica, mount the same horse. Both examples, as different as they may be otherwise, are almost alike in their effect upon our hearts, because both depict the beautiful victory of morals over passion and touch us by the naivety of their attitudes. But how differently the poets react in describing these similar actions. Ariosto, the citizen of a later world which had fallen from simplicity of manners, cannot, in recounting the occurrence, conceal his own wonderment and emotion. The feeling of the distance between those morals and those which characterised his own age overwhels him. He abandons for a moment the portrait of the object and appears in his own person. This beautiful stanza is well known and has always been greatly admired:

O nobility of ancient knightly mode!
Who once were rivals, divided still
In godly faith, bitter pain still suffered,
Bodies torn in enmity's wild struggle,
Free of suspicion, together rode
Along the darkling crooked path.
The steed, by four spurs driven, sped
To where the road in twain divided.17

And now old Homer! Scarcely has Diomedes learned from the narrative of Glaucus, his antagonist, that the latter's forefathers were guest-friends of his family, than he thrusts his lance into the ground, speaks in a friendly tone with him and agrees with him that in future they will avoid one another in battle. Let us, however, hear Homer himself:

In me you will now have a good friend in Argos, and I shall have you in Lycia, if ever I visit that country. So let us avoid each other's spears, even in the melee, since there are plenty of the Trojans and their famous allies for me to kill, if I have the luck and speed to catch them, and plenty of Achaeans for you to slaughter, if you can. And let us exchange our armour, so that everyone may know that our grandfathers' friendship has made friends of us. With no more said, they leapt from their chariots, shook hands, and pledged each other.18

It would hardly be possible for a *modern* poet (at least, hardly one who is modern in the moral sense of the word) to have waited even this long before expressing his pleasure at this action. We would forgive him this all the more readily because, even in reading, our hearts pause, and gladly detach themselves from the object in order to look within. But of all this, not a trace in
point in the sixth book of the *Iliad* to face in the battle and, having afterwards exchange gifts. This the rules of *hospitality* were observed: count of the knightly sense of nobility Ferrau and Rinaldo, the latter a with wounds after a violent duel, fleeing Angelica, mount the same may be otherwise, are almost alike depict the beautiful victory of naivety of their attitudes. But how these similar actions. Ariosto, the stern simplicity of manners, cannot, on wonderrment and emotion. The a and those which characterised his a moment the portrait of the objectiful stanza is well known and has

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**On Naive and Sentimental Poetry**

Homer; as though he had reported something quite everyday; indeed, as though he possessed no heart in his bosom, he continues in his dry truthfulness:

But Zeus the son of Cronos must have robbed Glaucus of his wits, for he exchanged with Deomedes golden armour for bronze, a hundred oxen's worth for the value of nine.

Poets of this naive category are no longer at home in an artificial age. They are indeed scarcely even possible, at least in no other wise possible except they *run wild* in their own age, and are preserved by some favourable destiny from its crippling influence. From society itself they can never arise; but from outside it they still sometimes appear, but rather as strangers at whom one stares, and as uncouth sons of nature by whom one is irritated. As beneficent as such phenomena are for the artist who studies them and for the true connoisseur who is able to appreciate them, they yet elicit little joy on the whole and in their own century. The stamp of the conqueror is marked upon their brows; but we would rather be coddled and indulged by the Muses. By the critics, the true gamekeepers of taste, they are detested as trespassers whom one would prefer to suppress; for even Homer owes it only to the power of more than a thousand years of testimony that those who sit in judgement on taste permit him to stand; and it is unpleasant enough for them to maintain their rules against his example and his reputation against their rules.

The poet, I said, either is nature or he will seek her. The former is the naive, the latter the sentimental poet.

The poetic spirit is immortal and inalienable in mankind, it cannot be lost except together with humanity or with the capacity for it. For even if man should separate himself by the freedom of his fantasy and his understanding from the simplicity, truth and necessity of nature, yet not only does the way back to her remain open always, but also a powerful and ineradicable impulse, the moral, drives him ceaselessly back to her, and it is precisely with this impulse that the poetic faculty stands in the most intimate relationship. For this faculty is not forfeited along with the lost simplcity of nature; it merely assumes a new direction.

Even now, nature is the sole flame at which the poetic spirit nourishes itself; from her alone it draws its whole power, to her alone it speaks even in the artificial man entoiled by civilisation. All other modes of expression are alien to the poetic spirit; hence, generally speaking, all so-called works of wit are quite misnamed poetic; although, for long, misled by the reputation of French literature, we have mistaken them as such.

It is still nature, I say, even now in the artificial condition of civilisation, in virtue of which the poetic spirit is powerful; but now it stands in quite another relation to nature.

So long as man is pure - not, of course, crude - nature, he functions as an undivided sensuous unity and as a harmonious whole. Sense and reason, passive and active faculties, are not separated in their activities, still less do they stand in conflict with one another. His perceptions are not the formless play of chance, his thoughts not the empty play of the faculty of representation;
the former proceed out of the law of necessity, the latter out of actuality. Once man has passed into the state of civilisation and art has laid her hand upon him, that sensuous harmony in him is withdrawn, and he can now express himself only as a moral unity, i.e., as striving after unity. The correspondence between his feeling and thought which in his first condition actually took place, exists now only ideally; it is no longer within him, but outside of him, as an idea still to be realised, no longer as a fact in his life. If one now applies the concept of poetry, which is nothing but giving mankind its most complete possible expression, to both conditions, the result in the earlier state of natural simplicity is the completest possible imitation of actuality – at that stage man still functions with all his powers simultaneously as a harmonious unity and hence the whole of his nature is expressed completely in actuality; whereas now, in the state of civilisation where that harmonious cooperation of his whole nature is only an idea, it is the elevation of actuality to the ideal or, amounting to the same thing, the representation of the ideal, that makes for the poet. And these two are likewise the only possible modes in which poetic genius can express itself at all. They are, as one can see, extremely different from one another, but there is a higher concept under which both can be subsumed, and there should be no surprise if this concept should coincide with the idea of humanity.

This is not the place further to pursue these thoughts, which can only be expounded in full measure in a separate disquisition. But anyone who is capable of making a comparison, based on the spirit and not just on the accidental forms, between ancient and modern poets, will be able readily to convince himself of the truth of the matter. The former move us by nature, by sensuous truth, by living presence; the latter by ideas.

This path taken by the modern poets is, moreover, that along which man in general, the individual as well as the race, must pass. Nature sets him at one with himself, art divides and cleaves him in two, through the ideal he returns to unity. But because the ideal is an infinitude to which he never attains, the civilised man can never become perfect in his own wise, while the natural man can in his. He must therefore fall infinitely short of the latter in perfection, if one heeds only the relation in which each stands to his species and to his maximum capacity. But if one compares the species themselves with one another, it becomes evident that the goal to which man strives through culture is infinitely preferable to that which he attains through nature. For the one obtains its value by the absolute achievement of a finite, the other by approximation to an infinite greatness. But only the latter possesses degrees and displays a progress, hence the relative worth of a man who is involved in civilisation is in general never determinable, even though the same man considered as an individual necessarily finds himself at a disadvantage compared with one in whom nature functions in her utter perfection. But insofar as the ultimate object of mankind is not otherwise to be attained than by that progress, and the latter cannot progress other than by civilising himself and hence passing over into the former category, there cannot therefore be any question to which of the two the ultimate object.

Perhaps on this account one is tempted to compare the ancient and modern poets, nothing is easier, but not without ridicule. If one affected simple nature uniformly, one could with more justice characteristically distinguish him through the art of finitude; the modern by comparison. But just as the poets their title justly derives from their temper, the moderns by comparison. But just as the poets their title justly derives from the peculiar spirit in which they think and feel, so must we compare any modern with the ancients. This spirit, which in his first condition antedates all human history and is the index of the first ideal, has passed into the state of civilisation and art has laid her hand upon him, making mankind its most complete possible representation and ineffable, in a spirit.

Since the naive poet only follow the ancient model, solely to imitation of actuality, his subject and in this respect there is no question of genuine poetry.
question to which of the two the advantage accrues with reference to that ultimate object.

The very same as has been said of the two different forms of humanity can likewise be applied to those species of poet corresponding to them.

Perhaps on this account one should not compare ancient with modern – naive with sentimental – poets either at all, or only by reference to some higher concept common to both (there is in fact such a concept). For clearly, if one has first abstracted the concept of those species onesidedly from the ancient poets, nothing is easier, but nothing also more trivial, than to depreciate the moderns by comparison. If one calls poetry only that which in every age has affected simple nature uniformly, the result cannot be other than to deny the modern poets their title just where they achieve their most characteristic and sublimest beauty, since precisely here they speak only to the adherent of civilisation and have nothing to say to simple nature. Anyone whose temperament is not already prepared to pass beyond actuality into the realm of ideas will find the richest content empty appearance, and the loftiest flights of the poet exaggeration. It would not occur to a reasonable person to want to compare any modern with Homer where Homer excels, and it sounds ridiculous enough to find Milton or Klopstock honoured with the title of a modern Homer. But just as little could any ancient poet, and least of all Homer, support the comparison with a modern poet in those aspects which most characteristically distinguish him. The former, I might put it, is powerful through the art of finitude; the latter by the art of the infinite.

And for the very reason that the strength of the ancient artist (for what has been said here of the poet can, allowing for self-evident qualifications, be extended to apply to the fine arts generally) subsists in finitude, the great advantage arises which the plastic art of antiquity maintains over that of modern times, and in general the unequal value relationship in which the modern art of poetry and modern plastic art stand to both species of art in antiquity. A work addressed to the eye can achieve perfection only infinitude; a work addressed to the imagination can achieve it also through the infinite. In plastic works the modern is little aided by his superiority in ideas; here he is obliged to determine in space in the most precise way the representation of his imagination and hence to compete with the ancient artists in precisely that quality in which they indisputably excel. In poetic works it is otherwise, and even if the ancient poets are victorious too in the simplicity of forms and in whatever is sensuously representable and corporeal, the modern can nonetheless leave them behind in richness of material in whatever is insusceptible of representation and ineffable, in a word, in whatever in the work of art is called spirit.

Since the naive poet only follows simple nature and feeling, and limits himself solely to imitation of actuality, he can have only a single relationship to his subject and in this respect there is for him no choice in his treatment. The varied impression of naive poetry depends (provided that one puts out of mind
everything which in it belongs to the content, and considers that impression only as the pure product of the poetic treatment), it depends, I say, solely upon the various degrees of one and the same mode of feeling; even the variety of external forms cannot effect any alteration in the quality of that aesthetic impression. The form may be lyric or epic, dramatic or narrative: we can indeed be moved to a weaker or stronger degree, but (as soon as the matter is abstracted) never heterogeneously. Our feeling is uniformly the same, entirely composed of one element, so that we cannot differentiate within it. Even the difference of language and era changes nothing in this regard, for just this pure unity of its origin and of its effect is a characteristic of naive poetry.

The case is quite otherwise with the sentimental poet. He reflects upon the impression that objects make upon him, and only in that reflection is the emotion grounded which he himself experiences and which he excites in us. The object here is referred to an idea and his poetic power is based solely upon this referral. The sentimental poet is thus always involved with two conflicting representations and perceptions — with actuality as a limit and with his idea as infinitude; and the mixed feelings that he excites will always testify to this dual source. Since in this case there is a plurality of principles it depends which of the two will predominate in the perception of the poet and in his representation, and hence a variation in the treatment is possible. For now the question arises whether he will tend more toward actuality or toward the ideal — whether he will realise the former as an object of antipathy or the latter as an object of sympathy. His presentation will, therefore, be either satirical or it will be (in a broader connotation of the word which will become clearer later) elegiac; every sentimental poet will adhere to one of these two modes of perception.

The poet is satirical if he takes as his subject alienation from nature and the contradiction between actuality and the ideal (in their effect upon the mind both amount to the same thing). But this he can execute either seriously and with passion, or jokingly and with good humour, according as he dwells in the realm of will or the realm of understanding. The former is a function of punitive or pathetic satire, the latter of playful satire.

Strictly speaking, the poet's purpose is compatible neither with the accent of correction nor with that of amusement. The former is too solemn for that play which poetry should always be; the latter too frivolous for the solemnity which must underlie all poetic play. Moral contradictions necessarily interest our hearts and therefore deprive our minds of their freedom; yet every substantive interest, i.e., any reference to a necessity, should be banished from poetic emotion. Contradictions of the understanding on the other hand, leave the heart indifferent, and yet the poet is concerned with the highest promptings of the heart, with nature, and with the ideal. Hence it is no small task for him in pathetic satire to avoid doing injury to the poetic form which subsists in freedom of play; and in playful satire not to fall short of the poetic content which must always be the infinite. This undertaking can be resolved only in a single manner. Punitive satire achieves poetic freedom by passing over into the sublime; playful satire obtains beauty.

In satire, actuality is contrasted with the ideal. It is, moreover, quite only that the poet is able to interpret a necessary object of antipathy; but he must itself necessarily arise out of a sensuous origin and be grounded in conflict; and often enough it is only the conflict between the two.

It is this material interest that this source is unworthy of the art and ideas and approach our hearts impure and material pathos with a broader connotation of the word which will become clearer later) elegiac; every sentimental poet will adhere to one of these two modes of perception.

The case is quite otherwise with the sentimental poet. He reflects upon the impression that objects make upon him, and only in that reflection is the emotion grounded which he himself experiences and which he excites in us. The object here is referred to an idea and his poetic power is based solely upon this referral. The sentimental poet is thus always involved with two conflicting representations and perceptions — with actuality as a limit and with his idea as infinitude; and the mixed feelings that he excites will always testify to this dual source. Since in this case there is a plurality of principles it depends which of the two will predominate in the perception of the poet and in his representation, and hence a variation in the treatment is possible. For now the question arises whether he will tend more toward actuality or toward the ideal — whether he will realise the former as an object of antipathy or the latter as an object of sympathy. His presentation will, therefore, be either satirical or it will be (in a broader connotation of the word which will become clearer later) elegiac; every sentimental poet will adhere to one of these two modes of perception.

