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# VALUE AND ECONOMY

CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY  
and  
THE EXPLOITATION OF THE UNIQUE

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## Following-up the success

Left-wing artists and intellectuals have played a rather peculiar role in popular modern progress, full of significance but at the same time regarded with a strong distrust. One did not know what to make of them and at the same time there was a need for them. The materialistically oriented workers' movement especially had difficulty in understanding these vague idealists struggling for something that only seemed to impoverish their own position. That capitalist economists like Adam Smith regarded the whole of this group as a flock of worthless parasites in society is so well known that it is hardly worth mentioning. The point of view could also be advanced that one could at least demand of a group calling itself intellectual and fighting for a new economic system that they were intelligent enough to demonstrate the economic basis to which they themselves were entitled. This is what I have tried to do here.

I have not included the group of intellectuals who are occupied with teaching, upbringing and technical training in the group I call *the creative elite*, because I cannot see that they have anything to do with it at all, as school-work is not generally creative but a continued reproduction of certain skills and of a particular attitude. The training necessary for the maintenance of society is the task of the state's administrative body of functionaries, in the same way as traditional academics and the church's people act in the maintenance of order, and is as a rule in the sharpest contrast to the creative elite.

In spite of this I give prominence to the Folk High School as the natural anchorage of the creative elite, because it is not in this sense a school. This is therefore at once a demand to have normal school teaching as well as technical training removed from this organization to the ordinary vocational and further education colleges or to rename all the so-called 'Folk High Schools' concerned with practical purposes, and to establish a progressive, intellectual, poetic, artistic, philosophical and Scandinavian-philological leadership of the remaining centres by the side of, or rather above, the administration of purely practical and economic schooling and, instead of the ridiculous academy for the distribution of prizes at the intellectual cattle show that has now been set up on the French pattern, to get a really active academy for creative intellectual life as was projected in its time in Sorø.\*

The economic rationalization of our cultural life, the basic principles of which are here presented in a clear and logical form, is based upon the tripartite principle of stabilization I advanced in my first report *The Natural Order* with such great success that there has been no criticism of it whatsoever. This tacit recognition shows that in principle I am in accord with the thinking and reading

section of the Danish people. As the economic triolectic advanced here is only a precise use in a special area where I am demonstrating how the principle is to be utilized, there should be no hindrance to us getting to work at once and ordering this affair in the correct manner, whilst we are preparing more comprehensive and searching operations.

Despite the fact that art and humanity are as they have always been, the question 'What is wrong with art today?' is still being asked. Only something has come between art and humanity. The direct connection between the best and the popular or the vulgar no longer exists and the old connecting lines have become obsolescent. A breakthrough must be planned and an independent social structure constructed *which would take care of this alone*, in a direct contact between the highest and the broadest for the enrichment of peoples' lives. The natural conditions to undertake this step, which is of universal significance, are to be found in Denmark today. When 121 French artists and intellectuals signed the demand that everyone should decide with his own conscience whether he wanted to kill the North Africans, they were excluded from their positions, for example in the world of entertainment.\* This lockout was so crippling that they had to be recalled. This shows what a little strike of the elite could accomplish. It is time that the creative elite was clear about its power, demanded its rights and did its duty by the people.

# Part 1:

## Critique of political economy

*This section, apart from a few rearrangements, was published in French by the Situationist Internationale in 1959 and dedicated to the Danish syndicalist and workers' leader Christian Christensen, who in my youth, when he lived in Sejs near Silkeborg, was like a father to me and taught me what economics, economic critique and organization are.\**

*The Marxism which is criticized here is what made Marx maintain that he was not a Marxist. The old basis for international communism has today definitively broken down. Here I could say to all those who are seeking pure socialism, 'If you are going to the right, then I'll go to the left.' I have already indicated in my book *The Natural Order* that this statement should not be perceived in the traditional sense. The illusion that progress and evolution are the same has come to an end. This has meant that the communist movement is dissolving. I go in for progress, but in order to progress one must be able to regress. In his cultural history, Hartvig Frisch has demonstrated that the forces of progress do not always evolve from the top, but can shoot out as side-shoots from the trunk.\* My idea of progress is therefore based upon an out-and-out revolutionary conservatism, for I am going back to the composition of the First Internationale and maintaining that none of its three basic principles – anarchism or the principle of the evolution of personal freedom, syndicalism or the evolution of wise, social organizations and socialism or the knowledge of the context of all social phenomena – can be done without today.*

***The main points in my critique\****

*Production and reproduction are, like progress and evolution, two complementary oppositions.*

*Neither commodity value nor work can comprise the elemental concept of social value, which must base itself upon the human being as the source of value.*

*Raw material cannot be constant or free capital, as capitalists and socialists maintain. Raw material is in a continual reductive process.*

*Use value is the opposite and negation of the article of utility, as quality is the opposite of value.*

## Value in itself and forms of value

The common criterion for truth for any socialist or anti-capitalist politics, the basis that is still recognized as valid by socialists as well as communists, is the Marxist analysis and critique of the capitalist form of value, *the commodity*, perceived as the elemental form of the wealth existent in a society where the capitalist form of production is dominant. This manifests itself as an immense accumulation of commodities.

This analysis was carried out by Karl Marx in his 'critique of political economy', a work that was given the name of *Das Kapital*. Marx does not just demonstrate that the capitalist form of wealth is the commodity, for that demonstration cannot take place at all without a precondition that wealth and value are the same.

As wealth exists as the opposite of poverty, it is precisely this opposition between rich and poor that socialist politics wants to remove. However, as, according to dialectics, an opposition cannot be removed without thereby achieving the removal of or the neutralization of both oppositions, socialism abolishes wealth along with poverty. If wealth continues to blossom one can simply demonstrate that socialism does not exist. The idea of a socialist wealth is not just utopia. It is simply rubbish.

The present crisis of socialism has its starting point in the fact that Marxism's identification of commodity, wealth and value make the abolition of value as such the ideological goal of socialism. Thus the concept of value itself becomes an absurdity in socialist terminology, whilst socialist politics is forced to become a permanent politics of devaluation, the end purpose of which can only be the absolute abolition of all values. Nothing in Marxist economic dogma contradicts this goal in a scientifically logical way. This absolute and all-embracing devaluation is, indeed, altogether unavoidable and will happen of its own accord whether people wish it or not. This natural evolution forms the scientific basis of socialist theory. This tendency is the basic definition of socialist development itself, the one by which the consequences of all socialist actions are justified, and is the justification in itself of socialist politics.

We will here attempt to indicate that it is possible to accept the Marxist analysis and critique of the *capitalist* form of value, the commodity, without thereby taking over the identification of this form with value itself as a concept and a reality. This is to say that it is possible to accept the purely scientific side of *Das Kapital* without thereby automatically taking over the political conclusions that Marx drew from it.\* It consists of perceiving the Marxist critique not as a critique of value in itself but of a specially occurring form of

value limited in time and space. To get to this new form of critique, it is first necessary to lay down a new and precise concept of value which does not contradict itself, and which is at the same time far more comprehensive than the Marxist one, a concept of value that harmonizes with the conceptual world of the natural sciences, something which the Marxist concept of value clearly does not do. In order to do this, we must find a corresponding definition of the concept of form so that we can clearly and unambiguously lay down what is meant by different forms of value. This leads directly to a necessary critique of the concept which in dialectical materialism goes under the name of 'objective quality'. This is the purpose of this study.

### **Concepts are concepts – actualities are actualities**

In order to avoid a thorough discussion about this question of concepts, Marx was obliged to exclude the whole question by saying that it did not exist at all, that it was unreal. He stated that value is not a concept but an actuality, namely the commodity or the exchange value. Thereby he is really stating that all value is exchange value. Concepts are words which everyone has agreed to give one and only one meaning. This socialization of the concepts is altogether necessary to make it possible to explain something to each other that we can agree on in fellowship. Therefore the whole socialist theory stands or falls on this tool, with which this theory is transformed to an ideology, becoming clearly and unambiguously socialized. In this argument Marx forgets, however, that he himself in *Das Kapital* defines value as a purely *metaphysical* and thus immaterial phenomenon, as an *agreement by convention*, and thus as nothing other than a concept.

However, even this Marxist refusal to discuss concepts does not hinder the rising depreciation in all areas which becomes a result of socialist politics. On the contrary. As the actual goal of socialism is the practical abolition of exchange value, socialism is not just moving towards an eradication of possible new value theories but towards a state where even the actual objects vanish, towards a state without actual values.