The poet is satirical if he takes as his subject alienation from nature and the contradiction between actuality and the ideal (in their effect upon the mind both amount to the same thing). But this he can execute either seriously and with passion, or jokingly and with good humour, according as he dwells in the realm of will or the realm of understanding. The former is a function of punitive or pathetic satire, the latter of playful satire.

Strictly speaking, the poet's purpose is compatible neither with the accent of correction nor with that of amusement. The former is too solemn for that play which poetry should always be; the latter too frivolous for the solemnity which must underlie all poetic play. Moral contradictions necessarily interest our hearts and therefore deprive our minds of their freedom; yet every substantive interest, i.e., any reference to a necessity, should be banished from poetic emotion. Contradictions of the understanding on the other hand, leave the heart indifferent, and yet the poet is concerned with the highest promptings of the heart, with nature, and with the ideal. Hence it is no small task for him in pathetic satire to avoid doing injury to the poetic form which subsists in freedom of play; and in playful satire not to fall short of the poetic content which must always be the infinite. This undertaking can be resolved only in a single manner. Punitive satire achieves poetic freedom by passing over into the sublime; playful satire obtains beauty.

In satire, actuality is contrasted with the ideal. It is, moreover, quite only that the poet is able to interpret a necessary object of antipathy; but he must itself necessarily arise out of a sensuous origin and be grounded in conflict; and often enough it is only the conflict between the two.

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beauty.

In satire, actuality is contrasted with the highest reality as falling short of
the ideal. It is, moreover, quite unnecessary that this be articulated, provided
only that the poet is able to intimate this to the mind; but this he absolutely
must do or it will not function poetically at all. Actuality is here therefore a
necessary object of antipathy; but — and this is all-important — this antipathy
must itself necessarily arise out of the opposed ideal. For it could in fact have
a sensuous origin and be grounded merely in some inner need with which actuality
is in conflict; and often enough we feel moral indignation at the world, when it
is only the conflict between the world and our inclination that embitters us.
It is this material interest that the vulgar satirist exploits, and since he can
hardly fail by this method to arouse our emotion, he believes he has conquered
our hearts, and that he is a master of pathos. But any pathos deriving from
this source is unworthy of the art of poetry, which may touch us only through
ideas and approach our hearts only by the path of reason. In addition, this
impure and material pathos will always reveal itself by an excess of passion
and through a painful embarrassment of the intellect, whereas truly poetic
pathos can be recognised by a predominance of spontaneity and by a freedom
of spirit which still survives even in emotion. For if the emotion arises out of
the ideal that confronts actuality, then all inhibiting feelings are lost in the
sublimity of the former, and the greatness of the idea with which we are filled
elevates us above all the limitations of experience. In the representation of
offending actuality everything depends therefore upon necessity’s being the
basis on which the poet or narrator presents the actual, if he is to be able to
attune our spirits to ideas. If only we remain lofty in our judgement nothing
is lost if the subject remains base and far beneath us. When the historian
Tacitus depicts for us the profound depravity of the Romans of the first century
he is still a superior spirit who looks down upon the base, and our mood is truly
poetic because only the height where he himself stands and to which he was
able to elevate us makes his subject base.

Pathetic satire must, therefore, always derive from a temperament that is
vigorously permeated by the ideal. Only a predominant impulse toward
harmony can and may produce that profound sense of moral contradiction
and that burning indignation against moral perversity which becomes the
inspiration of a Juvenal, a Swift, a Rousseau, a Haller, 22 and others. These poets
would and must have written with the same felicity also in the more moving
and tender forms if fortuitous causes had not given this definite tendency to
their temperaments at an early age; and this they have actually done to some
extent. All those mentioned have lived either in a depraved era and saw before
them a fearful spectacle of moral decay, or their own fates had sown bitterness
in their souls. Even the philosophical spirit, since he separates with implacable
rigour appearances from essence, and penetrates into the depths of things,
inclines to that severity and austerity with which Rousseau, Haller, and others
depict actuality. But these extraneous and coincidental influences which always have an inhibiting effect may at most determine the tendency only, never supply the content of inspiration. This must be the same in everyone and, free of every external constraint, must flow out of a burning impulse for the ideal which is absolutely the only true vocation for the satiric as for the sentimental poet in general.

If pathetic satire is appropriate only to sublime souls, playful satire will succeed only with a beautiful soul. For the first is already secured from frivolity by its serious subject; but the second, which may treat only a morally neutral subject, would lapse unavoidably into frivolity, and lose all poetic value if in this case the manner did not ennoble the matter and the poet’s personality did not stand in place of his theme. But it is given only to the beautiful heart to impress a complete image of itself on all its utterances, independently of the subject of its activity. The sublime character can manifest itself only in discrete victories over the resistance of the senses, only in certain instants of impetus and momentary effort; but in the beautiful soul the ideal functions as nature, that is, uniformly, and hence can reveal itself even in a state of calm. The fathomless sea appears most sublime in its motion, the pellucid brook most beautiful in its serene flow.

It has frequently been disputed which of the two, tragedy or comedy, merits precedence over the other. If the question is merely which of the two treats of the more important subject matter, there can be no doubt that the first has the advantage; but if one would know which of the two demands the more significant poet, then the decision may rather fall to the latter. In tragedy much is already determined by the substance, in comedy nothing is determined by the substance and everything by the poet. Since in judgements of taste the content is never taken into account it follows naturally that the aesthetic value of these two artistic genres stands in inverse proportion to their substantive significance. The tragic poet is supported by his theme, the comic poet on the other hand must raise his to aesthetic height through his own person. The first is, then, only intermittently and with effort free, the former

To promote and nourish this freedom of temperament is the fair task of comedy, just as tragedy is destined to help to restore by aesthetic means the freedom of temperament when it has been violently disrupted by emotion. In tragedy, therefore, freedom of temperament must be artificially and experi-
mentally disrupted, since it displays its poetic power in the restoration of that freedom; in comedy, on the other hand, care must be taken to assure that that disruption of the freedom of temperament should never occur. Hence the tragic poet always treats his subject practically, the comic poet always treats his theoretically, even if the former should indulge the quirk (like Lessing in his *Nathan*) of treating a theoretical subject, or the latter of treating a practical subject. Not the sphere from which the subject is drawn, but the forum before which the poet brings it makes it tragic or comic. The tragedian must beware of calm reasoning and always engage the heart; the comedian must beware of pathos and always entertain the understanding. The former thus displays his art by the constant excitement of passion, the latter by constant avoidance of it; and this art is naturally so much the greater on both sides the more the subject of one is of an abstract nature, and that of the other tends toward the pathetic. Even if tragedy proceeds from a more significant point, one is obliged to concede, on the other hand, that comedy proceeds toward a more significant purpose and it would, were it to attain it, render all tragedy superfluous and impossible. Its purpose is uniform with the highest after which man has to struggle, to be free of passion, always clear, to look serenely about and within himself, to find everywhere more coincidence than fate, and rather to laugh at absurdity than to rage or weep at malice.

As in actual life, it often happens in poetic works also that mere frivolity, pleasing talent, amiable good humour, are confused with beauty of soul, and since the vulgar taste can never raise itself above the pleasant it is easy enough for such *lightsome* spirits to usurp the fame which is so difficult to earn. But there is an infallible test by means of which lightness of disposition can be distinguished from lightness of the ideal, as well as virtue of temperament from true morality of character, and this is when both confront a difficult and great theme. In such a case the precious genius inevitably collapses into the banal, as does virtue of temperament into the material; the truly beautiful soul, however, passes over as certainly into the sublime.

So long as Lucian merely castigates absurdity, as in the *Wishes*, the *Lapithae*, in Zeus Rants, etc., he remains a mocker and delights us with his joyful humour; but he becomes quite another man in many passages of his *Nigrinus*, his *Timon*, his *Alexander*, in which his satire strikes also at moral decay. 'Unhappy wretch', he begins in his *Nigrinus*, the shocking picture of contemporary Rome, 'why did you leave the light of the sun, Greece, and that happy life of freedom, and come here into this turmoil of sumpuous servitude, of dancing attendance, of banquets, of sycophants, flatterers, poisoners, legacy-hunters, and false friends?' etc. On this and similar occasions is revealed the high solemnity of feeling that must underlie all play if it is to be poetic. Even in the malicious joke with which Lucian as well as Arisophanes abuses Socrates one perceives a serious reason which avenges truth upon the Sophist, and battles on behalf of an ideal that it does not always articulate. The first of these two, in his *Diogenes* and *Demonax*, has justified this character beyond
all doubt; among moderns, what a great and noble character has Cervantes expressed on every worthy occasion in his Don Quixote? What a magnificent ideal must have dwelt in the soul of the poet who created a Tom Jones and a Sophia. How readily can laughing Yorick touch our minds at will so loftily and so powerfully! In our own Wieland also I recognise this seriousness of feeling; even the wonton play of his moods is ensouled and ennobled by grace of heart; even in the rhythm of his song its impress is manifest, and he never lacks the impetus to carry us, if the moment is apt, to the greatest heights.

No comparable judgement can be passed on Voltaire's satire. True enough, even with this writer it is still only the truth and simplicity of nature by which he sometimes moves us poetically, either because he really attains to it in a naive character, as frequently in his Ingénu, or because he seeks and defends it, as in Candide, etc. If neither of these two is the case then he may indeed amuse us as a witty fellow, but certainly not move us as a poet. Everywhere too little seriousness underlies his ridicule, and this justly brings his poetic vocation under suspicion. We perpetually encounter only his understanding, never his feeling. No ideal is manifest beneath that airy frame and scarcely anything absolutely fixed in that ceaseless motion. Far from displaying any evidence for the inner abundance of his spirit, his wonderful variety of external forms gives rather a dubious testimony to the opposite effect, for despite all those forms he has not found even one upon which to leave the impress of his heart. One must therefore almost fear that in this richly endowed genius it was only poverty of feeling that determined his satiric vocation. Had this been otherwise he must surely somewhere along his broad career have departed from this narrow way. But despite the tremendous variety of content and external form we see the endless recurrence of this inner form in all its indigent uniformity, and despite his massive career he never fulfilled in himself the cycle of humanity which one joyfully finds permeating the satirists mentioned above.

If the poet should set nature and art, the ideal and actuality, in such opposition that the representation of the first prevails and pleasure in it becomes the predominant feeling, then I call him elegiac. This category, too, like satire, comprehends two species. Either nature and the ideal are an object of sadness if the first is treated as lost and the second as unattained. Or both are an object of joy represented as actual. The first yields the elegy in the narrower sense, and the second the idyll in the broader sense. Just as indignation in the pathetic satire and mockery in the playful satire, so also should sadness in the elegy be derived only from an enthusiasm awakened by the ideal. Only thus does elegy receive poetic content, and every other source of it is beneath the dignity of the art of poetry. The elegiac poet seeks nature, but in her beauty, not merely in her pleasantness, in her correspondence with ideas, not just in her acquiescence in necessity. Sadness at lost joys, at the golden age now disappeared from the world, at the lost happiness of youth, love, and so forth, can only become the material of an elegiac poem if those states of objects of moral harmony. Thus which he chanted from his place and containing so much that is poignant a poetic work. There is far too in his pain. Necessity, not inspiration, if not actually a vulgar soul, yet crushed by its fate. Still, when Augustus for which he sorrowed, even magnificent Rome, with his imagination has not first ennobled object for the poetic art which, as possesses the right to mourn only.

The content of poetic lamentation it must always be only an ideal in actuality, it must first be trans from the finite to the infinite, poetic is, therefore, always indifferent to it as it occurs, but only by means of its poetic value. The elegiac poet in which she has never existed, only survived and now lost. When one of the heroes who have disappeared of those images of recollection in experience of a particular loss by evanescence and the bard, affects, elevates himself to the sky, image of the immutable. I turn now to the modern poet and as philosopher, reveals or to revenge her on art. Accordin we find him sometimes elegiacally satiric, and sometimes, as in his Unquestionably his poems possess an ideal; but he does not know the character never permits him, it is him either to rise to poetic play by abstraction, he rarely or ever must maintain in relation to he. Either it is his unhealthy excess his emotion painful; or it is his imagination, and by the rigorous depiction. Both characteristics, ciliation in fact make for the po
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elegiac poem if those states of sensuous satisfaction can also be construed as objects of moral harmony. Thus I cannot consider the lamentations of Ovid which he chanted from his place of exile on the Black Sea, moving as they are and containing so much that is poetic in individual passages, as being as a whole a poetic work. There is far too little energy, far too little spirit and nobility in his pain. Necessity, not inspiration, utters those laments; in them breathes, if not actually a vulgar soul, yet the vulgar mood of a finer spirit that has been crushed by its fate. Still, when we recall that it is Rome and the Rome of Augustus for which he sorrows, we forgive the son of pleasure his pain; but even magnificent Rome, with all its enchantments, is still (if the power of imagination has not first ennobil it) only a finite quantity, hence an unworthy object for the poetic art which, superior to everything that actuality has to offer, possesses the right to mourn only for the infinite.

The content of poetic lamentation can therefore never be an external object, it must always be only an ideal, inner one; even if it grieves over some loss in actuality, it must first be transformed into an ideal loss. In this assimilation of the finite to the infinite, poetic treatment in fact subsists. The external matter is, therefore, always indifferent in itself since the poetic art can never employ it as it occurs, but only by means of what poetry makes of it does it receive its poetic value. The elegiac poet seeks nature, but as an idea and in a perfection in which she has never existed, even if he bemoans her as something having existed and now lost. When Ossian tells of the days which are no more, and of the heroes who have disappeared, his poetic power has long since transformed those images of recollection into ideals, and those heroes into gods. The experience of a particular loss has been broadened into the idea of universal evanescence and the bard, affected and pursued by the image of omnipresent ruin, elevates himself to the skies to find there, in the cycle of the sun, an image of the immutable.