Marx was himself the first to see this evolution and to go in for it at full throttle. He even perceived his own Marxist philosophy as the last philosophy for which there would be a use, and that only in the period of transition to the socialist society, where all philosophy, even the Marxist, would be abolished. Here one sees his own economic philosophy replaced by the greatest economy, as far as philosophy is concerned. His goal was to make all philosophy

unnecessary, including Marxism. Thus this growing devaluation of everything, of even Marxism itself, is not anything unexpected. It is both the conscious and unconscious goal of socialism.

Marx's conceptual confusion is too great to be able to demonstrate the overall consequences of this consistently anti-progressive ideology. For example, he talks of the commodity's factors, the use value (defined as the substance of value) and the exchange value or 'value in itself' (which he identifies with the dimension of value). There can be no doubt that dimension and value are here perceived as the same. However, he thereafter divides exchange value into two completely different factors, as he says, 'Any article of utility can be perceived from a double viewpoint, from that of the quantity and from that of the quality.' As dimension and quantity are the same, value and quantity must also be so. In dialectical materialism, the concepts of *quantity* and *quality* are themselves the key concepts. It is therefore strange that Marx cannot keep to them when he has to talk of value and commodities. The reason hits one in the eye. It is altogether impossible to classify considerations of value, be it under the concept of quantity or the concept of quality. Even the most diligent materialistic dialectician falls down here. Is value then really, as Marx himself suggests, just a purely metaphysical concept? There are only two possibilities. Either this is the case and then Marxism is neither materialistic nor scientific in the strict meaning of that expression, or Marxism's concept of value is out-of-date and must be replaced by a new one. It is this latter perception that I want to attempt to develop here. In order to do this we must look a little closer at what could lie in the concepts that Marx is manipulating. What do, for example, *substance and dimension*, the two concepts which in Marxist doctrine are the two factors of form, mean?

### **Substance and process are in the Marxist sense the same**

In order to be able to understand Marx's concept of substance, it is necessary to place it in relation to what he calls form. As we are keeping to a purely materialistic evaluation and conceptual world, we can in the main confirm that what the Marxists call matter is perceived as substance, and is normally perceived as being the same as the material's characteristic of *raw material* for something, and not in a true sense as an *element*. In the Marxist sense, all material is actually or possibly raw material and nothing else. On the other hand, the form of the material designates its character as a material different from all other materials, which can be determined or united in a special object. In this way one talks of different forms of energy, etc.

These forms of energy stand in a dialectical opponent relationship to the substance of the same energies. But it is here that Marx is wrong. In Marx, the concept of form is, so to speak, never placed in relation to the concept of substance. He prefers to operate with a completely different opposition: form and content. Thus he talks of the value's form and the value's content. A content is what is enclosed in a form. Thus Marx declares that the content of value is work and adds to this description that *the true form is the form of the content*, which logically makes formal truth identical with work or with content in the value question.

However, he also says somewhere, 'We now know the substance of value. It is work!' We must thus state that in Marx, *substance and content are the same*. However, he also declares that use value is 'the value's' (the exchange value's) substance and at the same time explains that 'work is not the only source of value for the use values it creates, for material wealth. It is the father. The earth is the mother.' But in order for a use value to be able to be transformed into a true 'value', an exchange value, he himself emphasizes that it is necessary to eliminate or completely devalue one factor, the material character of the commodity, to deny the mother, the earth, which is the original source. *The transition from use value to exchange value happens by the devaluation of the article of utility's material actuality.*

The lacking understanding of the materialistic significance of this operation can be seen even more clearly in Marxist theory, if one goes a little closer into the Marxist perception of form. Here it is stated that *the use value is the natural form of the commodity*. What does that mean? Marx adds, however, that the commodity possesses a form of value of a quite special kind that contrasts sharply with the various natural forms of the commodity, namely the form of money. If we accept that the use value is the commodity's actual *substance*, then it is impossible to perceive an article of utility as being identical with a natural form. An article of utility is not a natural form but a cultural form, otherwise a wooden table would have the same form as a tree. The more one reads Marx, the more one becomes clear that he hasn't an inkling of what a use value and an article of utility are. He believes that they are the same. One can excuse him. In spite of his unique efforts in the cultural history of humanity, it was not given to him in practice to immerse himself in either the world of wealth or of use values.

Nevertheless it is precisely this lack of knowledge of the artistic and the artificial elements in the article of utility's character of wealth that reduces the extent of the Marxist theories to a limited period in history which is now past.

We can accept the fact that articles of utility represent the substance or raw

material of commodities. There is, however, just the important thing that use value is something more and something more essential than just commodity substance. It is in itself a value that is certainly devalued in the instant of barter, but immediately takes up its intrinsic value again in the consumer's hand, when the exchange has taken place. *Once bought by the consumer the article of utility is no longer a commodity. It has again become an article of utility.* This determination is necessary for all articles of utility except money.

He who manufactures articles of utility does it primarily because he has use for them. If he makes more than he can use himself, then he has created a utilitarian surplus value. This surplus production is directly valueless to himself. If others are interested in it, then he can give it away. This is called potlatch.\* However, it is this productive *surplus value*, and only this, which is made into commodities, first by the exchange of surplus products in barter and then by the surplus production being exchanged for money, this again being exchanged for other articles of utility. Exploitation arises when a person is not allowed to give his surplus production away to whom he will. Slavery consists in the person no longer being allowed to decide what he has a use for himself. One can thus be exploited before one becomes a slave. The Marxists have not discovered this. However, if one has no right whatever to decide what, how much and why one produces, then one is simply an instrument.

What Marx discovered was that all the process mentioned here is *artificial*, that is, discovered by people, and that *the article of utility also has its substance which is the forms of nature*. However, nature exists, as Lenin maintains, independent of our sensing it and our use of it. This means that nature is not in itself a substance. It is so only in its relation to the human wishes and abilities that create the articles of utility. Nature itself is not a means, and has not in itself an end that serves humanity. Nature is simply the first unavoidable condition for all production. Nature exists in natural forms. The destruction of these natural forms is the process we call the manufacture of articles of utility. One can destroy natural forms without manufacturing anything. But the manufacture of articles of utility is impossible except by a destructive incursion into the natural order. This incursion is called culture. So the foundation of socialism in the order of *nature* makes its theory a denial of art and culture. This is apparent above all in socialism's complete lack of understanding of the agriculture problem.

**Use value is the negation of the article of utility**

Marx is forced to eliminate the whole problem of consumption to avoid seeing the holes in his theory. He does this by simply and primitively maintaining obstinately that there is nothing at all that one could call use value and what one does call use value is in reality what should be called the article of utility. If Marx in the beginning maintains that value and dimension are the same, then he also ends by identifying value with quality or article, which in reality abolishes the difference between quality and quantity upon which dialectical materialism is built. In no other place has Marx used such an agitated tone and such cheap arguments as in this question and, oddly enough, no postulates have been lapped up with greater joy than precisely this rubbish, be it by communists, socialists or capitalists, priests and popes and artists, the whole caboodle.

Marx asserts that the use of the word *value* in connection with articles of utility is just as crazy and pre-scientific as the pre-chemical use of the word salt not just for true salt but also for substances like sugar because there is a purely external similarity between sugar and salt. This parallelization is not, however, a scientific argument but a piece of chicanery that the socialists have also used recently in Denmark to assert that one cannot compare the amounts from the national wealth used for military purposes with those used for cultural institutions like the National Museum, because the military, as everyone can clearly see, has nothing to do with culture. No arguments seem to have so great a carrying capacity as such mental short-circuits.

Of course, Marx himself believed in his own argument. However, he did not follow it. He could not solve the problem. But if he had really followed his own theory in *Das Kapital* and written *article of utility* every time he wrote *use value*, then he would have swiftly discovered the absurdity. But he was careful not to do that, and Marxists since have not dared to do the experiment, but have all faithfully continued to swallow his assertion. One has to hinder discussions about this problem. When Marx says, '*Use value is realized in use or consumption*', then it would be quite meaningless to imagine that he is talking of the article of utility, for the realization of the article of utility is after all because of its production and not its consumption. One does not realize a roll by eating it.

*The use value* of bread is realized in the digestion, in the dissolution and thus in the process of digestion. This is all that can be said directly about use value. Use value must therefore be exactly the opposite of article of utility, *the negation of the article of utility* as article or object, or as actual form.