I turn now to the modern poets of the elegiac category. Rousseau, both as poet and as philosopher, reveals no other tendency but either to seek nature or to revenge her on art. According as his feeling dwells on one or the other we find him sometimes elegiacally moved, sometimes inspired to Juvenalian satire, and sometimes, as in his Julie, enraptured in the realm of the idyll. Unquestionably his poems possess poetic content, since they are concerned with an ideal; but he does not know how to exploit it in a poetic manner. His serious character never permits him, it is true, to sink to frivolity, but it does not permit him either to rise to poetic play. Sometimes, gripped by passion, sometimes by abstraction, he rarely or never achieves the aesthetic freedom which the poet must maintain in relation to his material and communicate to his listener. Either it is his unhealthy excess of feeling which overpowers him and renders his emotion painful; or it is his excess of thought that lays shackles upon his imagination, and by the rigour of his concepts destroys the grace of the depiction. Both characteristics, whose inner reciprocal workings and reconciliation in fact make for the poet, are present in this writer to an unusually
high degree, and nothing is lacking except that they should manifest themselves in actual unison, that his intellectual activity should be combined with his feeling, and his sensitivity more combined with his thought. Hence, in the ideal that he established for humanity, too much emphasis is laid upon man’s limitations and too little upon his capacities; and in it one observes everywhere a need for physical calm rather than for moral harmony. His passionate sensitivity is to blame for preferring to restore man to the spiritless uniformity of his first state in order simply to be rid of the conflict within him, rather than to look for the termination of that conflict in the spiritual harmony of a completely fulfilled education; he would rather that art had never begun than that he should await its consummation; in a word, he would rather set his aim lower and degrade his ideal only in order to attain to it the more quickly and more surely.

Among German poets of this order I will mention here only Haller, Kleist, and Klopstock. The character of their poetry is sentimental; they touch us by ideas, not by sensuous truth; not so much because they are nature as because they are able to inspire enthusiasm in us for nature. Whatever, therefore, is true of the character of these as well as of all sentimental poets in general naturally does not by any means exclude the capacity in particular to move us by naive beauty; without this they would not be poets at all. But it is not their essential and predominant character to feel with serene, simple, and unencumbered senses and to present again what they have felt in like manner. Involutionarily imagination crowds out sense and thought feeling, and they close their eyes and ears to sink into internal reflection. The mind cannot tolerate any impression without at once observing its own activity and reflection, and yielding up in terms of itself whatever it has absorbed. In this mode we are never given the object, only what the reflective understanding has made of it, and even when the poet is himself the object, if he would describe his feeling to us, we never learn of his condition directly and at first hand, but rather how he has reflected it in his own mind, what he has thought about it as an observer of himself. When Haller is lamenting the death of his wife (in his well known poem), and begins as follows:

Shall I sing of thy death?
O Mariane, what a song!
When sighs contest with words
And one idea flees before the rest, etc.

then we may indeed find this description exactly true, but we feel also that the poet has not actually communicated his feelings but his thoughts about them. He therefore moves us much more feebly also, because he must himself have been very much cooler to be an observer of his own emotion.

The predominantly supersensuous material alone of Haller’s and, in part, of Klopstock’s poetry excludes them from the naïve category; hence, for that material to be poetically treated, it must (since it cannot assume any corporeal nature and in consequence cannot be translated into the infinite and be generally speaking, didactic poetry) encounter the poem of this order was able to lead the concept downward to individuality or up it is successful at all, that the poetic concept dominates, and imaginative poetic realm, is simply subordinate to the didactic poem in which the truth is seen.

What has been said here in particular to Haller. The thou sometimes is, either by the employment of the a pathetic seriousness characteristic and his glowing feeling for truth that has disappeared from the energetic, almost bitter satire, he heart, and with love the beautiful predominates everywhere in his standing dominates over feeling represents, and represents through strokes. He is great, daring, fiery, to beauty.

Kleist is far inferior to him in grace he may be superior to his weakness in the one aspect as a soul expands most at the spectacle from the empty turmoil of society the harmony and peace that he his longing for calm! How true is

Aye, world, thou true
I urged
And melancholy dries
Example is victorious
Together drying up
A true man must aw

Yet, if his poetic impulse has
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They should manifest themselves, and they should be combined with his thought. Hence, in the ideal emphasis is laid upon man's moral harmony. His passionate man to the spiritless uniformity of the conflict within him, rather than in the spiritual harmony of a greater that art had never begun than word, he would rather set his aim to attain to it the more quickly and

mention here only Haller, Kleist, try is sentimental; they touch us because they are nature as because nature. Whatever, therefore, is all sentimental poets in general capacity in particular to move us to be poets at all. But it is not their feel with serene, simple, and that they have felt in like manner. and thought feeling, and they close action. The mind cannot tolerate own activity and reflection, and is absorbed. In this mode we are we understanding has made of it, so, if he would describe his feeling and at first hand, but rather how is thought about it as an observer of his wife (in his well known

words the rest, etc.).

exactly true, but we feel also that feelings but his thoughts about only also, because he must himself of his own emotion. alone of Haller's and, in part, the naive category; hence, for that it cannot assume any corporeal

nature and in consequence cannot become an object of sensuous intuition) be translated into the infinite and be elevated into an object of spiritual intuition. Generally speaking, didactic poetry can only be conceived of without inner contradiction in this sense; for, to repeat this once again, the art of poetry comprehends these two realms only: either it must dwell in the world of sense or in the world of ideas, since it absolutely cannot flourish in the realm of concepts or in the world of the understanding. I confess that I have yet to encounter the poem of this order either in ancient or modern literature that was able to lead the concept which it treated purely and completely either downward to individuality or upward to the idea. It is usually the case, when it is successful at all, that the poem fluctuates between both, while the abstract concept dominates, and imagination, which should be in command in the poetic realm, is simply subordinated to the service of the understanding. The didactic poem in which the thought is itself poetic and remains so has yet to be seen.

What has been said here in general about all didactic poetry applies in particular to Haller. The thought itself is not poetic, but the execution sometimes is, either by the employment of the images, or by its soaring to ideas. Only in this latter quality do they belong here. Strength and profundity and a pathetic seriousness characterise this poet. His spirit is kindled by an ideal and his glowing feeling for truth seeks in the still alpine valleys the innocence that has disappeared from the world. His lament is deeply moving: with energetic, almost bitter satire, he marks the distractions of understanding and heart, and with love the beautiful simplicity of nature. But the concept predominates everywhere in his descriptions, just as within himself understanding dominates over feeling. Hence, he teaches throughout more than he represents, and represents throughout more with powerful than with attractive strokes. He is great, daring, fiery, sublime; but he rarely, if ever, raises his work to beauty.

Kleist is far inferior to him in the content of his ideas and depth of spirit; in grace he may be superior to him if we do not, as sometimes happens, account his weakness in the one aspect as a strength in the other. Kleist's emotion-laden soul expands most at the spectacle of rural scenes and usages. Gladly he escapes from the empty turmoil of society and finds in the bosom of inanimate nature the harmony and peace that he misses in the moral world. How affecting is his longing for calm! How true and how felt when he sings:

Aye, world, thou truly art the grave of life.
Often am I urged by an impulse to virtue,
And melancholy draws many a tear down my cheek,
Example is victorious, and thou, oh fire of youth:
Together drying up those noble tears.
A true man must avoid his fellow men.

Yet, if his poetic impulse has led him away from the constricting round of
circumstances into the spiritual loneliness of nature, still he is pursued even this far by the anxious image of the age and unfortunately, too, by its letters. What he flees lies within him, what he seeks is forever outside him; he can never overcome the bale influence of his century. Even if his heart is sufficiently afire, his fantasy energetic enough, to ensoul the dead configurations of his understanding by his composition, still cold thought as often deprives the living creation of his poetic powers of its soul, and reflection disrupts the secret labour of feeling. His poetry is indeed as bright and sparkling as the spring creation of his poetic powers of its soul, and reflection disrupts the secret labour of feeling. His poetry is indeed as bright and sparkling as the spring creation of his poetic powers of its soul, and reflection disrupts the secret labour of feeling. His poetry is indeed as bright and sparkling as the spring creation of his poetic powers of its soul, and reflection disrupts the secret labour of feeling. His poetry is indeed as bright and sparkling as the spring creation of his poetic powers of its soul, and reflection disrupts the secret labour of feeling. His poetry is indeed as bright and sparkling as the spring creation of his poetic powers of its soul, and reflection disrupts the secret labour of feeling. His poetry is indeed as bright and sparkling as the spring creation of his poetic powers of its soul, and reflection disrupts the secret labour of feeling. His poetry is indeed as bright and sparkling as the spring creation of his poetic powers of its soul, and reflection disrupts the secret labour of feeling. His poetry is indeed as bright and sparkling as the spring creation of his poetic powers of its soul, and reflection disrupts the secret labour of feeling.

What he flees lies within him, what he seeks is forever outside him; he can never form, partly the more arbitrary quality of his material permits us to overlook crystallising themselves into a whole, without becoming filled with life and rounding themselves into a unity. So long as he merely writes lyrically and merely dwells upon landscape images, partly the greater freedom of lyrical form, partly the more arbitrary quality of his material permits us to overlook this shortcoming, since in this case we always demand the representation of the poet's feelings rather than of the subject itself. But the mistake becomes only too obvious when he goes out of his way, as in his 

Gassides and Paches and his Seneca, to depict human beings and human actions; for here the imaginative power finds itself hemmed in amid fixed and necessary limits, and the poetic effect can proceed only from the object. Here he becomes insipid, dull, thin, and all but insupportably cold: an admonition to anyone who tries without inner vocation to project himself from the field of musical into the realm of plastic poetry. A similar genius, Thomson, fell victim to the same human weakness.

In the sentimental genus, and particularly in the elegiac species of it, few poets of modern times and fewer still of antiquity may be compared with our Klopstock. Whatever could be attained in the realm of ideality, outside the boundaries of living form and outside the sphere of individuality, has been achieved by this musical poet. One would indeed do him a grave injustice if one were altogether to deny him that individual truth and vivacity with which the naive poet depicts his theme. Many of his odes, several individual features of his dramas and of his Messiah portray the object with striking veracity and with beautiful circumscription; particularly where the object is his own heart, he has not infrequently displayed a lofty nature, an enchanting naivety. But his strength does not lie in this, this characteristic is not to be fulfilled throughout the whole of his poetic range. As superb a creation as the Messiah is in the musical poetic sense as defined above, yet much is left to be desired from the plastic poetic point of view in which one expects specific forms and forms specific for sensuous intuition. The personages in this poem may perhaps be specific enough, but not for intuition; abstraction alone has created them, only abstraction can distinguish them. They are fine examples of concepts, but not individuals, not living figures. It is left much too much to the imagination, to which nonetheless the poet must return and which he should command by
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the thoroughgoing specificity of his forms, in what manner these men and angels, this God and Satan, this heaven and this hell shall embody themselves. An outline is given within which the understanding must necessarily conceive of them, but no firm boundary is set within which fantasy must necessarily portray them. What I say here of the characters applies to everything that is or should be life and action in this poem; and not just in this epic, but also in the dramatic works of our poet. For the understanding everything is finely delineated and delimited (I mention here only his Judas, his Pilate, his Philo, his Solomon in the tragedy of that name), but it is far too formless for the imagination and here, I freely confess, I find the poet entirely out of his sphere.

His sphere is always the realm of ideas, and he is able to transport everything he touches into the infinite. One might say he disembodies everything he touches so as to transform it into spirit, just as other poets endow everything spiritual with a body. Virtually every pleasure that his poetry affords must be gained by the exercise of thought; all the feelings, however fervent and powerful, that he is able to engender in us stream forth from supersensuous sources. Hence the seriousness, the power, the impetus, the depth that characterises everything that comes from him; hence also the perennial tension of the mind in which we are maintained in reading him. No poet (with the possible exception of Young, who demands more in this respect than Klopstock but without compensating for it as he does) would seem to be less apt to become a favourite and companion through life than Klopstock, who always leads us only away from life, always summons up only the spirit, without vivifying the senses with the serene presence of an object. His poetical muse is chaste, supermundane, incorporeal, holy, like his religion, and one must confess with admiration that even though he may sometimes go astray on these heights, he still has never fallen from them. I admit, therefore, without reserve, that I am somewhat fearful for the sanity of anyone who really and without affectation can make this poet his favourite reading, the kind of reading by which one can attune oneself to any situation, to which one can return from any situation; also, it would seem to me, we have seen enough in Germany of the fruits of his dangerous domination. Only in certain exalted frames of mind can he be sought out and appreciated; for this reason, too, he is the idol of the young, if by far not their happiest choice. Youth, which always strives beyond the conditions of life, which escapes from all forms and finds any limitation too confining, abandons itself with love and delight in the endless expanses opened up to it by this poet. But when the boy becomes a man and returns from the realm of ideas into the limitations of experience, then much is lost, very much of that enthusiastic love, but not of the respect which is due to so unique a phenomenon, to so extraordinary a genius, to such very ennobled feeling, a respect which the German owes to such high merit.

I called this poet great above all in the elegiac species, and it will hardly be necessary to justify this judgement in further detail. Equal to every effort and master of the entire range of sentimental poetry, he can now shake us with
the highest pathos, now soothe us with celestially tender feelings; but above all his heart is inclined to a lofty spirit-filled melancholy and, as sublime as his harp, his lyre sounds, yet the melting tones of his lute will still ring truer and more deeply and movingly. I appeal to every purely attuned feeling and ask whether it would not gladly abandon everything bold and powerful, every fiction, every superb description, every model of oratorical eloquence in the Messiah, all the glittering similes in which our poet is so outstandingly successful — whether it would not abandon all this for the sake of the tender feelings that are breathed forth in the elegy To Ebert, in the splendid poems Bardale, Early Graves, Summer Night, Lake Zurich, and many of this order. For as dear to me as the Messiah is as a treasure of elegiac feelings and ideal portrayals, it satisfies me less as the depiction of action or as an epic work.

Perhaps, before leaving this field, I should refer also to the merits of Uz, Denis, Gehler (in his Death of Abel), Jacobi, von Gerstenberg, of Holty, von Göckingk, and many others of this class, who all move us through ideas and, in the sense of the word defined above, have written as sentimental poets. But my purpose is not to write a history of German poetry, but to illustrate what spirituality, individuality, and living sensuousness, the latter, by ideas and lofty spirituality, manifest an equally great, if not so widespread, power over our minds.