Marx elaborates, 'As use value, the commodity is above all of differing quality. As exchange value, it can only be of differing quantity.' Here we have arrived back at the concepts of quality and quantity. Does anyone, after this presentation, doubt that use value cannot be the same as the article of utility? If one uses an article of utility one cannot at the same time preserve it as a commodity. In order for an article of utility to be recognized as a commodity in the modern sense, it must be *unused*, remain intact, and it is thus this intact object that Marx calls quality. We will keep to this unambiguous definition of the concept of quality.

However, it is thereby impossible for use value to be the quality of an article as one likes to maintain. Quality, if this word is to have one unambiguous meaning, must simply mean the article in itself, the extent and duration of its body, which in reality are the same, its *condition*.

If I buy myself a pair of shoes, then their consumption and destruction by wear cannot really be their quality. On the contrary, one perceives their *quality as their resistance to destruction*, their permanence or constancy as an article. It is obvious that the shoes will hold their quality best if one never uses them, if one puts them in a cupboard. This is the way the shopkeeper has to treat them. The least use diminishes their price to a degree that no Marxist law can explain. However, if I don't use my shoes, then they are at the same time without value to me. *The value is created in the use* but not by the wear or consumption in itself. I buy good quality shoes precisely to avoid them being swiftly worn out, even though this is, despite everything, unavoidable, if I am to use them. One cannot thus directly identify use or consumption. For bread the problem is even more complex. I do not bite the bread into pieces to destroy it but to produce thereby strength with which to build myself up. Only that part of the bread that gives me strength is a value to me. The rest is pure garbage.

### **Value is process**

Marx says that 'as an article of utility the commodity is quality and as exchange value it is quantity'. This formula, perceived by dialectical materialism as a renewal of the scientific concepts, would, however, remain completely static and unusable, if Marxism did not reckon with what it calls the transition from quality to quantity and vice versa. This process has not been given a clear scientific formulation in the ideology of dialectical materialism.

What evades the attention of Marxists in this formulation is that Marx's so-called exchange value has no more to do with value than the article of utility

has to do with use value. The Marxist pseudo-value, *exchange value*, is *nothing other than the neutralization of two values in a condition of equilibrium* which is called equivalence or equal value – equal validity. Two values which are equally valid abolish each other's value and make each other valueless until they are again torn from their established opposite number. This opposition is fixed in the object we call *currency*. Money in itself as an object is valueless. But it is an article of utility, a form. The special thing about it, however, is that as it is gradually liberated in its pure form, where there is no material covering for it, it has only a purely metaphysical value based exclusively upon belief, upon everyone believing in it. *In the socialist society the banknotes themselves become the measure of what people believe and value*, nothing more. One could abruptly agree that one no longer wanted to believe in the particular banknotes. One could make others and the first ones could be ripped up. They would be valueless, on the metaphysical ground alone that as a matter of pure convention one has agreed not to believe in them anymore.

The market value of things is not conditioned by their quality, far less by their amount. It is conditioned by their *differences*, their variability. To reduce this variability, to standardize a commodity is therefore to say that one is devaluing it. This process of standardization is called economics. The exchange value of two commodities is thus not their equivalence but the dissimilarity in the conditions they offer and this is expressed in the price difference. By reducing this difference to a price difference of a purely quantitative nature, one can fix the price. In reality this means that everything has the same price and thereby there is nothing that has a price anymore. The price no longer exists. The real exchange value exists exclusively in the change or variability in price. When all prices are fixed, trade has become meaningless. The commodity no longer exists. This is the purpose of socialism.

It should thus be correct to put forward the perception that *value and process are the same* and that which Marx calls the value's substance is the true value and not the dimension of the value as he claims. Dimension is nothing more than the quantity of a particular quality. However, *value is a particular quantity of qualities undergoing process or change*.

Matter or natural forms first become substance in the process that changes them not to quantity but to other forms or qualities. Outside the process each substance is, in its own nature, just a special quality or form. The concept of substance is thus characteristic of nothing other than the process itself or the transition between two states. Substance is the material actuality of the change

or the transformation. Let us test the possibilities for a deeper knowledge of the production problem that this opens up.

### **The cycle of production and consumption**

Marx declares that barter implies the following change of form:

Commodity – Money – Commodity (C–M–C)

But this process necessarily presupposes a deeper lying change of form:

Article of Utility – Commodity – Article of Utility (A–C–A)

Behind this lies a third change of form:

Natural Form – Article of Utility – Natural Product (N–A–N)

The most primitive human life form was based on this simple cycle: N–A–N. The city society's trade added a new element to the chain in a cycle N–A–C–A–N. The Greco–Roman money system made the cycle one notch longer: N–A–C–M–C–A–N.\* What new element have the socialists added to this cycle? It is not our task here to indicate this. We would just like to stress that only the study of this cycle is able to give us a real scientific picture of the relationship between production and consumption in modern society. At the same time, it has, however, to be pointed out that, in contrast to agriculture, industry gives nothing back to nature in a rebirth of the values it consumes. Industry's consumption of nature is *irreversible*, as the natural products it leaves behind have always been definitively devalued in human and cultural terms. Industry therefore has a direct contact with that rising depreciation of matter which is called the expansion of the universe. This is the reason why its advocates do not see their own place in a cyclic development, and this is the reason that those who are not in the running must be wary of whichever cycle industry may now find to launch itself into, for behind that grows no grass.

### **A commodity is a socialized article of utility**

The bourgeois revolution against the nobility, the court and the Catholic Church had its point of departure in indignation at the wealth, plenty and luxurious living of these privileged groups, and it set up against them the bourgeois virtues of modest simplicity of conduct, of thrift and frugality. Marx did not even discover that it was this sudden and compulsory thrift in consumption which was the source of capital-creating savings. This tendency did not come on the agenda at all in the revolutionary ideas of socialism. On the

contrary, there was a tendency to promise all the people what the privileged classes had before the bourgeois revolution. According to Marx, the luxury consumption of the individual capitalist plays no role at all in economic considerations.

It is only against the background of this fact that one can understand why socialists feel themselves so dependent upon capitalists that they assume a bourgeois-capitalist revolution to be a necessary prelude to a socialist one. The two revolutions are just two sides of the same affair. Of course, there are purely tactical reasons for not getting too close to the problem. No one makes a revolution to be frugal, especially not poor people. But the reason that it is at all possible for socialists to suppress this problem is that they already assume certain bourgeois-capitalist traits of character as an obvious necessity amongst the people who are to shape socialism. This means that what is called capitalism is nothing other than a particular form of socialism or socialization: a form of socialization really just as deep-seated as the working class's socialization of industry's means of production and what complements it, namely, the socialization of the means of consumption, for *a commodity is nothing other than a socialized means of consumption*, a socialized article of utility. In this way the socialist revolution is nothing other than the completion of the capitalist revolution. The only element removed from capitalism by this completion is private savings, nothing else, for the true wealth in the course of life, its variability in consumption, has already been reduced through the capitalistic mass production of the same article. It is rare today to find a capitalist whose consumption exceeds a petty and bigoted life-form. The difference in the standard of living of a grand duke in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and a great capitalist in Rockefeller's period is grotesque and is becoming steadily greater.

If socialists do not therefore need to deal with the socialization of the article of utility, it is simply because the capitalists have already saved them the labour. This socialization allowing the characterization of an article of utility as a commodity has the three following characteristics:

- a) Only articles of utility of a common interest to the members of society can find a sufficiently large market to be able to be used as commodities. The ideal commodity is the article that everyone wants.
- b) Only an article of utility which is found in sufficiently large numbers of uniform examples can be recognized as a true commodity in the Marxist sense. Industry is only interested in serial production and the interest rises with the number. To open the way for industrial production to such a socialization, *capitalism has had to fight the idea of rarity value* and make

people believe that the special value of handcrafted and individual production was a formalist superstition. This is the reason for Marx's remark about the enmity of capitalism to art, an enmity that has become absolute only in the socialist society, where one maintains that the reproduction is just as valuable as the original.

c) Finally, capitalist production is characterized by the use of art to an immense extent for propaganda on behalf of popular mass production. The advertisement for socialized production is therefore only the natural consequence of the capitalists' advertisement for a socialized consumption. Socialists also avoid taking this economic significance of art into consideration. Therefore they cannot explain why there are types of wine in France that are half as dear as others even though they are just as good. The explanation is that because of the lack of advertisement they are not known and cannot therefore be sold for a high price. The lack of advertisement is due to the limited number of commodities.

### **The container principle and the concept of form**

When we maintain that socialism excludes savings from the capitalist consumption system, then this is really just a propaganda cliché without meaning, for *socialism is in reality constructed on the principle of absolute savings*.

This can only be understood if one includes the article of utility in the economic considerations, and this is probably the most important reason why socialists avoid it. We have been able to establish that the article of utility becomes a commodity in the instant the producer cannot use it himself and it thus becomes directly or immediately of no use to him, and therefore where the direct causal relationship between production and consumption is broken. Only the article of utility saved up in this way (placed in reserve) becomes a commodity, and this happens only in the event of a sufficiently large number of uniform articles of utility existing in the depot. This system of accumulation is the process of commodity genesis and is not eliminated by socialism. On the contrary, it has become an absolutely common principle for all production. The socialist system is based upon a common accumulation of the whole production, without exception, before it is distributed. This occurs with the intention of achieving complete control by such a distribution.

No one up to now has analysed accumulation, which is the same as saving, in its own form, which is the form of the container. Accumulation is dialectical

interplay between container and content. We have noticed that substance is often identified with the concept of content, but it is really nothing more than process. *Substance, in the form of a real content, means the latent power, restrained energy or matter available to be used in a process.* But we have always perceived form as constancy or stability. A container's form is a form that exists only as a direct opposite to the content, its function being to prevent the content entering into a process except under controlled and severely limited conditions. In this way, the container form is thus something completely different from the form of the material in itself, where only the content's own form exists. It is only in the biological world that the container becomes an elemental function. The whole of biological life has, so to speak, occurred on the basis of a development of this opponent relationship between container form and the material's own form. It is this path that technology is continuing in an artificial way and is definitively systematizing through what we call the measurement processes, for any goal whatsoever is nothing other than a form of container, and what is called by that strange expression scientific control is only the establishment of a constant relationship between objective forms and artificial container forms manufactured by man.

These measurements or container forms are established as purely conventional oppositions to the forms being measured. Generally the container hides the content's own form and thus possesses a third form, the sensual form or the apparent form. In the discussion about forms, these three forms are never clearly separated. But all three forms are actual and make up sides of our experience of matter. They make up a scale of oppositions that allow us to distinguish between the matter of the unorganized world, the forms of biological nature and our own purely sensory world. But another world unites with these three actual forms, the world of imagined forms, formed by thought and fantasy, the symbolic forms.

Scientific and philosophical systems differ from each other in the way they confuse and mix up these forms, which, as forms, have nothing to do with each other, if the descriptions are shaped into clear and unambiguous concepts. If one can establish that there is an opposition between *quality* and *quantity* as two opposite characteristics of matter which is also the opposition that exists between *units* and *similarities*, then it is precisely the principle of container form which permits people to be fooled that this opposition can be abolished as *the similarity and uniformity of the content is neutralized by the container's function as a unit.* By this one comes to the formula; the greater the unit or quality, the greater the similarity or quantity, as the law of probability abolishes the *meaning* of the differences to the same degree as the units are increased in

number. In the unit *container-content* the opposition between mass and amount is abolished.

This storage of accumulation or box principle, this insurance or savings principle, is the basis for the whole of the modern tin-can philosophy which sees progress as the tendency towards greater and greater similarities. One has just to extend the container, to make it bigger and bigger, which isn't so difficult as it can be changed independently of the content because its form has nothing at all to do with the form of the content. This is the capitalist as well as the socialist principle of development and all their reflections about the relationship between form and content only serve the purpose of developing this tinned goods industry.

### Surplus and economics

The word *state* means condition, the static, the quality or the form. The great discrepancy of Marxism is that it has not understood what the state in its innermost being is, that it is that purely biological form, the container. The biological cycle in nature is called *ecology* and it is the mistake of the Marxists not to have seen that unpolitical economics, ecology and the pure doctrine of the state are the same. Despite the opposite being maintained, socialism therefore becomes the society of the pure state. This cannot be otherwise. The day that the lie is rooted out, everything is true and then truth is abolished. Really this is the way that the socialists wish to abolish the state.

Marxism is the first philosophy that has stressed the economic problem as the most important, as the basic condition for human conduct. In order to avoid the direct consequences of this theory's fusion with socialism, a distinction was discovered between higher Marxism and what was called vulgar Marxism. *Vulgus* means people, just like *populus*, and this more lowly regarded popular Marxism, which in reality is not taken into account, probably corresponds to what were called the vulgar or folk democracies in eastern Europe after the war. I here have to make this absolutely vulgar perception of Marxism my own, for I am an adherent of democracy.

Since industrialization, economics and economic problems have played a steadily rising role in human activity. It is therefore appropriate for once to examine thoroughly what this new dominant concept truly covers. If one goes back to the original speculations about economics, one discovers that they limited themselves to only one of the three sides that today comprise economics, namely the ordering of *expenditures* in a housekeeping. Neither incomes nor

savings were dealt with at that time. Only later was the concept of economics moved over to the savings achieved by limiting expenditures.

These savings are called economizing. The question of from where the savings that are to be made or distributed are to come has not yet been posed. This undefined dimension is called *wealth*. However once the economic question is posed in its entirety as the relationship between income, saving and expenditure, the basis has been created for the development of what is called *political economics*, which deals with the question of the production, distribution and consumption of *wealth*.

### **Expenditure – saving – income**

We have already indicated at the beginning that wealth has nothing to do with what is necessary for the maintenance of life, and thus to the economic in its true sense. Wealth is surplus, abundance, multiplicity or what modern economics calls surplus value. If this wealth had always been used from the dawn of time in accordance with its own essence, as waste, unprofitable consumption and superfluous luxury, then an economic problem would never have existed, but neither would technical development. Economic problems first arise the moment wealth is saved, collected and stored, thus taking on the character of a reserve. It is through the accumulation of wealth that one economizes. Thus this is immediately just a question of a choice between consumption and non-consumption and it is this problem that occupies the thoughts of most people.

Karl Marx was the first person to move the main interest in economic considerations consistently over to the relationship between production and saving. He maintained that the saving of products from time immemorial has been the source of all humanity's misfortunes and that the equivalence between human production and consumption is the formula for happiness, as it hinders the accumulation of wealth. Strangely enough this leads to the demand for absolute saving.

A completely equable economics would thereby arise, a true economy, and a new economic science, no longer interested in wealth, but, on a purely economic basis, able to control the harmony between the various parts of the economic whole. This would make economics an absolute unit, a quality, by excluding the problem of variability or what we call the concept of value. *Human economics* has hereby become identified with *biological ecology* and can be perceived as natural, and an integrated part of the natural sciences. This

socialist economics is far more superior in its theory than political economics, because the latter systematically avoids analyzing the source of wealth. Its success has led to a pure doctrine of political economics hardly being found anywhere in the world anymore. Everything is consciously or unconsciously stamped with the principles of socialist economics.

### **Economic politics versus political economics**

In order to understand this development, it is necessary to understand what the concept of *politics* really means in its basic essence. What in Hellenic city society was called politics, and is still the fundamental meaning today, are those actions carried out within a social community *without any regard whatever to economic considerations*. Politics is surplus fellowship or a social unit's anti-economic actions, the variability in the actions of a social group. Gathering the description of all these unique and incessantly changing events together is called the writing of history. Politics is thus the medium for introducing something new and unexpected into the pattern of actions of a whole group. This is called historical development and is a purely artificial or artistic phenomenon.

The 'Critique of political economics' of *Das Kapital* is in no way a critique of economics as such. On the contrary, it is a critique of the control of economics through the purely uneconomical activity called politics that is still frustrating all objective economic calculations. As an antidote to the political consequences, which are always uncertainty, instability, crises, social and productive disorder, Marx suggests a socialist politics or more precisely an anti-political economic system, which must necessarily remove any possibility or necessity of making politics.

As communists see that the state is used as a political instrument, the socialist movement reckons that one can dissolve the state by rooting out the class which dominates politics. The political goal of Marxism is therefore to replace the state with an inoffensive and automatic administration or a system of distribution of those things which could be of common interest. As in socialist terms that is everything, this is to say that this administrative apparatus would control everything. Statistics robots will compute, guided by effective soundings of public opinion, in accord with the wishes or otherwise of the majority, and in the society of the future secure us a perfect and effective dictatorship of the majority, without the least possibility of fooling the people, that is to say, of making politics with them and thereby allowing people to dominate other people. The problem will be solved.