From the previous examples it could be seen how the sentimental poetic spirit treats a natural theme; but one might also be interested in knowing how the naive poetic spirit proceeds with a sentimental theme. This task appears to be completely new and of a quite unique difficulty, for in the ancient and naive world a theme of this kind did not occur, whereas in the modern the poet would be lacking. Nevertheless, genius has accepted this task also and has resolved it in an admirably felicitous manner. A personality who embraces the ideal with burning feeling and abandons actuality in order to contend with an insubstantial infinitude, who seeks continuously outside himself for that which he continuously destroys within himself, to whom only his dreams are the real, his experiences perennial limitations, who in the end sees in his own existence only a limitation, and, as is reasonable, tears even this down in order to penetrate to the true reality — this dangerous extreme of the sentimental character has become the theme of a poet in whom nature functions more faithfully and purely than any other, and who, among modern poets, is perhaps least removed from the sensuous truth of things.

It is interesting to note with what fortunate instinct everything that nourishes the sentimental character is concentrated in Werther: fanatically unhappy love, sensitivity to nature, feeling for religion, a spirit of philosophical contemplation; finally, so that nothing shall be forgotten, the gloomy, formless, melancholic Ossianic world. If one takes account with how little recommend-

On Naive and Sentimental Poetry in Germany about eighteen years ago there is a tendency to display toward the caricature, toward facetious caprices makes it clear enough the reason. In the scales of genuine with one another, for both lack the aesthetic combination of spirit and matter, faculties of feeling and ideas. Siegwart and his cloister story by France is admired; yet both want of appreciation; and an equally extravagant, feeling for that and a vivaciously fine understanding is entirely lacking in appropriate, lacking in aesthetic dignity. That experience, the other virtually completely beautiful must correspond to the ideal, the first can.
On Naive and Sentimental Poetry

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tion, even in how hostile a manner actuality is contrasted with it, and how everything external unites to drive the tortured youth back into his world of ideals, then one sees no possibility how such a character could have saved himself from such a cycle. In the same poet's Tasso the same opposition occurs, albeit in quite different characters; even in his latest novel, just as in that first one, the poetic spirit is set in opposition to plain common sense, the ideal over against the actual, the subjective mode of representation over against the objective - but with what a difference! even in Faust we encounter the same opposition, of course insofar as the theme requires it, very coarsened and materialised on both sides; it would be well worth the effort to attempt to analyse the psychological development of this personality as it is manifested in four such different ways.

It was observed earlier that the merely carefree and jovial type of mind, when it is not based on an inner wealth of ideas, fails to yield a vocation for playful satire as readily as popular opinion would assume this; just as little does merely tender effeminacy and melancholy provide a vocation for elegiac poetry. Both are lacking that principle of energy that belongs to the true poetic gift, and that must animate its subject matter in order to produce the truly beautiful. Products of this delicate sort can, therefore, only melt us and, without enlivening the heart and engaging the spirit, they merely flatter sensuousness. A continuous tendency to this mode of feeling must, at the last, necessarily enervate the character and depress it into a condition of passivity out of which no reality at all can proceed, either for the external or the inner life. It was, therefore, altogether warranted to pursue with implacable mockery that evil of affected feeling and lachrymose demeanour which, as a result of the misunderstanding and aping of a few excellent works, began to gain the upper hand in Germany about eighteen years ago, even though the indulgence which there is a tendency to display toward the scarcely better counterpart of that elegiac caricature, toward facetious manners, toward heartless satire and pointless caprices makes it clear enough that they were not attacked for entirely pure reasons. In the scales of genuine taste the one must have as little effect as the other, for both lack the aesthetic content which is contained only in the inmost combination of spirit and matter, and in the unified relation of a work to the faculties of feeling and ideas.

Siegwart and his cloister story have been mocked, and the Journey to Southern France is admired; yet both works have an equal claim to a certain degree of appreciation; and an equally small one to unqualified praise. True, if extravagant, feeling makes for the value of the first novel, a delicate humour and a vivaciously fine understanding for that of the second; but just as the first is entirely lacking in appropriate sobriety of understanding, the second is lacking in aesthetic dignity. The first is a little ridiculous in the light of experience, the other virtually contemptible compared with the ideal. But since the truly beautiful must correspond on the one hand with nature and on the other with the ideal, the first can lay as little claim as the second to the name.
of a beautiful work. Nonetheless it is natural and reasonable, and I know from my own experience, that Thümme's novel is read with great pleasure. Since he offends only against those demands that originate in the ideal, which in consequence are not imposed at all by the greatest number of his readers and never by the better ones if they are reading a novel, and he fulfils the remaining demands of the spirit - and in no mean degree of the body - so his must and will justifiably remain a favoured book of our and every age in which aesthetic works are written simply in order to please, and are read simply for pleasure.

But does not poetic literature possess even classical works which offend the lofty purity of the ideal in a like manner, and which seem by the materiality of their content to be very far removed from that spirituality which we here demand of every aesthetic work of art? What even the poet, that chaste apostle of the muse, may permit himself, should that be denied to the novelist, who is only his half-brother and still so very much earthbound? I can all the less avoid this question here since there exist in the elegiac as well as in the satiric class masterpieces in which a quite other nature from that of which this essay treats is sought, recommended, and gives the appearance of being defended not against evil morals as much as against good morals. Hence, either these poetic works would have to be rejected, or the concept established here of elegiac poetry must be taken as much too arbitrary.

Whatever the poet may permit himself, we asked, should that be withheld from the prose narrator? The answer is already contained in the question: whatever is permitted the poet can prove nothing for one who is not a poet. In the concept itself of poet, and only in this, lies the ground of that freedom which is merely contemptible licence as soon as it is not derived from the highest and noblest that constitutes him.

The laws of propriety are alien to innocent nature; only the experience of corruption has given them their origin. But as soon as that experience has been undergone and natural innocence has disappeared from morals, then they become sacred laws which a moral feeling may not contravene. They apply in any artificial world with the same right as the laws of nature rule in the world of innocence. But it is precisely this that denotes the poet: that he revokes everything in himself that recalls an artificial world, that he is able to restore nature within himself to her original simplicity. But having done this, then he is by the same token exempted from all laws by which a corrupted heart is protected against itself. He is pure, he is innocent, and whatever is permitted to innocent nature is permitted him too; if you, who read or listen to him, are no longer guiltless, and if you cannot become so for the moment through his purifying presence, then it is your misfortune, not his; you are forsaking him, he has not sung for you.

The following, then, may be said with reference to liberties of this kind: First: only nature can justify them. Hence they may not be the product of choice or of deliberate imitation; for we can never allow to the will, which is always directed according to moral laws, to favour sensuousness. They must therefore be naivety. In order, however, we must see them supported a grounded in nature, for natural consequence, unity, and uniformity are grounded in nature, for natural consequence, unity, and uniformity are demanded by the spirit in the whole of all artificiality outright, and hence the question: Where does the exemption where it repres...
and reasonable, and I know from its read with great pleasure. Since it originate in the ideal, which in greatest number of his readers and novel, and he fulfills the remaining free of the body – so his must and r and every age in which aesthetic and are read simply for pleasure. classical works which offend the ad which seem by the materiality in that spirituality which we here What even the poet, that chaste uld that be denied to the novelist, much earthbound? I can all the st in the elegiac as well as in the her nature from that of which this gives the appearance of being against good morals. Hence, either d, or the concept established here to arbitrary.

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Second: only beautiful nature can justify liberties of this sort. Therefore they may not be onesided manifestations of appetite; for everything that originates in crude necessity is contemptible. From the totality and from the richness of human nature these sensuous energies must likewise derive. They must be humanity. But in order to be able to judge that the whole of human nature demands them and not merely a onesided and vulgar exigency of sensuousness, we must see that whole depicted of which they represent a single feature. In itself the sensuous mode of feeling is something innocent and indifferent. It displeases us in a human being only because it is animal and testifies to a lack of a more truly perfect humanity in him: it offends us in a work of art only because such a work makes a claim to please us and hence assumes that it is not derived from the naturalness; he must be true, simple, free, candid, full of feeling, upright; all deception, cunning, all caprice, all petty selfishness must be banished from his character, every trace of them from his work.

This, then, would provide us with the criterion to which we could with certainty submit every poet who offends somewhat against propriety, and forces his freedom in the depiction of nature to this extreme. His work is vulgar and low, reprehensible without exception, if it is cold, if it is empty, for this reveals its origin in intention and in vulgar exigency, and is a heinous assault on our appetites. On the other hand, it is beautiful, noble, and worthy of applause despite all the objections of frosty decency, if it is naive and binds spirit and heart together.

If I am told that, according to the criterion laid down here, most French narratives of this genre and their best imitations in Germany would not survive – that this would in part be the case with many a product of our most graceful and gifted poet, not even excepting his masterpieces – to this I have no reply. The dictum itself is anything but new, and I only give here the grounds of a judgement which has already long been enunciated by every finer
feeling on this subject. But these very principles which perhaps appear all too rigorous in connection with those writings may perhaps be found too liberal in connection with some other works; for I do not deny that the same grounds on which I find entirely inexcusable the seductive pictures of the Roman and German Ovid, as well as of Crébillon, Voltaire, and Marmontel (who calls himself a moral narrator), Laclos, and many others, yet reconcile me to the elegies of the Roman and German Propertius, even to some of the ill-reputed works of Diderot, for the former are only witty, only prosaic, only lascivious, while the latter are poetic, human, and naive.

Idyll

There remain only a few more words for me to say about this third species of sentimental poetry, because a more detailed development of them, which they surely require, is reserved for another occasion.

The poetic representation of innocent and contented mankind is the universal concept of this type of poetic composition. Since this innocence and this contentedness appear incompatible with the artificial conditions of society at large and with a certain degree of education and refinement, the poets have removed the location of idyll from the tumult of everyday life into the simple pastoral state and assigned its period before the beginnings of civilisation in the childlike age of man. But one can readily grasp that these designations are merely accidental, that they are not to be considered as the purpose of the idyll, simply as the most natural means to it. The purpose itself is invariably only to represent man in a state of innocence, i.e., in a condition of harmony and of peace with himself and with his environment.

But such a condition does not occur only before the beginnings of civilisation, rather it is also the condition which civilisation, if it can be said to have any particular tendency everywhere, aims at as its ultimate purpose. Only the idea of this condition and belief in its possible realisation can reconcile man to all the evils to which he is subjected in the course of civilisation, and were it merely a chimera the complaints of those would be justified who deplore society at large and the cultivation of the understanding simply as an evil, and assume that superseded state of nature to be the true purpose of mankind.

For the individual who is immersed in civilisation, infinitely much therefore depends upon his receiving a tangible assurance of the realisation of that idea in the world of sense, of the possible reality of that condition, and since actual experience, far from nourishing this belief, rather contradicts it constantly, here, as in so many cases, the faculty of poetic composition comes to the aid of reason in order to render that idea palpable to intuition and to realise it in individual cases.

That innocence of the pastoral state is indeed also a poetic conception, and hence imagination must already there have shown itself to be creative; but, apart from the solution of the task having been incomparably simpler and easier, experience itself provided the individual features which it had only to select and combine into a whole, for all people who possess a history, and were it not for the art of the poet, the progress of society would have been beyond the art of the poet, not, indeed, been lacking in enough who can prefer an Amyntas of the epic and dramatic muses; in their opinion cannot be considered healthy, but they must take the value of friendship to it and sooner satisfied, more powerfully; but the truly beautiful a moment, but should rather pass.

What I am here criticising is sentimental; for the naive can never be contained in the form itself. All people who possess a history, and were it not for the art of the poet, the progress of society would have been beyond the art of the poet, not, indeed, been lacking in enough who can prefer an Amyntas of the epic and dramatic muses; in their opinion cannot be considered healthy, but they must take the value of friendship to it and sooner satisfied, more powerfully; but the truly beautiful a moment, but should rather pass.
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select and combine into a whole. Beneath the unclouded skies, in the simple conditions of the primitive state, and with limited knowledge nature is easily satisfied, and man does not become savage until dire need has frightened him. All peoples who possess a history have a paradise, a state of innocence, a golden age; indeed, every man has his paradise, his golden age, which he recalls, according as he has more or less of the poetic in his nature, with more or less inspiration. Experience itself therefore supplies features enough for the depiction of which the pastoral idyll treats. For this reason it remains always a beautiful, an elevating fiction, and the poetic power in representing it has truly worked on behalf of the ideal. For, to the man who has once deviated from the simplicity of nature and is delivered over to the dangerous guidance of his reason, it is of infinite importance to perceive once again nature's legislation in a pure exemplar, and in this faithful mirror to be able once again to purify himself of the corruption of civilisation. But in doing so, one circumstance is involved that very much reduces the aesthetic value of such poems. Set before the beginnings of civilisation, they exclude together with its disadvantages all its advantages, and by their very nature they find themselves necessarily in conflict with it. Theoretically, then, they lead us backwards, while practically they lead us forwards and ennoble us. Unhappily they place that purpose behind us, toward which they should, however, lead us, and hence they imbue us only with a sad feeling of loss, not with joyous feelings of hope. Since they can only attain their purpose by the denial of all art, and only by the simplification of human nature, they possess together with the utmost value for the heart, all too little for the spirit, and their narrow range is too soon exhausted. Therefore we can love them and seek them out only when we stand in need of peace, but not when our forces are striving for motion and activity. Only for the sick in spirit can they provide healing, but no nourishment for the healthy; they cannot vivify, only assuage. This shortcoming grounded in the essence of the pastoral idyll has been beyond the art of the poets to correct. This type of composition has not, indeed, been lacking in enthusiastic admirers, and there are readers enough who can prefer an Amynas and a Daphnis to the greatest masterpieces of the epic and dramatic muses; but with such readers it is not so much their taste as their private needs that judge of works of art; consequently their opinion cannot be considered here. The reader of spirit and perception does not, indeed, mistake the value of such poetry, but he feels himself more rarely drawn to it and sooner satiated. They function at the needful moment all the more powerfully; but the truly beautiful should not be obliged to wait for such a moment, but should rather produce it.