There is just the snag that this technical administration which today has developed with growing speed all over the world to the east and the west, although it abolishes the politics of cultivating politics, does not at the same time, as was believed, abolish the state. On the contrary. *Everything becomes the state*. What was overlooked was the fact that *the state is not and never has been a directly political instrument*. The state's function has always been to avoid or at any rate diminish and even out the misfortunes that politics brought with it. The state was created to create stability and this stability is precisely the same as what is called economics. The statesman in his pure form appears neither as emperor, nobleman nor capitalist. He comes into history under the name of '*major domus*', the householder or the economist. In this category we will find all the really great statesmen of Europe. He is the economist, the bureaucrat, the first model for the statistics robot, even though he is encumbered with faults because he is only a human being and not a machine. If the socialist goal is itself in this way in absolute conflict with the progressive ideas of the working classes, this is because of this misunderstanding of the concept of the state, and their great illusion about being able to liberate themselves from this apparatus by perfecting it.

In order to come to power, the socialists have worked out a political programme. They are therefore forced to accept the political perception of the state, a perception which contrasts completely with those perspectives in which Marx believed and which came from the theory of the swift dissolution of the state. They wish to utilize the apparatus of the state and thereby become themselves utilized for just the opposite of what they aspired to. In the Soviet Union, they believed that they were on the way to abolishing surplus value, but without knowing it they have created the greatest and most sensational completely unusable surplus value in the history of humanity, a star that could lift humanity above its attachment to the earth. The danger of this situation is that they themselves believe that they have done this of necessity, to defend themselves, and thus for military reasons. For this reason, they are blind to the fact that this new human possibility for expansion could not under any circumstances be coupled with the production of H-bombs, but on the contrary must definitively close this chapter of the history of humanity as the final mistake for this new perspective to have any possibility at all of development.

Instead, however, bureaucracy swarms everywhere. As the true so-called 'power factors' within the areas of capitalism, socialism and communism, these snotty little functionaries are increasing more and more. Like the counter-revolutionary armies of socialism, they are spreading out over all branches of human existence, for *bureaucracy is the container system of society*. In the

name of economic control, and to preserve their own meaningless little existence, they sit by the innumerable screws and taps of the whole system of pipes. They have all 'the power' except one, the one able to change anything at all, and this is really the only power that counts. That the social justification for the sputnik and the atom bomb is the same everywhere, even though they open two quite opposite perspectives, is the fault of that ridiculous flock of politicians, economists and generals which in the USA carries the delicious name of *the power elite*.

### **Value is inconstancy – quality is immutability**

What must now be the consequence of our new definition of value? Firstly it must be that we can maintain that value never under any circumstances can be a *state* of things, a constant. Thus value does not exist in the same way as things. Values arise and pass away. One cannot therefore own values, as it is so nicely put. One can only own objects containing a latent value, a possible value. A substance is a possibility of value. Thus in theory all objects in the world possess values, if people are able to extract them. This is thus dependent exclusively upon people themselves. On the other hand, one could say that everything is value in itself, because everything is in process. This is just not in peoples' direct interest. All matter is in constant emergence and disappearance. Value can therefore be characterized as an objective property of matter. Or, more correctly, if quality is the property of matter then value is the material characteristics or abilities, the dynamics of matter. The value of a form or a quality thus depends upon *the ease with which one can dissolve the form and liberate its latent energies*, whilst its character of quality consists in its resistance to this. The ease with which a quality is transformed to another quality is thus its value. The socialist attack upon the right of private ownership thus comes from the will to destroy a system that blocks the free play of values by making them private, which is to say socially inaccessible. However, the law of mechanics says that a form of energy cannot be counteracted without the energy gathering itself after its liberation into an even more inaccessible form or quality, which thus becomes *more valueless and precisely therefore of higher quality*. It is this opposition to which the socialists close their eyes.

Fixed values do not exist. If they are fixed, that is to say that they are qualities and not values. In his analysis of industrial society, Marx demonstrates how *variable capital* is transformed to *constant capital*, that capital from being a value is transformed into a quality, and that it is precisely

this transformation that shows that the transformation of the capitalist society into a socialist society is unavoidable and necessary. The socialists have shown their theoretical superiority for it is extremely easy to demonstrate this process purely scientifically

Value perceived as process can only be progressive or regressive. It is here that the socialists have allowed themselves to be fooled, for this means that value can only exist in the form of rising surplus value or depreciation, as inflation and deflation. The fixation of a form through a rising reproduction of the same form is the neutralization of its value, its transformation to quantity or '*Entfremdung*'

### **Uniform work is valueless – only new ideas create surplus value**

Marx maintains that what is called *constant capital* is the apparatus of production, and thus the industrial machinery. This apparatus is in itself unable to enter into a process, to create wealth or surplus value. It can only repeat the same production in the same tempo. The more industrial production develops its technical apparatus the more production becomes valueless as a commodity, until complete automation makes the product completely free of charge. In this way Marx has shown that it is not the machines that produce value, in this case surplus value. *Surplus value arises exclusively in variable capital* and this variable capital is manpower, *the human being*.

This statement makes Marx draw the conclusion that it is the worker that creates surplus value. But it is of significance to investigate more closely where this surplus value really comes from. Where is the variable, the element of variation that makes the rising profit possible?

It cannot exist in the abilities and diligence of the individual worker, his personal and professional characteristics. Neither capitalists nor socialists reckon with this in the industrial production. The workers are not exploited in their abilities or in the quality and value of the work, but exclusively on the basis of the *amount of work*, the quantity. Work is measured in man-hours. As it is thus in the exploitation of man and not of machine that profit and wealth occurs, Marx perceives the content of value as the work put into it and the standard of measurement for the object is one hour's human work in capitalist as well as socialist industry.

But even Marx was clear that it was not because the workers could be made to labour for longer and longer periods that profit rose. This has become even more distinct after the organization of the working class and the reduction in

working time, for profit is still rising. How do the Marxists explain this condition? The explanation is enormously simple.

The precondition for this explanation is *that every producing human in the world has the right to what he himself produces*. If this basis, which is Marxism's great, humanistic achievement in world history, is removed, then the whole meaning of Marxism vanishes. Now it is demonstrable that the industrial worker can produce far more than he himself consumes to maintain life, and with technical development he takes less and less time to achieve the production necessary for himself. As he nevertheless continues to work at the same tempo, there is, however, a steadily increasing surplus of production, and as this is taken from him he is exploited to an ever increasing degree.

If we now stick to the capitalist and socialist evaluation of industrial labour as a purely quantitative dimension, where human characteristics play no role, then it is also quite obvious that the purely mechanical work could be carried out to a greater and greater degree by machines and thus carried out free of charge. Then the conclusion becomes in reality that *in principle mechanical work is valueless*.

Within mechanics the concept of work is *the product of quantity or tension*. If it is possible to disregard tension as a factor in industrial labour and to perceive labour purely quantitatively, then this is because *the whole of the factory installation keeps production in a constant tension* common to all. This is the reason that there is an equivalence between one man-hour and another. No variability of any significance is possible in the tempo of work. Thus the machine represents the inertia or the resistance to changes in the working process. The valuelessness of labour is conditioned by this constancy in tension. If one man-hour is equivalent to another man-hour, then all human labour is free of charge or valueless. This is the weakness in the Marxist theory of exploitation, for if industrial labour is without value in itself, then the worker represents a higher human value than other human classes, not as maintained because of his work achievement, but on the contrary because he has preserved his human values intact despite the work, because these values are not utilized or introduced in the process.

If there is something correct in Marxism's theory of value, it is in no way connected with work. If the measurement of value is perceived as man-hours and this has nothing to do with work, then it simply has to be *the human being's time* and nothing else that is the variable capital to which he himself owns the property rights.

Surplus value is not created in the work but in the variability of the work. In reality this is well known. Movement, change, and not the price dimension,

creates the profit. But where does this variability come from? It cannot come from the machines working with clockwork precision. It cannot come from the workers either, who labour with their accustomed constancy. It is just as unlikely to come from the capitalist or the manufacturer who makes the factory yield its utmost, which is also constant. It is thus the transformation of industry itself as such that creates surplus value. Therefore surplus value is, as we have seen, the result of a rising acceleration of production. But who creates this acceleration? It is those who have a new idea, those who discover new machines and processes, *the inventors*. Here we are at *the true source of rising surplus value, human ingenuity* and imagination. A new invention has already lost its ability to create surplus value the day all the competitors own the machine, when it is common to all. The socialist countries have been able to overlook this question because they have been able to exploit the exploiters in the capitalist countries for their inventions. But this problem has become topical today.

### **Time – space – and event**

Trade is exchange. Transport is displacement. These two processes are basically different. *Unilateral or what is called irreversible transport, and thus a transport where neither interchange nor return transport takes place, is called progress*. Progress is thus pure transport. This progressive movement is necessary in order for a movement to be *oriented*. Without it, a rudder has no function at all, even though a boat without a rudder is also oriented by the advance of the water, as it drifts with the current. In order to give possibilities of orientation, progressive movement must be movement collected from within in relation to the surrounding element.