What I am here criticising in the bucolic idyll applies of course only to the sentimental; for the naive can never be lacking content since here it is already contained in the form itself. All poetry must indeed possess an infinite content, only through this is it poetry; but it can fulfil the requirement in two different ways. It can be infinite in accordance with its form, if it presents its subject with all its limits, by individualising it; it can be infinite according to its matter
if it removes all its limits from the subject, by idealising it; hence either by an absolute representation or by the representation of an absolute. The naive poet takes the first way, the sentimental the second. The first cannot fall short of his content so long as he remains faithful to nature which is always radically limited, i.e., infinite in relation to its form. To the second, however, nature stands in opposition with her radical limitation, since he should place an absolute content in the subject. The sentimental poet, therefore, does not well understand the advantages when he borrows his subjects from the naive poet; in themselves they are completely indifferent and only become poetic by their treatment. In this way he imposes on himself the naive poet’s limitations quite unnecessarily, without however being able to carry through the limitation completely, or to compete with him in absolute assurance of the representation; he should therefore rather remove himself in his subject from the naive poet, because he can only regain from him through the subject what the latter has to his advantage in the form.

In order to make the application from this to the bucolic idyll of the sentimental poets, it now becomes clear why these poems, despite every effort of genius and art, are not completely satisfactory either for the heart or for the spirit. They implement an ideal, and yet retain the narrower indigent pastoral world, whereas they should absolutely have chosen either another world for the ideal, or a different representation for the pastoral world. They are so far ideal that thereby the representation loses in individual truth, yet again they are so far individual that the ideal content suffers thereby. One of Goethe’s shepherds, for example, cannot delight us as nature by the fidelity of imitation, since for this he is too ideal a being; he can as little satisfy us as an ideal by infinitude of thought since for this he is too much too inadequate a creature. He will, indeed, satisfy all classes of readers without exception up to a certain point because he strives to unite the naive with the sentimental, and consequently discharges to a certain degree the two opposed demands that can be made on a poem; but because the poet, in the effort to unify both, fails to do justice to either one, and is neither wholly nature nor wholly ideal, he cannot for that very reason be quite acceptable to a rigorous taste that cannot forgive half-measures in aesthetic matters. It is extraordinary that this hybrid quality extends likewise to the language of the poet we have mentioned; he wavers undecided between poetry and prose, as though the poet were fearful of removing himself in metrical address too far from actual nature, and in nonmetrical address of losing his poetic impulse. A loftier satisfaction is aroused by Milton’s superb representation of the first human couple and the state of innocence in paradise: the most beautiful idyll known to me of the sentimental type. Here nature is noble, spirited, at once full of range and depth, the highest meaning of humanity clothed in the most graceful form.

Hence here too, in the idyll, as in all other poetic types, one must make a choice once and for all between individuality and ideality; for to seek to satisfy both demands simultaneously is, so long as one has not reached the acme of perfection, the surest way of failing himself sufficient of the Greek spirit of his material, with the Greek on poetry, then let him do it wholly every demand of the sentimental model with difficulty; between the perceptible interval will always, however, certain to produce a the contrary, to the ideal by the sentimental this wholly, in complete purity, and highest, without looking back to him despise the unworthy evasion in order to accommodate it to human order to make reader way with the world, whereas they should absolutely for that in order to secure the understanding a peace which spiritual faculties, but rather to us permit us to perceive that higher gratifies the conqueror. Let him up put pastoral innocence even in creature of the most active and vigorous like the highest social refinement, who go back to Arcady forward to Elysium.

The concept of this idyll is the one in the individual, but in society, of a nature illuminated by the highest idea of beauty applied to a complete reconciliation of all opposed supplied material for satirical and in the feelings likewise. Calm and such a poetic type, but calm of power from the balance not the arresting and not emptiness, and is accompanied. But for the very reason that all remain more difficult than in the two form which, however, no poetic effect unity must prevail; but not at satisfied, but not so that aspiration this question is in fact what the task.

The following has been established to one another and to the poetic:

To the naïve poet nature has an undivided unity, to be at every and to represent mankind, in t
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The following has been established on the relation of both modes of poetry:

The concept of this idyll is the concept of a conflict fully reconciled not only to one another and to the poetic ideal: the highest social refinement, which, in a word, leads man who cannot now permit us to perceive that higher harmony which rewards the combatant and gratifies the conqueror. Let him undertake the task of idyll so as to display that pastoral innocence even in creatures of civilisation and under all the conditions of the most active and vigorous life, of expansive thought, of the subtlest art, in the individual, but in society, of a free uniting of inclination with the law, of a nature illuminated by the highest moral dignity, briefly, none other than pastoral innocence even in creatures of civilisation and under all the conditions of the most active and vigorous life, of expansive thought, of the subtlest art, the highest social refinement, which, in a word, leads man who cannot now go back to Arcady forward to Elysium. 67

The concept of this idyll is the concept of a conflict fully reconciled not only in the individual, but in society, of a free uniting of inclination with the law, of a nature illuminated by the highest moral dignity, briefly, none other than the ideal of beauty applied to actual life. Its character thus subsists in the ideality; for to seek to satisfy such a poetic type, but calm of perfection, not of inertia; a calm that derives from the balance not the arresting of those powers, that springs from richness and depth, the highest poetic form.

For poetic types, one must make an analogical distinction; for to seek to satisfy one has not reached the acme of perfection, the surest way of falling short of both. Should the modern feel within himself sufficient of the Greek spirit to compete, despite all the intractability of his material, with the Greek on his own ground, namely in the field of naive poetry, then let him do it wholly and exclusively, and liberate himself from every demand of the sentimental taste of the age. He may indeed reach his model with difficulty; between the original and the most successful epigone a perceptible interval will always remain open, but by these means he is nevertheless certain to produce a genuinely poetic work. 8 If he is driven, on the contrary, to the ideal by the sentimental poetic impulse, then let him pursue this wholly, in complete purity, and not rest content until he has reached the highest, without looking back to see whether actuality has borne him out. Let him despise the unworthy evasion of cheapening the meaning of the ideal in order to accommodate it to human inadequacy, or of excluding the spirit in order to make readerly way with the heart. Let him not lead us backwards into our childhood in order to secure to us with the most precious acquisitions of the understanding a peace which cannot last longer than the slumber of our spiritual faculties, but rather lead us forward into our maturity in order to permit us to perceive that higher harmony which rewards the combatant and gratifies the conqueror. Let him undertake the task of idyll so as to display that pastoral innocence even in creatures of civilisation and under all the conditions of the most active and vigorous life, of expansive thought, of the subtlest art, the highest social refinement, which, in a word, leads man who cannot now go back to Arcady forward to Elysium. 67

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If a poet's limitations quite permit him to carry through the limitation of the representation; in his subject from the naive poet, through the subject what the latter has this to the bucolic idyll of the these poems, despite every effort to either for the heart or for the tasks the narrower indigent pastoral chosen either another world for the pastoral world. They are so far in individual truth, yet again they suffer thereby. One of Geßner's nature by the fidelity of imitation, as little satisfy us as an ideal by too inadequate a creature. He puts exception up to a certain point the sentimental, and consequently demands that can be made on to unite both, fails to do justice to wholly ideal, he cannot for that gorous taste that cannot forgive ordinary that this hybrid quality he have mentioned; he wavers though the poet were fearful of far from actual nature, and in last. A loftier satisfaction is aroused at human couple and the state of all known to me of the sentimental all of range and depth, the highest traceful form.

In poetic types, one must make a analogical distinction; for to seek to satisfy one has not reached the acme of
sentimental poet she has conferred the power, or rather impressed a lively impulse, to restore out of himself that unity that has been disrupted by abstraction, to complete the humanity within himself, and from a limited condition to pass over into an infinite one. But to give human nature its full expression is the common task of both, and without that they could not be felt, to make a whole of himself, to give complete expression to the humanity abstraction, to complete the humanity within himself, and from a limited condition to pass over into an infinite impulse, to restore out of himself that unity that has been disrupted by

But if the naive poet gains on the one hand in reality at the expense of the sentimental, and brings into actual existence what the latter can only arouse a lively impulse to attain, the latter for his part possesses the great advantage over the first that he can give the impulse a greater object than the former has supplied or could supply. All actuality, we know, falls short of the ideal; every trace of temporal dependence, inspiration, and the subject itself. The poet. It will be readily understood if the poet brings to the subject absolute freedom of sensuous reality over the sentimental, since he implements as an actual fact an inadequate subject of his own making. He is, however, he can receive only from his subject itself, or more accurately, from the idea itself. It is quite a way unknown to the sentimental poet where the former conceivable, this one moment of inspiration is necessary to base that state against the transience of actual existence. Actual nature is everywhere, but true nature is everywhere, but true nature is the child of life, and to life also it leads us back. I have called naive poetry a favours of nature to underscore that reflection has no part in it. It is a lucky throw of the dice, standing in no need of improvement if successful, but equally incapable of any if it should fail. In his feeling the whole work of the naive genius is acquitted; here is his strength and his limit. If he has not at once felt poetically, i.e., not at once completely humanly, then this shortcoming can no longer be repaired by art. Criticism can only afford

On Naive art

By his nature the naive genius achieves little; and it will fulfil itself according to an inner necessity. Not place by nature: this applies equally to both, for whom nothing is farther removed from success; but the coercion of the moment is what they both strive for. Consider the poet is assigned the task of equalizing the two. The naive poet she has conferred the power, or rather impressed a lively impulse to attain, the latter for his part possesses the great advantage over the sentimental, since he implements as an actual fact an inadequate subject of his own making. He is, however, he can receive only from his subject itself, or more accurately, from the idea itself. It is quite a way unknown to the sentimental poet where the former conceivable, this one moment of inspiration is necessary to base that state against the transience of actual existence. Actual nature is everywhere, but true nature is everywhere, but true nature is the child of life, and to life also it leads us back. I have called naive poetry a favours of nature to underscore that reflection has no part in it. It is a lucky throw of the dice, standing in no need of improvement if successful, but equally incapable of any if it should fail. In his feeling the whole work of the naive genius is acquitted; here is his strength and his limit. If he has not at once felt poetically, i.e., not at once completely humanly, then this shortcoming can no longer be repaired by art. Criticism can only afford
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him an insight into his mistake, but it cannot supply any beauty in its place. By his nature the naive genius must do everything; by his freedom he can achieve little; and it will fulfil its essence so long as nature in him should operate according to an inner necessity. Now everything indeed is necessary that takes place by nature: this applies equally to every product of the naive genius (from whom nothing is farther removed than arbitrary action) be, it never so successful; but the coercion of the moment is one thing, the inner necessity of the whole quite another. Considered as a whole, nature is independent and infinite; in any individual manifestation, however, she is dependent and limited. This, therefore, applies also to the nature of the poet. Even the most felicitous moment in which he can find himself is dependent upon a preceding one; hence, too, only a conditional necessity can be attributed to him. But now the poet is assigned the task of equating an individual state to the human whole, consequently to base that state absolutely and necessarily upon itself. Hence, every trace of temporal dependence must be removed from the moment of inspiration, and the subject itself, however limited it may be, may not limit the poet. It will be readily understood that this is possible only insofar as the poet brings to the subject absolute freedom and breadth of ability and as he is practised in embracing everything with his whole humanity. His practice, however, he can receive only from the world in which he lives and by which he is directly affected. The naive genius is thus dependent upon experience in a way unknown to the sentimental. The latter, we know, only begins his practice, his task, but the task itself is an infinite condition into a condition of freedom. Thus the naive poetic genius requires assistance from without, whereas the sentimental nourishes and purifies himself from within; around him he must observe nature instinct with form, a poetic world, naive humanity, since he must complete his work in sense perception. If, however, this assistance from without is not forthcoming, and he finds himself surrounded by a spiritless matter, only two things then occur. Either he abandons his species if the genus predominates in him, and he becomes sentimental if only to remain poetic; or, if the characteristics of the species retain their predominance, he abandons his genus and becomes common nature if only to remain nature. The first may well be the case with the finest sentimental poets in the ancient Roman world and in more modern times. Had they been born in another age, transplanted beneath other skies, they, who now move us by ideas, would have enchanted us by individual truth and naive beauty. From the second the poet could only with difficulty protect himself if he cannot abandon nature in a vulgar world.

Actual nature, of course; but from this one cannot carefully enough distinguish true nature which is the subject of naive poetry. Actual nature exists everywhere, but true nature is all the rarer, for to it belongs an inner necessity of existence. Actual nature is every outburst of passion, however crude; it may even be true nature, but truly human it cannot be, for this requires some

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inner necessity of the of naive poetry. Actual nature exists it cannot be, for this requires some
participation in every utterance of the independent faculties, the expression
of which is dignity. Actual human nature includes every moral baseness, but
it is to be hoped that true human nature does not; for the latter cannot be
other than noble. The absurdities cannot be overlooked to which this confusion
between actual and true human nature has misled criticism as well as practice:
what trivialities have been permitted, even praised, in poetry because, alas!
they are actual nature; how pleased one is to find caricatures which are ghastly
enough in the actual world carelessly transported into the poetic and counter­
feited true to life. Certainly, the poet may imitate bad nature also, and indeed
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dependent faculties, the expression includes every moral baseness, but does not; for the latter cannot be overlooked to which this confusion misled criticism as well as practice: praised, in poetry because, alas! find caricatures which are ghastly sorted into the poetic and counter-mitate bad nature also, and indeed in this case his own beautiful nature vulgar material must not drag the true human nature at least in the latter at all what he executes: but of actuality from the hands of such que mirrors itself in the grotesque, from whom nature intended should, devoid of everything that one can set as vulgar imitation and exercise the expense of our taste! noted, common nature can become fine accord between feeling and still only an idea that is never entirely lost fortunate geniuses of this class, nate somewhat over independent or less dependent upon external of the productive faculties, which is ould be able to prevent the material ver over receptivity. Whenever this vulgar. aamer down to Bodmer, has entirely the most dangerous to those who are from vulgar nature, or whose inner line. The first is responsible for the ways remain free of platitudes, and vented from occupying the rank to poet, whose genius most of all is Jason most exposed to platitude, as Plautus and of almost all the latter steps. How far does even the sublime trivalities are we not tormented oldoni; into what mire are we not one of the most gifted poets of our none among the foremost in this category; Gellert, a truly naive poet, as also Rabener, even Lessing, the cultivated student of criticism and a so watchful judge of his own work — do they not all, more or less, pay for the insipid character of the nature they have selected as the material of their satire? I do not mention any of the most recent writers of this class since there are none that I can except.