Progress is neither necessary, absolute nor ideal. Einstein explains that a uniform movement in space is without orientation, and that in a space speeding off into outer space we can only locate up and down, as we do on the earth's surface, if the speed is still rising. This explains why what is called general progress also appears as a general increase in speed, a constant acceleration. The whole of our conscious orientation is conditioned by this rising acceleration, which unites our universal experiences with our most primary conditions and thereby creates our ability to experience the connection called causality. If the idealistic belief in progress is bankrupt stock today, this, however, in no way abolishes the significance progress still has for us. We have just lost certain illusions and must in the future base our perception of the whole question upon quite new principles, which have to be combined with the

three basic factors, time, space and event.

We have to demonstrate that time becomes space and space time. We now know that a star observed at a distance of 40 light years is just as old in time as the distance is long. To observe through the instrument of time or of space is thus a simple interchange.

Time is change which can be regarded as a progressive movement in space whilst space appears as a constant which can only be observed if one is participating in that movement called time. Thus neither time nor space possess an actuality, existence or value outside this change or process, that is to say, outside the active combination called the time-space continuum. The action of time-space is the process and this process is in itself the transformation of time to space and space to time. These transformations are called events.

The rigidity, inertia, constancy or quality in matter rises with the speed of movement to the degree that one could put forward the claim that quality and speed are the same. Value is thus found not in the speed but in the transformation of the speed, and the less this speed is the easier the speed and the direction can be changed. The general acceleration thus creates a rising progress but is in itself the tendency to greater and greater inertia. This is the double-edged effect of the general tendency of progress. A real development of value thus cannot be identical with rising devaluation or acceleration even if it is dependent upon the same.

A person's lifetime or span of years is his personal property. But this property only becomes value if this lifetime is realized, and the realization of a lifetime happens through its variation, its changeability. Therefore the perfect industrial worker realizes nothing of his life during the working process, as this is completely eventless. Seen in purely human terms, working time in its industrial form is active waiting time. Therefore the abolition of the right to private activity only makes the person more and more valueless. This is the reason why socialization can only have a standard of value in the activation of humanity's leisure time, if socialization is to have any human purpose, something which is not necessary. *Leisure time* is therefore the only thing that has value in modern society and the modern form of exploitation is concentrated upon precisely this one point: how can we steal the individual's free time from him? This is the greatest problem of modern state politics.

**Progress and change. Value is transport**

That I bother at all to concern myself with something as deadly boring as economics and into the bargain do myself the even more killing inconvenience of translating what I have written and then publishing it in Danish, then, of course, this is from the conviction that this ought to be enormously significant to the Scandinavian people. Whether this is right or wrong is not my business. With me any responsibility stops at the purely personal question of conscience, to get it said and especially to get it said at a moment where it could, if wished, be included in the economic deliberations which it seems are to bring in their wake deep-seated political changes in Scandinavia's relationship to the surrounding world, and because these political deliberations are said to have been concluded upon a purely economic basis.

As I set out my theory of value in connection with my theory about the natural order, it is very evident that this is created from an analysis of the Scandinavian cultural tradition as compared with other cultural traditions, and that it is an attempt to take the fundamental Scandinavian attitude to these problems. If I therefore make the assertion that *value is the transport of forces* and not the size of these forces, nor their quantity, then this is a direct critique of economic policy in postwar Scandinavia, for, by tying itself to the belief in the superiority of dimension and quantity over variability, this policy has denied the economic principle which I am setting out here as a Scandinavian contribution to the problem. If this theory does not have general validity, then there is always a chance that it has Scandinavian validity. The unique context of Scandinavian cultural development from the Stone Age to the present day makes it enormously simple to demonstrate that our periods of full bloom have always coincided with those periods when we have concentrated all our wealth, our surplus of human enthusiasm around the problem of transport. This is especially apparent in the Nordic Bronze Age, the art of which is one long tribute to the holy transport, and it is apparent in the Viking period, where the positive element was not the plundering, rapine or trade but transport and especially the transport of precious goods. We have already indicated previously that the great humanistic discovery that Marx made was that *only in humanity, never in machines or instruments, arises wealth or surplus value*. This is the reason that human transport, especially if it is superfluous or unnecessary, is the best source of human wealth. This can be studied in the immense pilgrim transactions of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, which created all our wonderful church art. The same is also true today where, with

its rising surplus, the car industry is on the way to making car traffic impossible.

I have found, however, the most shattering commentary to what is being prepared today in Scandinavian politics in Palle Lauring's fantastically clear analysis of Scandinavia's economic decline at the end of the Middle Ages in his book about *The Sons of Valdemar and the Union*.<sup>\*</sup> Every Scandinavian politician ought to read the section on our childish rash indifference to the transport problem: our self-important Viking conservatism and chivalrous enthusiasm for the *fata morgana* of the German regional farmer. History repeats itself. Nothing is learnt. Nothing is forgotten. I will not go into historical considerations here. The only thing I would indicate is that a people that voluntarily renounces valuing what is the most precious element in its own being, in which it has shown itself to be superior to all other peoples over millennia, has thereby sinned not only against itself but against all humanity, which develops precisely through the wealth of differing abilities and contributions to the development of humanity by the various peoples and cultures. Only by the development of this our special ability are Danes and Scandinavians as a whole in the same boat. This is the only boat we have. Without it we are wreckage and bodies washed ashore. And with uncomfortable clarity this too can be read in our history. To an overwhelming degree our fame abroad is unfortunately a stressing of this side of our existence and hardly without reason. However, this is outweighed by Scandinavians having, on the strength of our special culture, all the natural preconditions for being the best and most secure transporters in the world.

### Who owns whom?

Let us now sort right from wrong. In *Das Kapital*, Karl Marx has shaped a scientific analysis of the economic character of the commodity. The treatment of this concrete subject is a scientific achievement which can never be shaken. In this limited area, Karl Marx has realized a scientific knowledge that corresponds to Heisenberg's demand 'that it has universal validity and can be neither changed nor improved'

At the same time, with the economic perspective gradually being realized more and more, as Marx foresaw, the *political* programme of Marxism has lost its interest. In the focus of events, it has already become past and history. A third value in this work, which can never be diminished, is hereby liberated, the artistic value, the literary human value.

In human sympathy, even, I dare to say, in poetic and dramatic force, this work surpasses most of what the poets of the same period have depicted. If, through the rich knowledge and the careful documentation, one is able to decipher the terrible tension of this striking document of its time, then one cannot avoid seeing life in a different way. I mention this not to appear as a literary critic, but as just the truism it is for me as it must be for all humanity. In this area too the value of *Das Kapital* is universal. It forms a stage in the history of humanity.

In its demand for the protection of the weak against the thoughtless and violent exploitation of the strong, it is an accusation and at the same time a rule of conduct in direct continuation of the doctrine of the New Testament, which it outdoes at exactly the same point that Christ outdid the Pharisees of the Old Testament. This is why Christianity is just as little able to condemn Marxist socialism with any right as the Pharisees were able to shape a legal judgement over Christ. In the struggle against socialism, the Christian church has had to use the same means as the Pharisees used against Christ. The Pharisees' demand for forgiveness was outdone by Christ. Marx simply maintains that no individual has the right to draw up accounts over his efforts in the community. Everything must be forgiven when everything is owed by all to all. Against this demand, the champions of Christianity stand just as disarmed as the Pharisees did before Christ. This why the principle of socialism is spreading all over the world.

'Communism is a classless societal system with uniform ownership by the people of the means of production and complete equality of the members of society,' it says in the Soviet Union's Communist Party programme. This resembles what is also in the American constitution and no one can ignore the fact that the means of production in the West are being more and more socialized.

But what about the exploitation of the strong by the weak?

# Part 2:

## The exploitation of the unique

**Noteworthy insights and outcomes with inserted remarks**

**P.H.**

*This section has never been published before. It is dedicated to the critic and architect Poul Henningsen, a cultural personality whose range and breath of vision will possibly one day outshine those of Gropius, le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright. Danes frequently remark that it is easy to criticize, which proves that the Danish people lack a critical sense. Poul Henningsen's repeated criticism of the exploitation of art and culture by the state and the holders of power (including the broad public) is elucidated here in dry, scientific calculations, that show the method by which this exploitation takes place.\**

### **The transformation of the proletariat from value to quality**

The struggle to elevate the proletariat without property to conditions of human worth, and to give the working class weapons and arguments in its fight for human rights that has been carried on since the rise of industrialization, has been waged with the help of artists and authors. One could even say that what recognition, what dignity there has been about this struggle is to the highest degree due to the efforts on the part of artists and intellectuals.