And not enough that the naive poetic spirit is in danger of nourishing itself all too much with common reality — by the facility with which it expresses itself, and precisely by means of this greater assimilation to actual life it encourages the vulgar imitator to try his hand in the realm of poetry. Sentimental poetry, albeit dangerous enough from another point of view, as I shall later show, at least keeps these folk at a distance, because it is not everyone's forte to elevate himself to the idea; but naive poetry encourages the belief that it is mere feeling, mere humour, mere imitation of actual nature that makes for the poet. But nothing is more repellent than the banal individual who takes it into his head to be ingratiating and naive — he who should envelop himself in all the veils of art in order to conceal his leathsome nature. From this source, too, come the unspeakable platitude which Germans love to hear in the form of naive and comic songs and with which they are wont to amuse themselves incessantly at a well-laden table. Granted the licence of whimsy, of feeling, these paltry things are tolerated — but this whimsy and this feeling cannot be too carefully suppressed. The muses on the PleiBe constitute a specially pitiful chorus in this respect, and they are answered in no better accord by the Camenae of the Leine and Elbe. These jokes are as insipid as the passion is pitiful that is heard upon our tragic stages and that, instead of imitating true nature, achieves only the spiritless and ignoble expression of the actual, so that after such a tearful dish we are in the same mood as if we had just paid a visit to a hospital or read Salzmann's Human Misery. Matters are still worse with satiric poetry and particularly with the comic novel which simply by its nature is so close to common life and hence ought, like any frontier post, to be in the safest hands. That man is truly least called to be the portrayer of his time who is its creature and its caricature; but because it is so easy to conjure up some kind of comic character from one's own acquaintance, even if only a fat man, and to get the grotesque down on paper with a crude pen, even the sworn enemies of everything in the poetic spirit sometimes feel the urge tofounder in this style and delight a circle of worthy friends with the fair offspring. A purely attuned feeling would, of course, never be in danger of confusing these products of a vulgar nature with the gifted fruits of naive genius; but it is precisely this mode of pure feeling that is lacking, and in most cases the attempt is made only to gratify a desire without making any demands on the spirit. The so patently misunderstood notion, true enough in itself, that one finds recreation in works of bel esprit, contributes substantially to this indulgence, if one can indeed call it indulgence when nothing loftier is intimated and the reader profits by it in the same manner as the author. Common nature, in fact, when it is under
tension, can recuperate only in emptiness, and even a high degree of understanding, if it is not supported by an equivalent cultivation of feeling, relaxes from its affairs only in insipid sensual enjoyment.

If the poetic genius must elevate itself by its free individual activity above all accidental limits that are inseparable from any determined condition in order to attain to human nature in its absolute capacity, it may not, on the other hand, go beyond the necessary limits which are involved in the concept of human nature; for the absolute (but only within humanity) is its task and its sphere. We have seen that the naive genius is not in fact in danger of surpassing this sphere, nor indeed of exhausting it fully, if it sets external necessity or the accidental exigency of the moment too much in the place of inner necessity. The sentimental genius, however, is exposed to the danger, due to the effort of removing all limitations from it, of suppressing human nature altogether, and not only, as it may and should, elevating or idealising itself above and beyond all determined and limited actuality to absolute possibility, but rather of going still further beyond possibility or otherwise falling into extravagant enthusiasm. This error of overtension is as much founded in the specific nature of its procedure as the opposed error of indolence is rooted in the idiosyncratic approach of the naive. For the naive genius permits nature to reign unrestrictedly within himself, and since nature in its individual temporal manifestations is always dependent and scanty, naive feeling will not always remain sufficiently exalted to be able to resist the accidental determinations of the moment. On the other hand, the sentimental genius abandons actuality in order to rise upward to ideas and to command his material with free spontaneity; but since reason, in accordance with its laws, always strives toward the unconditioned, the sentimental genius will not always remain sufficiently dispassionate to maintain himself uninterruptedly and uniformly within the conditions that are entailed in the concept of human nature and to which reason, even in its freest effects, must here always remain bound. This could take place only through a relative degree of receptivity which, however, in the sentimental spirit, is as far outweighed by spontaneity as in the naive it outweighs spontaneity. If one therefore sometimes misses the spirit in the creations of naive genius, one will frequently seek in vain in the products of the sentimental for the matter. Both, therefore, albeit in entirely opposed ways, fall into the error of emptiness; for matter without spirit, and a play of spirit without matter, are both a nullity in the aesthetic judgment.

All poets who draw their material too oned-sidedly from the world of thought and are driven more by an inner wealth of ideas than by stress of feeling to poetic creation are more or less in danger of falling into this bypath. In its creations reason draws too little upon this counsel of the limits of the sensuous world, and thought is always driven farther than experience can follow. If, however, thought is driven so far that not only could no particular experience correspond to it (for thus far the ideally beautiful may and must go), but that it also in fact contravenes the conditions of all possible experience and consequently, in order to make totally and completely abandoned poet not only suffer and poet; for if it does not please, it can not contradict itself. If it does not please, it pleasures; for that which does not please, it does not; and whatever has no limits cannot be overstrained that outrages, not by making claims upon it. If, then, a story is selected as a theme for depiction natures can not be represented otherwise, he is, by abandoning the poetic and by means of the imagination. For would impose its own limits on a limited human one (as, for example, on the subject would remove the limits of the imagination. For example, the sentimental poetic creatio would impose its own limits on a limited human one (as, for example, on the subject would remove the limits of the imagination. For example, the sentimental poetic creation are more or less in danger of falling into this bypath. In its creations reason draws too little upon this counsel of the limits of the sensuous world, and thought is always driven farther than experience can follow. If, however, thought is driven so far that not only could no particular experience correspond to it (for thus far the ideally beautiful may and must go), but that it also in fact contravenes the conditions of all possible experience and

On Naive

Schiller

Laura, St Preux for his Julie, Phanias, Peregrinus Proteus (Wieland). The feeling is true, but its object: If their feeling had simply remained it would not have been able to assimilate the capricious play of fantasy without being able to touch our hearts, for overstrain, then, merits correction should ask himself whether he is so cautious out of lack of reason.
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The feeling is true, but its object is artificial and lies outside human nature. If their feeling had simply remained attached to the sensuous truth of its objects it would not have been able to assume that impetus; on the other hand a merely capricious play of fantasy without any inner meaning would likewise not have been able to touch our hearts, for the heart is touched only by reason. This overstrain, then, merits correction, not contempt, and whoever mocks at it should ask himself whether he is not perhaps so clever out of heartlessness, or so cautious out of lack of reason. Thus also the exaggerated tenderness in
matters of gallantry and honour that characterises the knightly romances, particularly the Spanish, the scrupulous delicacy driven to the point of preciosity in the French and English sentimental novels (of the best kind) are not only subjectively true, but also, objectively considered, not without substance; they are genuinae feelings actually derived from a moral source and are only objectionable because they surpass the bounds of human truth. Without that moral reality how would it be possible that they could be communicated with such power and fervour as we nonetheless find them in experience to be? The same applies also to moral and religious enthusiasm and to exalted love of freedom and fatherland. Since the objects of these feelings are always ideas and do not appear in external experience (for what affects the political enthusiast, for example, is not what he sees, but what he thinks), the spontaneous imagination possesses a dangerous freedom and cannot, as in other cases, be restored to its limits by the sensuous presence of its objects. But neither man in general nor the poet in particular may withdraw himself from the jurisdiction of nature other than to submit to the opposed jurisdiction of reason; only for the ideal may he abandon actuality, since by one of these two anchors freedom must be secured. But the path from experience to the ideal is long, and in between lies fantasy with its unbridled arbitrariness. It is therefore unavoidable that man in general, just as the poet in particular, if he should quit the domination of feeling for the freedom of his understanding without having been driven to it by the laws of reason, that is, if he leaves nature through caprice, then he will remain without a law, and is thus rendered a prey to the fantastic.

Experience shows that whole peoples as well as individuals who have withdrawn from the secure guidance of nature are actually in this state, and this too provides sufficient examples of an analogous deviation in the art of poetry. Because the genuine sentimental poetic impulse must, in order to elevate itself to the idea, pass beyond the limits of actual nature, the inauthentic goes beyond every limit whatever and persuades itself that the mere wild play of imagination is all that makes for poetic inspiration. To the true poetic genius, who abandons actuality only for the sake of the idea, this can either never happen, or only in those moments in which he has lost himself; for he, on the other hand, can be seduced by his own nature into an exaggerated mode of perception. He can, however, seduce others into the fantastic by his example, because readers of vivid fantasy and weak understanding take into account only the licence against actual nature which he permits himself, without being able to follow him as far as his lofty inner necessity. The same thing happens here to the sentimental genius that we have observed in the naive. Since the latter carries out by his nature everything that he does, the vulgar imitator prefers no worse guide than his own nature. Masterpieces of the naive category will, therefore, usually have as their sequel the most banal and sordid impressions of vulgar nature, and the chief works of the sentimental genre, a numerous host of fantastic productions; and this of every people.

With reference to poetry, two are completely correct, but in the taken, cancel one another out. Of pleasure and recreation, we have emptiness and platitude in poetry; it serves for the moral ennoblement. It is not superfluous to illuminate, which are so often enunciated, so applied.

By recreation we mean the true, is natural to us. Everything her natural condition to be, and which posit the former exclusively as an in liberty from every constraint, the resistance to sensuousness; becomes quietude combined with sensuousness: however, we posit our natural condition, and the ideal of recreation after onced, after onesided tensions. The first of sensuous nature, the second by these two types of recreation there scarcely be a question in theory; that he could be tempted to set animality. Nevertheless, the dem make of poetic works are drawn in most cases it is in accordance to these works is deter, the faviour chosen. The hand intensive and exhausting in the former, we know, renders the sense of activity disproportionately mo and for an absolute freedom of if satisfied before the mind can make the moral impulses themselves fit. Hence nothing is more disadvan than both these all-too-common, it becomes clear why so few, even in aesthetic matters. Beauty is th the senses; it addresses itself at
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characterises the knightly romances, delicacy driven to the point of mental novels (of the best kind) are
ectively considered, not without ly derived from a moral source and pass the bounds of human truth. It be possible that they could be our as we nonetheless find them in moral and religious enthusiasm and Since the objects of these feelings eternal experience (for what affects what he sees, but what he thinks), dangerous freedom and cannot, as in sensuous presence of its objects. But peculiar may withdraw himself from bind to the opposed jurisdiction of actuality, since by one of these two path from experience to the ideal in its unbridled arbitrariness. It is just as the poet in particular, if he the freedom of his understanding laws of reason, that is, if he leaves in without a law, and is thus rendered as well as individuals who have nature are actually in this state, and a analogous deviation in the art of poetic impulse must, in order to auis of actual nature, the inauthentic guades itself that the mere wild play aspiration. To the true poetic genius, of the idea, this can either never he has lost himself; for he, on the nature into an exaggerated mode of into the fantastic by his example, understanding take into account only permits himself, without being able sility. The same thing happens here served in the naive. Since the latter he does, the vulgar imitator prefers terpieces of the naive category will, most banal and sordid impressions sentimental genre, a numerous host of fantastic productions; and this can easily be demonstrated in the literature of every people.

With reference to poetry, two principles are employed which in themselves are completely correct, but in the interpretation in which they are commonly taken, cancel one another out. Of the first: 'That the art of poetry serves for pleasure and recreation', we have already observed that it not a little favours emptiness and platitude in poetic depictions; by the second principle: 'That it serves for the moral ennoblement of man', the exaggerated finds protection. It is not superfluous to illuminate somewhat more closely both these principles, which are so often enunciated, so often incorrectly interpreted, and so clumsily applied.

By recreation we mean the transition from a constrained state to one which is natural to us. Everything here, of course, depends on what we posit our natural condition to be, and what we understand by a constrained one. If we posit the former exclusively as an unbridled play of the physical powers, and in liberty from every constraint, then all activity of reason (because it exercises resistance to sensuousness) becomes a violence done to us, and spiritual quietude combined with sensuous activity is the proper ideal of recreation. If, however, we posit our natural condition as an unlimited capacity for every human utterance, and the ability to exercise all our powers with equal freedom, then any separation and isolation of these powers is a constrained condition, and the ideal of recreation is the restoration of our whole nature after onesided tensions. The first ideal is therefore dictated solely by the needs of sensuous nature, the second by the independence of human nature. Which of these two types of recreation the art of poetry ought and must supply can make of poetic works are drawn by preference from the sensuous ideal, and in most cases it is in accordance with it – not indeed that the esteem that one accords to these works is determined, but certainly that the predilection is decided and the favourite chosen. The state of mind of most people is on the one hand intensive and exhausting labour, on the other, enervating indulgence. The former, we know, renders the sensuous need for spiritual calm and for cessation of activity disproportionately more pressing than the moral need for harmony and for an absolute freedom of function, because above all else nature must be satisfied before the mind can make its demands; the latter confines and cripples the moral impulses themselves from which these demands should originate. Hence nothing is more disadvantageous for sensitivity to the truly beautiful than both these all-too-common frames of mind among men, and from this it becomes clear why so few, even among better men, possess correct judgement in aesthetic matters. Beauty is the product of accord between the mind and the senses; it addresses itself at once to all the faculties of man and can,
therefore, be perceived and appreciated only under the condition that he employ all his powers fully and freely. One must assemble clear senses, a full heart, a fresh and unimpaired mind, one’s whole nature must be collected, which is by no means the case with those who are divided in themselves by abstract thought, hemmed in by petty business formalities, or exhausted by strenuous concentration. These persons yearn indeed for sensuous matter, not in order to continue the play of their intellectual powers, but in order to stop it. They want to be free, but only from a burden that fatigues their lassitude, not from a barrier that blocks their activity.

Should one then still be amazed at the happiness of mediocrity and emptiness in aesthetic matters, or at the vengeance of weak minds upon the truly and actively beautiful? They expected recreation from it, but a recreation to meet their need and in accordance with their feeble notion, and they discover with dismay that they are now first expected to put out an effort of strength for which they might lack the capacity even in their best moments. There, on the contrary, they are welcome as they are; for as little strength as they bring with them, still they need very much less to exhaust the minds of their writers. Here they are at once relieved of the burden of thought; and nature relaxed can indulge itself upon the downy pillow of platitude in blessed enjoyment of nothingness. In the temple of Thalia and Melpomene, as it is established among us, the beloved goddess sits enthroned receiving in her ample bosom the dull pedant and the tired businessman, and lulls the mind into a mesmeric sleep, thawing out the frigid senses and rocking the imagination in gentle motion.

And why should one not indulge vulgar individuals, when that is often enough done for the best ones? The relaxation that nature demands after every sustained effort and also takes without invitation (and only for such moments does one reserve the enjoyment of beautiful works), is so little favourable to aesthetic judgement that among those classes who are really occupied only extremely few will be found who can judge in matters of taste with certainty, and what is here more to the point, with consistency. Nothing is more usual than that scholars, in contrast to cultivated mundane individuals, reveal themselves in judgements of beauty in the most ridiculous light, and in particular the professional critics are the scorn of all connoisseurs. Their neglected, sometimes exaggerated, sometimes coarse, feeling leads them astray in most cases, and even if they have seized upon something in theory in defence of it, they can only formulate technical (concerning the purposiveness of a work) not aesthetic judgements, which must always comprehend the whole, and in which, therefore, feeling must decide. If they at last voluntarily renounce the latter and rest content with the former, they may yet be of sufficient use, since the poet in his inspiration and the perceptive reader at the moment of enjoyment may only too easily overlook details. But it is an all the more laughable spectacle if these crude natures who, with all their painstaking efforts, at best attain the cultivation of a single skill, set up their paltry personalities as representative of universal judgement upon the beautiful.

The concept of recreation, which is usually beset by too narrow limits, too onesidedly to mere sensuous possession, is supposed to aim at, is exact because it is too onesidedly determined.

For, in accordance with the idea that reason in its demands is of sense and does not stop short at something still higher can be the limitation of finite nature is an insurmountable limitation but those of thought the limits of space and time. It prescribes in its true legislation the poet as that base ideal of mankind that he should indeed liberate mankind setting aside its concept or disallow himself beyond those limits that he is all too readily misled by.

But the evil is that he can scarcely be ennobled without any capacity to attain to it he must abandon any ideal, only out of inner and outer himself nor in the tumult of ever encountered, and only in the still heart. Yet this withdrawal from accidental limitations of mankind insurmountable limitations, and of losing the entire meaning. Recollection from experience, and whatever serene course of thought, the interminable course of daily life, was solely able to engender the perhaps subsist less in that he did not remain so.

It may therefore be left neither to determine the concept of recreation of contemplative classes to determine with their speculation, if the former unworthy of poetry, nor the latter for poetry. But since both these questions of poetry and poetic have been explored for a class of men which, without
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representative of universal feeling, and in the sweat of their brows pass judgement upon the beautiful.

The concept of recreation, which poetry is to provide, is, as we have seen, usually beset by too narrow limits because one is accustomed to referring it too onesidedly to mere sensuous necessity. The notion of ennoblement, which the poet is supposed to aim at, is exactly the reverse; it is given too wide a scope because it is too onesidedly determined by the mere idea.

For, in accordance with the idea, ennoblement passes always into the infinite because reason in its demands is not bound by the necessary limits of the world of sense and does not stop short of the absolutely perfect. Nothing beyond which something still higher can be conceived can satisfy it; at its stern court no limitation of finite nature is acceptable in excuse; it acknowledges no other boundaries but those of thought, and of this we know that it soars beyond all the limits of space and time. Such an ideal of ennoblement which reason prescribes in its pure legislation may no more be established as his purpose by the poet as that base ideal of recreation which sensuousness sets up, since he should indeed liberate mankind from all accidental limitations, but without setting aside its concept or disrupting its necessary limitations. Whatever he allows himself beyond those limitations is exaggeration, and it is to just this that he is all too readily misled by a falsely construed concept of ennoblement. But the evil is that he can scarcely elevate himself to the true ideal of human ennoblement without in any case taking a few steps beyond it. For in order to attain to it he must abandon actuality, since he can draw upon it, as upon any ideal, only out of inner and moral sources. Not in the world that surrounds him nor in the tumult of everyday life, but only in his heart is it to be encountered, and only in the stillness of solitary contemplation can he find his heart. Yet this withdrawal from life will not only remove from his vision the coarse, feeling leads them astray upon something in theory in defence of sensuousness (and only for such moments full works), is so little favourable to asses who are really occupied only in matters of taste with certainty, consistency. Nothing is more usual among mundane individuals, reveal the most ridiculous light, and in the scorn of all connoisseurs. Their coarse, feeling leads them astray upon something in theory in defence of sensuousness, but they may yet be of sufficient use, since the reader at the moment of enjoyment, they comprehend the whole, and in the end at last voluntarily renounce the may yet be of sufficient use, since the reader at the moment of enjoyment, they comprehend the whole, and in the end at last voluntarily renounce the manner of their browing pass administered upon the beautiful, set up their paltry personalities as

only under the condition that he must assemble clear senses, a full whole nature must be collected, who are divided in themselves by sensuous formalities, or exhausted by sectual powers, but in order to stop burden that fatigues their lassitude, y.

ppiness of mediocrity and emptiness of weak minds upon the truly and on from it, but a recreation to meet plausible notion, and they discover within an effort of strength for which their best moments. There, on the as little strength as they bring with them the minds of their writers. Here if thought; and nature relaxed can platitude in blessed enjoyment of Melpomene, as it is established that nature demands after everyitation (and only for such moments full works), is so little favourable to asses who are really occupied only in matters of taste with certainty, consistency. Nothing is more usual among mundane individuals, reveal the most ridiculous light, and in the scorn of all connoisseurs. Their coarse, feeling leads them astray upon something in theory in defence of sensuousness, but they may yet be of sufficient use, since the reader at the moment of enjoyment, they comprehend the whole, and in the end at last voluntarily renounce the may yet be of sufficient use, since the reader at the moment of enjoyment, they comprehend the whole, and in the end at last voluntarily renounce the manner of their browing pass administered upon the beautiful, set up their paltry personalities as
ideals without fanaticism; a class that unites within itself all the realities of life with its least possible limitations and is borne by the current of events without becoming its victim. Only such a class can preserve the beautiful unity of human nature that is destroyed for the moment by any particular task, and continuously by a life of such toil, and decide, in everything that is purely human, by their feelings the rule of common opinion. Whether such a class might actually exist, or whether that class which actually does exist under the external conditions described possesses the inner disposition corresponding to the concept, is another question which I am not concerned with here. If it does not correspond to it, then it has only itself to blame, since the contrasting labouring class has at least the satisfaction of considering itself a victim of its labour. In such a class of society (which, however, I offer here only as an idea and by no means wish to have taken as a fact) the na"ive character would be united with the sentimental so that each would preserve the other from its own extreme, and while the first would save the mind from exaggerations the second would secure it against inertia. For, in the final analysis, we must concede that neither the na{"ive nor the sentimental character, each considered alone, quite exhausts that ideal of beautiful humanity that can only arise out of the intimate union of both.

For so long as one exalts both characters as far as the poetic, as we have thus far considered them, much of the limitation which adheres to them falls away, and their antithesis becomes all the less noticeable the higher the degree to which they become poetic; for the poetic mood is an independent whole in which all distinctions and all shortcomings vanish. But for the very reason that it is only the concept of the poetic in which both modes of perception can coincide, their mutual differences and limitations become in the same degree more noticeable if they are devoured by the poetic character; and this is the case in ordinary life. The more they descend to this, the more they lose of their generic character which brings them closer to one another, until finally in their caricatures only their specific character remains to oppose one to the other.

This leads me to a very remarkable psychological antagonism among men in a century that is civilising itself: an antagonism that because it is radical and based on inner mental dispositions is the cause of a worse division among men than any fortuitous clash of interests could ever provoke; one that deprives the artist and poet of all hope of pleasing and affecting universally, as is their task; which makes it impossible for the philosopher, even when he has done his utmost, to convince universally: yet the very concept of philosophy demands this; which, finally, will never permit a man in practical life to see his course of action universally approved – in a word, an antithesis that is to blame that no work of the spirit and no action of the heart can decisively satisfy one class without for that very reason bringing upon itself the damning judgement of the other. This antithesis is without doubt as old as the beginnings of civilisation and is scarcely to be overcome before its end other than in a few rare individuals who, it is to be among its effects is also this one, because neither side can be induced to the uniform testimony of the moment into a resigned submission to the necessary accession thus to what is and nothing remains (theoretically) but to go to the unconditional in all its knowledge, that insists upon the unconditional in all its knowledge which all distinctions and all shortcomings vanish. But for the very reason that it is only the concept of the poetic in which both modes of perception can coincide, their mutual differences and limitations become in the same degree more noticeable the higher the degree to which they become poetic; and this is the case in ordinary life. The more they descend to this, the more they lose of their generic character which brings them closer to one another, until finally in their caricatures only their specific character remains to oppose one to the other.

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One can best discover the true nature of this opposition by abstracting from both what each possesses of the poetic character and the sentimental character and based on inner mental dispositions is the cause of a worse division among men than any fortuitous clash of interests could ever provoke; one that deprives the artist and poet of all hope of pleasing and affecting universally, as is their task; which makes it impossible for the philosopher, even when he has done his utmost, to convince universally: yet the very concept of philosophy demands this; which, finally, will never permit a man in practical life to see his course of action universally approved – in a word, an antithesis that is to blame that no work of the spirit and no action of the heart can decisively satisfy one class without for that very reason bringing upon itself the damning judgement of the other. This antithesis is without doubt as old as the beginnings of civilisation and is scarcely to be overcome before its end other than in a few rare individuals who, it is to be among its effects is also this one, because neither side can be induced to the uniform testimony of the moment into a resigned submission to the necessary accession thus to what is and nothing remains (theoretically) but to go to the unconditional in all its knowledge, that insists upon the unconditional in all its knowledge which all distinctions and all shortcomings vanish. But for the very reason that it is only the concept of the poetic in which both modes of perception can coincide, their mutual differences and limitations become in the same degree more noticeable the higher the degree to which they become poetic; and this is the case in ordinary life. The more they descend to this, the more they lose of their generic character which brings them closer to one another, until finally in their caricatures only their specific character remains to oppose one to the other.

And in just this way the realist becomes an a for all things as is his actions. The compass of experience apply, in their strictes and the rule of the moment into a resignation. If, therefore, the realist seeks knowledge, he must attempt to do so by experience. But since the sum of experience a comparative totality is the b
within itself all the realities of life are by the current of events without further the beautiful unity of in everything that is purely opinion. Whether such a class high actually does exist under the inner disposition corresponding to not concerned with here. If it does not blame, since the contrasting of considering itself a victim of its merly, I offer here only as an idea the naive character would be ld preserve the other from its own and from exaggerations the second analysis, we must concede that ter, each considered alone, quite that can only arise out of the far as the poetic, as we have thus which adheres to them falls away, diceable the higher the degree to hood is an independent whole in vanish. But for the very reason that with both modes of perception can tions become in the same degree of their poetic character; and this descend to this, the more they lose closer to one another, until finally ter remains to oppose one to the logical antagonism among men monism that because it is radical e cause of a worse division among ld ever provoke; one that deprives ed affecting universally, as is their oplorer, even when he has done the very concept of philosophy mit a man in practical life to see on a word, an antithesis that is to the action of the heart can decisively bringing upon itself the damning doubt as old as the beginnings before its end other than in a few rare individuals who, it is to be hoped, always existed and always will; but among its effects is also this one, that it defeats every effort to overcome it because neither side can be induced to admit that there is any shortcoming on its part and any reality on the other; despite this, it still remains profitable enough to pursue so important a division back to its ultimate source and thereby to reduce the actual point of the conflict at least to a simpler formulation.

One can best discover the true concept of this antithesis, as I have just remarked, by abstracting from both the naive and the sentimental character what each possesses of the poetic. Of the first, then, nothing remains (from the theoretical point of view) but a sober spirit of observation and a fixed loyalty to the uniform testimony of the senses, and (from the practical point of view) a resigned submission to the necessity (but not the blind necessity) of nature: an accession thus to what is and what must be. Of the sentimental character nothing remains (theoretically) but a restless spirit of speculation that presses on to the unconditional in all its knowledge, and (practically) a moral rigorism that insists upon the unconditional in acts of the will. The member of the first class can be called a realist and of the other class an idealist; but these names should not recall either the good or bad senses which are connected with them in metaphysics. 

Since the realist allows himself to be determined by the necessity of nature and the idealist by the necessity of reason, the same relation must obtain between them as is found between the effects of nature and the actions of reason. Nature, we know, although of infinite dimension as a whole, displays its dependence and indigence in every particular manifestation; only in the universe of its phenomena does it express an independently vast character. Every particular within it subsists only because something else exists; nothing arises out of itself, everything springs out of the antecedent moment in order to give rise to the following one. But it is just this reciprocal relation of phenomena to one another that assures to each its existence by the existence of the other, and its constancy and necessity is inseparable from the dependence of its manifestations. Nothing is free in nature, but nothing is arbitrary in her either.

And in just this way the realist also reveals himself in his knowledge as well as in his actions. The compass of his knowledge and functions extends to everything that exists conditionally; but he can never proceed beyond conditional cognition, and the rules which he formulates out of particular experience apply, in their strictest form, only once also; but should he elevate the rule of the moment into a universal law he will irremediably fall into error. If, therefore, the realist seeks to attain to something unconditional in his knowledge, he must attempt to do so along the very same path by which nature becomes an absolute, that is, by the path of totality and in the universe of experience. But since the sum of experience is never completely concluded, only a comparative totality is the highest to which the realist attains in his
knowledge. He founds his insights upon the recurrence of similar instances, and
will therefore judge correctly wherever the order remains unchanged; but in
whatever presents itself for the first time, his wisdom returns to its beginnings.