It is obvious that such a creative solidarity with the working class from a social group not working in industry could never be explained as idealism, as the theory that explains and justifies the working class's takeover of power in society is in itself anti-idealistic, materialistic and based on demonstrating the significance of economic interests as the basis of society. If what is called the left-wing intelligentsia has supported this struggle, then the working class must reckon that this has happened because one possesses a certain degree of intelligence.

Consequently this group must itself feel utilized by this prevailing class, at any rate, if it forms solidarity with those who wish, according to the programme, to hinder people using other people. As all the artificial privileges derived from inheritance of property, titles of social rank, capital and other means of exploitation are now or in the process of being abolished and as the powers of the nobility, the church and capitalism are gradually diminished by revolution or by a quiet development connected with it, it has become apparent that the formula for justice and economic balance that satisfies the worker in industry cannot be used at all for the creative activity. A place for this within the capitalist and socialist system has simply been forgotten, and it is regarded as a waste of time. However, this activity has a certain parasitic right to live on in the shadows within the bounds of capitalism, on the basis of a certain liberalism. But in the socialist system this right is definitively eliminated.

This condition results in two opposite tendencies within modern art today. One is about finding a purely ideological justification even for this removal of creative activity, and the other is about justifying our rights to economic existence by the rules of economic computation that are today adopted in modern society. We have no right at all to complain about being excluded from the economic whole if we are unable to demonstrate the rules by which an indisputable fairness could be shown and how exploitation goes on. The broader population have the greatest grounds for suspicion about an intelligentsia unable to provide an elementary form of intelligence sufficient to demonstrate its own economic basis for existence.

If the proletariat without property has been the dominant factor in creative life for a century, then this is not, as the politicians believe, because of this class's unity or quality. On the contrary, it is because of its value, its unique availability and openness, conditioned by owning nothing and therefore having nothing to look after, nothing to lose, and thus having everything to win. This unique availability gave the working class a human surplus value that contrasted rawly and harshly with the bourgeoisie's self-centred petty little home-life.

So what did this class win? Here arose the socialist theory of the takeover by the proletariat of the means of production. This was realized in a limited geographical area and there was thereby a change from availability to its opposite, absolute engagement. *Value was transformed to quality.* The working class's interest and mentality was also transformed in a thought process that is the exact opposite of that which had ruled the proletariat without property, and the understanding between the worker in a capitalist and a socialist society only became possible to the degree that capitalist society became socialized and the working class in the capitalist countries changed mentality. From being absolutely without property, in their own perception they became the absolute propertied class. The only ones who continued to have everything to win and nothing to lose were the artists, who are today the only population group that has preserved its complete availability. Every trick has been tried to abolish this too. But as this is itself the precondition for creative work, the result has just been that though art continues to be made, it is without value. For the artists who have preserved their free availability and creative ability, life has become more and more dramatic and lawless. One could say homeless.

At the same time rising automation in industry has meant that the work lacking quality that was the basis of calculation for social production is carried out more and more by machines. Hereby the very basis for continued development is slipping towards a calculation of equivalence based upon one hour's industrial work lacking in quality. The undifferentiated working class is coming unstuck and losing its unity, whilst specialization is spreading.

So one comes to the interesting alternative! *Is one to be paid for consuming as well as producing, and is one thus to be paid for living in society?* This must be the logical consequence of society owning individuals. One no longer has the right to decide what one wants to consume or produce. This seems to be the current tendency in modern politics the world over. We will not bother to indicate the completely absurd consequences of this tendency here. It is only necessary to point out that the starting point for Marxism's criticism of capitalist exploitation of the individual is the postulate about the individual's

property being his own productivity. If one abolishes this property right, then the individual will, of course, never under any circumstances be exploited again, for then there will be nothing that belongs to him. As an argument against exploitation, this solution is, however, more than absurd, for it abolishes any possibility of establishing a relationship between production and consumption. Only the abolition of any variability in consumption, an absolute uniformity of consumption, permits the reduction of the consumption question to a pure question of numbers where the individual freely uses *as much* as he needs because he cannot decide *what* he needs. But even in this case one does not avoid a problem, as, for example, it appears to be of great significance in the USA.

The lacking respect for the valueless product invokes a quite idiotic and meaningless waste that is simply due to this indifference.

Romain Rolland tells somewhere of a wood-carver who decorated a castle with figures which the prince amused himself by using for target practice. That the great majority reacts in any other way is a big illusion. Thus even in the case of everyone having to consume exactly the same, a control of consumption is still indispensable. The idea of free and uncontrolled consumption is stuff and nonsense. Standardization only makes the possibility of perfect control easier, nothing more.

### **The secret knowledge**

The triolectic theory of complementarity is based on the recognition of the observer's relationship to the observed. Carried over to the economic problem this gives a clear perception of what it means when something is perceived as 'free of charge'

If we perceive the air as free of charge, it is because we are living in the atmosphere. If we were imprisoned and locked into a larder, then we would also perceive food as free of charge, if we did not begin to speculate how long the stores would last and if there was plenty of everything in relation to the time of one's confinement. All the different things would then be of equal value, equivalent, just like the various things on a *smorgåsbord*. Unless everyone sequestered their own favourite dish, then it would not be possible to start bartering at all.

If the larder, on the other hand, is locked so securely that one cannot get in and so stands hungry outside, then there is no possibility of barter either. But then the larder is valued at a higher and higher price the hungrier one becomes.

It becomes an unattainable 'ideal', which in a desperate situation one would risk one's life to reach. 'Idealism' is nothing more than such an actual or imagined larder.

If therefore socialists assert that they are against idealism, then this is only 'true' in the sense that they are just acknowledging realism and value in their own 'ideal'.

If one is sitting in the container and it is big enough, then everything there is in the container, and all that is not locked into other containers, appears to be free of charge. But if this is an *artificial* container, then it has to be constantly maintained. Then the container *in itself* is not free of charge. Only an agreement to build and maintain the container leads to the artificial container being built. If such a container is a building not needing much attention then that building costs nothing, when the building costs have been paid. But this is an excellent object for exploitation, by rent, interest or tax. Today it is all the same whether one pays the first, the second or the third. It costs just as much and it all goes by and large into the same treasury. Thus exploitation can take place outside barter.

If one maintains that quality and value are the same, then what has to be paid for art and culture must be an exploitation of exactly the same kind. This exploitation, which is common in both East and West, is the reason why it has not hitherto been possible to demonstrate how art is milked by the holders of social power, whether they represent the people or an upper class. If this trielectic method is acknowledged, then its economic consequences must also be acknowledged. If the economic consequences are not acknowledged, then it will be necessary to forbid all philosophical use of the method or to prove that it is false.

No human knowledge can be locked into a container, unless it is called a *secret*. If the proletariat had kept secret the knowledge that Karl Marx had discovered, then the working class's takeover of power would have become an *absolute* takeover of power. But Marx was working above all for humanity, and Marxism has therefore changed the whole world. An idea became a social force, *whilst* it streamed out to the masses. No one, either in the East or the West, wishes to acknowledge the change that Marxism has wrought in the thought processes of all, and thereby in their mode of action. It is the strength of this idea's radiant power that neither Marx nor the Marxists have taken into consideration. Not even those who call themselves Marxists have the patent for Marxism any longer, and not even the anti-Marxists can stop thinking in a Marxist way. This is especially true of the most eminent capitalists. The day an idea is known and used by all, it no longer has value.

### **Communism is the negation of socialism**

By adopting the principle of keeping knowledge secret, the Soviet Union has taken over the Roman or Latin power dialectic, which is based upon an opposition between ethical rights and, on the other hand, the united principle of aesthetics and knowledge. A stagnation of the development of human social rights hereby occurs, whilst the whole of science is placed at the service of chance expansion. Progress thereby becomes more and more asocial as society's productive powers have to be utilized more and more effectively to maintain this expansion's front rank above the research of other countries.

The competitive relationship between the USSR and the USA that is established directly by the division of Europe into an American and a Russian colony, separated by an imaginary Iron Curtain and the atom-bomb competition, has now led to the USA, with ruthless consistency, being sucked up in space. It will not be long before the colony-areas of these two countries are tied to that wagon each in its own area. In relation to the immense victory that this new development means for humanity, I can easily take the consequences of this sucking-in lightly. It is too magnificent for an artist, at any rate, to have any desire to look pettily at this problem.