Whatever applies to the realist's knowledge applies equally to his moral
actions. His character possesses morality, but this lies, considered according
to its concept, not in any particular act, but only in the whole sum of his life.
In every particular case he will be determined by external causes and by
external purposes; but those causes will not be accidental nor those purposes
momentary, but will rather flow subjectively out of the whole of nature and
will refer back objectively to it. Thus the impulses of his will are not, in the
rigoristic sense, sufficiently free or morally pure enough, because they have as
their cause something other than the pure will, and as their object something
other than pure law; yet these are by no means blind and materialistic impulses
since that other something is the absolute totality of nature, and therewith
something independent and necessary. In this way common human under­
standing, the most distinctive feature of the realist, shows itself throughout his
thought and conduct. From the individual case he draws the rule of his
judgement, out of an inner perception the rule of his conduct; but by a happy
instinct he is able to distinguish from both everything that is momentary and
incidental. By this method he proceeds excellently on the whole, and will
scarcely have to accuse himself of significant errors; but he will not be able
to lay claim to greatness and dignity in any particular case. This is the prize
only of independence and freedom and in his individual actions we see too few
traces of these.

With the idealist the situation is quite different; he finds his cognitions and
motives in himself and in pure reason. If nature always appears dependent and
limited in her individual manifestations, reason on the other hand imposes the
character of independence and perfection equally on every individual action.
It draws everything out of itself, and to itself it refers everything. Whatever
happens because of it happens only for its sake; every concept that it establishes
is an absolute dimension, as is every decision that it formulates. And the idealist
reveals himself in the same way, so far as he justly bears the name, in his
knowledge as in his actions. Dissatisfied with cognitions that are valid only
under certain presuppositions he seeks to penetrate to truths for which no
presuppositions are necessary and which are the presuppositions of everything
else. He is satisfied only by the philosophical insight that refers all conditional
knowledge to the unconditional and attaches all experience to the necessity
within the human spirit; those things to which the realist subordinates his
thought, the idealist subordinates to his faculty of thought. And in this he
proceeds with complete authority, for if the laws of the human spirit were not
simultaneously the laws of the universe, if reason, in the last analysis, were
subordinate to experience, then no experience would be possible either.

But he can have reached as far as absolute truths and yet still not be much
furthered in knowledge thereby. For while it is true that everything is subject
to necessary and universal laws, accidental and particular rules; his philosophical cognition he can
never attain nothing thereby for the reason that it everywhere penetrates to the
immediate. He can easily overlook the proximate and particular because he directs his attention
only to the common factor in the most universal and particularity that differentiates
very much by his knowledge an individual matter, and often lose in insight when
it is necessary that if speculative understanding is the common understanding derivable always lose in specific content when

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to necessary and universal laws, yet every individual matter is governed by accidental and particular rules; and in nature everything is individual. With his philosophical cognition he can therefore command the whole, while having gained nothing thereby for the particular or in practice: indeed, because he everywhere penetrates to the remote causes by which everything is possible, he can easily overlook the proximate causes whereby everything becomes actual; because he directs his attention in everything to the universal that finds the common factor in the most varied instances, he can easily neglect the particularity that differentiates them. He will, therefore, be able to comprehend very much by his knowledge and, perhaps for that very reason, apprehend very little, and often lose in insight what he gains in perspective. Thus it happens that if speculative understanding scorns common sense for its narrowness, common understanding derides the speculative for its empiriness; for cognitions always lose in specific content what they gain in range.

In moral judgements one will find in the idealist a purer morality in individual matters, but much less moral uniformity as a whole. He is called an idealist only insofar as he takes the grounds of his determinations from pure reason, but reason displays itself in each of its utterances absolutely, hence his individual actions, if they are moral at all, will bear the whole character of moral independence and freedom; and if in actual life a truly moral deed could be found at all which would remain so even in face of rigorous scrutiny, then it could only be executed by the idealist. But the purer the morality of his individual actions the more fortuitous it is too, since consistency and necessity are indeed the character of nature, but not of freedom. Not, of course, that idealism could ever be in conflict with morality (which would be a contradiction in terms), but because human nature is simply incapable of strict idealism. If the realist, even in his moral actions, calmly and uniformly submits to physical necessity, the idealist requires inspiration, he must for the moment exalt his nature, for he can do nothing unless he is inspired. But then, of course, he can do all the more and his behaviour will manifest a character of loftiness and grandeur which one looks for in vain in the actions of the realist. But actual life is by no means fitted to arouse that enthusiasm in him and still less so to maintain it uniformly. Set against the absolute greatness from which he always departs, the absolute smallness of the individual case to which he has to apply it makes far too great a contrast. Since his will in relation to form is always directed to the whole he is not prepared in relation to matter to direct it to the part, and yet in most cases the achievements are only trifling by which he can display his moral disposition. Thus it not infrequently happens that because of the limitless ideal he overlooks the application in the limited case, and, himself imbued by a maximum, loses sight of the minimum out of which, nevertheless, everything great arises in actuality.

In order to do justice to the realist, therefore, one must judge him according to the entire context of his life; for the idealist one must limit oneself to particular occurrences in it, but these must first be selected. Common opinion,
which so gladly decides on the basis of individual cases, will therefore maintain an indifferent silence in regard to the realist because his individual actions provide as little occasion for praise as for blame; but in connection with the idealist, opinion will always be partial and divided between obloquy and admiration, because both his weakness and his strength lie in his individual acts.

It is unavoidable, because of so great a divergence of principles, that both parties will often be diametrically opposed in their judgements and that, even if they should agree as to facts and outcomes, their reasons will be opposed. The realist will ask what a thing is good for, and will appraise things according to their use; the idealist will ask whether they are good, and appraise them according to their worth. Whatever possesses its value and purpose in itself (with the exception, however, of the whole) the realist little knows or esteems; in matters of taste his criterion will be pleasure, in matters of morality it will be happiness, even if he does not make this the condition of moral action; in his religion, too, he does not gladly forget his interest, but he renders it noble and sacred by the ideal of the greatest good. Whatever he loves he will seek to make happy, where the idealist will seek to ennoble it. Whereas the realist aims, in his political tendencies, at well-being even if it should to some extent detract from the moral self-reliance of the people, the idealist will imperil well-being to make freedom his standard. To the first, independence of condition is his highest object; to the second, independence from condition, and this characteristic difference can be traced throughout their respective modes of thought and action. Thus the realist will always manifest his affection by giving, the idealist by receiving; and each reveals by what he sacrifices in his generosity what he prizes most highly. The idealist will pay for the shortcomings of his system with his own person and with his temporal condition, but he does not heed this sacrifice; the realist makes up for the shortcomings of his with his personal dignity, but he knows nothing of this sacrifice. His system holds good for everything about which he knows and for which he feels a need - why should he be bothered with goods of which he has no notion and in which he does not believe? It is enough for him that he is in possession, the earth is his, there is light in his understanding, and satisfaction in his breast. The idealist by no means enjoys so happy a fate. It is not enough that he often quarrels with happiness because he fails to make the moment his friend, he quarrels with himself too; he cannot be content either with his knowledge or with his actions. What he demands of himself is boundless; but everything that he achieves is limited. This rigour, which he applies to himself, he does not renounce in his behaviour towards others. He is indeed generous because in relations with others he does not remember his own individuality so much; but he is often unfair because he as easily overlooks the individuality of others. The realist, on the other hand, is less generous, but more fair-minded since he judges everything rather in its limitation. The vulgar, even the base in thought and action he can forgive, but never the arbitrary or eccentric; but the idealist...
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is the sworn enemy of everything petty and jejune and will reconcile himself even with the extravagant and monstrous if it only testifies to a great potentiality. The former shows himself to be a philanthropist but simply without entertaining any very high idea of humanity; the latter thinks so highly of mankind that he thereby falls into the danger of despising man.

Left to himself the realist would never extend the compass of mankind beyond the borders of the world of sense, he would never seek to acquaint the human spirit with its independent greatness and freedom: for everything absolute in humanity is for him only a beautiful chimera and belief in it is not much better than fanaticism, because he never observes men in their pure potentiality, only in a determined and hence limited actuality. But the idealist left to himself would just as little seek to cultivate the sensuous faculties or to educate man as a natural being; yet this is an equally substantial part of man's vocation and the condition of all moral ennoblement. The striving of the idealist too far surpasses the sensuous life and the present moment; only for the whole, for eternity, does he want to sow and plant, and thereby forgets that the whole is only the consummated cycle of the individual, that eternity is only a totality of moments. The world, as the realist would construct it about himself, and in fact does, is a well-planned garden in which everything has its use, and merits its place and from which everything that does not bear fruit is banished; in the hands of the idealist the world is nature less utilised, but laid out on a grander scale. It does not occur to the first that man could exist for any other purpose than to live well and contentedly, and that he should put roots down only in order to thrust the plant into the skies. The latter does not understand that he must above all live well if only in order to think consistently well and nobly, and that the plant must wither if the roots are lacking.

If in a system something is left out for which an urgent and unavoidable need exists in nature, then nature can only be satisfied by some inconsistency in the system. Here both parties are guilty of such an inconsistency and this demonstrates, even if it could still have remained in doubt hitherto, both the oned sidedness of the two systems and the richness of content of human nature. In regard to the idealist I do not have to supply any particular proof that he

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opposed to her, and in millions of your fellow men is in fact opposed? You cannot say because all other natural beings submit to her, for you for one possess a will, and even feel that your submission should be a voluntary one. You submit, then, if you do so voluntarily, not to the necessity of nature itself, but to the idea of it; for the first merely compels you blindly as it compels the worm; but it has no power over your will, for you, even crushed by it, can still express another desire. But where do you take that idea of the necessity of nature from? Surely not from experience, which supplies you only with the discrete effects of nature but not with nature (as a whole), and only with discrete actualities but not with necessity. Thus you go beyond nature and determine yourself idealistically, each time you will to act morally or only not to endure blindly. It is apparent, then, that the realist acts more worthily than following his theory, he would allow, just as the idealist thinks more sublimely than he acts. Without admitting it to himself the first displays in the whole conduct of his life the self-reliance of human nature while the latter displays its poverty in his individual actions.

To the attentive and impartial reader I will not, following the account just given (the truth of which can be admitted even by anybody who does not accept the outcome), have first to demonstrate that the ideal of human nature is divided between both, but is not fully attained by either. Experience and reason each has its own prerogatives and neither can infringe upon the area of the other without inflicting serious consequences upon either the inner or external condition of man. Experience alone can teach us what is under certain conditions, what follows upon certain antecedent circumstances, and what must occur for a certain purpose. Reason alone, on the other hand, can teach us what is unconditionally valid and what must necessarily be so. If we should presume to decide anything by our pure reason about the external existence of things we should be engaged in a merely empty game, and the results would amount to nothing; for all existence is conditional and reason determines unconditionally. If, however, we should permit an accidental occurrence to decide about something that is already involved in the very concept of our own being, then we make of ourselves an empty game of chance, and our personality would amount to nothing. In the first case we relinquish the value (the temporal content) of our lives, in the second the dignity (the moral content).

In our account thus far we have indeed allowed a moral value to the realist and a measure of experience to the idealist, but only insofar as both do not proceed consistently, and nature operates in them more powerfully than their systems. Even though both do not entirely correspond to the ideal of perfect humanity, yet between them the important difference subsists that although the realist in no individual case does justice to the rational concept of mankind, he never contradicts its concept of the understanding; and although the idealist in individual cases approaches the highest concept of humanity, he not infrequently falls short of even its lowest concepts. But in practical life much
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more depends upon the whole being uniformly humanly good, than upon the particular being accidentally divine—and even if the idealist is a more appropriate subject to arouse in us a lofty notion of what is possible for mankind, and to imbue us with respect for its vocation, still only the realist can carry it out in practice with constancy and maintain the race within its eternal boundaries. The former is indeed a more noble, but a disproportionately less perfect being; the latter may appear generally less noble, but he is on the other hand all the more perfect; for nobility is already present in the manifestation of a great potentiality, but the perfect lies in the conduct of the whole and in the actual deed.

What is true of both characters in their most favourable interpretation is even more noticeable in their respective caricatures. True realism is beneficent in its effects and only less noble in its origin; false realism is contemptible in its origin and only slightly less pernicious in its effects. For the true realist submits himself to nature and to her necessity—but to nature as a whole, to her eternal and absolute necessity, not to her blind and momentary compulsions. He embraces and follows her law in freedom, and will always subordinate the ideal of human nature to the necessity of nature itself; thus he cannot fail to agree with the genuine idealist in the final result, however different the path which each takes to that end.

The vulgar empiricist, however, submits himself to nature and to her necessity—but to nature as a force, and in indiscriminate blind surrender. His judgements, like his efforts, are limited to the particular; he believes and grasps only what he touches; he esteems only what advances him sensuously. He is, therefore, no more than external impressions chance to make him; his individuality is suppressed and, as a thing condemned to a moral value to the realist he possesses absolutely no worth and no dignity. But as a thing to which he blindly abandons himself does not let him sink altogether; her eternal boundaries protect him, her inexhaustible assistance rescues him, if only he surrenders his freedom without reservation. Although in this condition he knows no laws, yet they govern him unacknowledged, and as much as his individual efforts might be in conflict with the whole, yet that whole will infallibly be able to overcome them. There are men enough, even whole peoples, who live in this lamentable condition, who survive solely by the grace of the law of nature, without individuality, and hence are good only for something; but that they even live and survive demonstrates that this condition is not entirely without meaning.

If, in contrast to this, true idealism is insecure and often dangerous in its effects, false idealism is appalling in its effects. The true idealist abandons nature and experience only because he does not find in it the immutable and unconditional necessity for which his reason prompts him to strive; the fantastic abandons nature out of mere caprice, in order to indulge with all the less restraint the wantonness of his desires and the whims of his imagination. He bases his freedom not on independence from physical duress, but on emancipation from moral compulsion. Thus the fantastic renounces not only
human character – he renounces all character, he is completely lawless, hence nothing in himself and fit for nothing. But for the very reason that his phantasmagoria is not an aberration of nature but of freedom, and thus develops out of a capacity in itself estimable and infinitely perfectible, it leads likewise to an infinite fall into a bottomless abyss and can only terminate in complete destruction.