But there is a but! From the knowledge about social and economic structuration we have today, we can indicate in advance that the initial basis of this development, a mutually aggressive, militarily competitive relationship, is in the long run unsustainable. At a certain moment, this endless perspective will only be able to be carried further if the whole of humanity voluntarily or without any form of force, betrayal or threat of war goes in for the task. This will happen only if the task is directly allotted to humanity in concert and not to an increasing degree arrogated by an aristocratic power elite, which will not even be able to avoid starting racial manipulations in a far more rational and consistent way than the Nazis, because the selection will have quite precise and controllable goals.\*

If those nations that have not up to now been directly involved in the system of military opposition in control today do not begin to prepare from now on for such a future re-adjustment of this whole future perspective on a universally human, humanistic basis through a systematic critique of the imperialistic colonization programme as it developed in the last century, then the whole of this fantastic perspective will one day subside. Unless opposition to and absolute independence from the whole of the old military programme and above all from that of the atom bomb is asserted, and the whole of this threatening

apparatus is abolished, all progress will fall back into an indissoluble conflict situation.

In its relationship to capitalism, socialism is an opposition, a negation. But the Russians have not yet discovered that the transition from socialism to communism must also manifest itself as a negation, that communism is the complete negation of socialism. As this communistic stage is reached, socialism and capitalism become exactly the same. This is what has happened today. In more and more areas, separation between socialism and capitalism is becoming, as we have seen in the previous text, more and more impossible. They have formed a synthesis, a synthesis that today is neither one thing nor the other, neither capitalism nor socialism. This is the reason that all the talk about their opposition fills humanity more and more with loathing, because of the obvious emptiness of the platitudes.

### **So there was Stalin. But there is no Stalingrad**

Czesław Miłosz, a Polish author, has sent an open letter to Picasso through the Grove Press of New York. Part of this reads:

*'Like each one of us, you are responsible for what happens on our planet and your special responsibility is measured in the distance between your fame and the anonymity of the ordinary citizen.'*

I accuse you, Picasso, and not just you, but all the artists and intellectuals in the West who have allowed themselves to be snared by words. In this period of atrocities and suffering you all chose, free as you were to choose, the most careful conformity. This gave you – perhaps also your conscience – an appearance of men who belonged on the side of progress. But in reality your weight counted in the scales and stole hope from those in the East who did not wish to subordinate themselves to absurdity. No one can say what would have been the consequence of a categorical protest made by you all against the official doctrine forced upon art in the East. If the support you gave to the terror counts, then your indignation would also have counted. It is therefore just that your irresponsibility is revealed, so that your future biographers do not forget it.

I hardly need tell you what your name, which the Stalinists appropriated as their property, has been used to conceal.

Imagine, Picasso, that your biography contained the following passage: At the height of Hitler's power Picasso painted his portrait. You painted Stalin's portrait and it called forth the party's rejection because it did not conform, etc.

– If you answer that, in spite of everything, Stalin was not so bad as is said, then you reject the witness made public in the press in the East by people who know what they are writing.

*Why should you and so many others be exempted from duties that weigh upon us all? \**

This writer reveals that he was cultural attaché for the Polish Peoples' Democracy in 1948 and thus had had a lightning official bureaucratic career, like those we saw springing up in that period in communist and socialist organisations all over the world. A representative of the new Eastern power elite is thus here attacking the creative elite in Western Europe because it is irresponsible and does not fight the absurd and ridiculous, yet wishes to give the appearance of being progressive.

Should the creative elite of Western Europe fight this ridiculous absurdity, then it will have enough to do, and then it will go hard on Czesław Miłosz and similar red tape merchants.\*

*How can the responsibility of famous people be in a proportional relationship to their fame whilst at the same time it being a requirement that they should have the same responsibility as an anonymous person?* Here we find the bureaucratic and popular absurd concept of the creative elite expressed in all its royal absurdity. Like all bureaucrats, Miłosz has obviously lost all sense of humour. He hardly knows about Ubu or that Picasso has a high rank within the *College de 'Pataphysique*, the praises of which have been sung by the afore-mentioned Grove Press.\* Just as the Munich verdict on Gruppe Spur for blasphemy and pornography has been issued by this excellent organization as a highly-comical document,\* so the Miłosz letter is in the same context.

Miłosz maintains that the poor geniuses in Eastern Europe have only the choice between 'subordinating themselves to conformism or to emigrate'. He forgets that Picasso has been an emigrant since the Spanish Civil War. Picasso has never been Spanish cultural attaché and Stalin has never invited him to exhibit in Moscow.

What Picasso and we others are accused of today is our solidarity with the Soviet Union during the period that Stalin was leader and that we swallowed the thesis about 'historical necessity' which, according to Miłosz, only served as a debasement that *almost* delivered Russia into the hands of Hitler. Yes, we know well that the Russian generals today, who are to save the cause of peace with their atom bombs, have become pure-washed angels so that the good, little citizen can sleep peacefully in his little bed with his sweet wife without risking being sent to Siberia, without his responsibility being measuring according to his fame.

There is no difference in thought process at all between Milosz and the Russian writer P.S. Mstislavski, whose article 'Communism for Equality' has now been issued as 'Facts on the Soviet Union'.\* In this, it says:

'Today in the West there are also scientists who assure their fellow men that capitalism can be democratized and the class difference between people made to disappear. These myths have already been torn apart by Marx and Engels, not to speak of Lenin. History has long since dispersed these illusions. It has shown that private ownership of the means of production invariably and constantly develops and concentrates the inequality of people.'

To the intelligent person this is pure twaddle. Marx has demonstrated that variable capital always tends to become constant capital and is thus socialized. Only if Mstislavski could prove that this tendency towards socialization of the industrial means of production could have in any way been *avoided* in Western Europe, does his inference have any meaning. But he is just as unable as the capitalists to do so.

The difference between the bureaucrats in Stalin's period and today is that the former were forced to know Marxism inside out. Today they only need to pretend that they know what Marxism is. But they just don't.

A near miss is still a miss. It is perhaps worth remarking that Stalingrad was the turning point of the last World War, perhaps a turning point with the effect that a new World War will be an impossibility in the future. War is dirty work and it is perhaps best to forget it. Perhaps it is best that everyone forgets that such a place called Stalingrad ever existed on earth.\* We who took part in the struggle of the time are no longer suitable for a Sunday School and we were too tired to see what was happening in the offices behind the scenes. There was fatigue was the world over and everywhere the seats were filled with the holy ones of the final days. Let them sit. But they bore us. We know what it costs. We know too much.

Mstislavski writes further:

'The American sociologist Charles Boyer maintains that unequal demands and differences in human talent are the natural foundation for the existence of classes. For its part, the *New York Post* frightens its readers that all motives for human activity will vanish under economic equality. Greater incomes, greater duties – monopolists recognize no other stimuli, and therefore everything done in the socialistic countries with regard to creating social and economic equality is called a painful experiment. What has been achieved in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries is, however, *no experiment* but a result of the best experiences of humanity.'

'*Keine experimente*,' says Adenauer.\* Statesmen say the same the world

over. We are undertaking painless tooth extraction everywhere. Now the revolutionary construction of the industrialized socialist countries is no longer a painful experiment, indeed, it has never been so. If there has been pain, then it is because of the cruelty of a blind tyrant, nothing else. See, this is the new tone.

But all those whose whole life was one great painful experiment, *the creative elite* – yes, we had sympathy for the Soviet Union, because we perceived this whole development precisely as a painful experiment. Now we suddenly discover that we have been fooled. *Keine experimente*, only the peaceful results of ‘the best experiences of humanity.’ But all who seek to renew the sum of these best experiences know how much it has cost: how many unsuccessful experiments, how many crushed fates they cost and will continue to cost. The Soviet Union suddenly shows us that it would like to harvest the experiences without cost, so that it can be offended by the criminals who talk about them.

In ‘Facts on the Soviet Union’, the president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, M. Keldyjs, writes, ‘The resolve and goal of science consists in placing new natural phenomena at the service of humanity.’ *To place a natural phenomenon at the service of humanity is an invention, not a discovery, and thus is a technique.* What the Russians call science is only technique. When the Russians say ‘science’, they mean technique. Why? Are they bad scientists? No, they are excellent. The Russians know very well what is technique and what is science. Why do they come out with this rubbish? There can only be one reason. *The Soviet Union refuses to socialize its own science, to place its scientific results at the disposition of humanity.* They want only to force their technique upon the world. Their science is secret. On this important point, they are in league with the American statesmen. If one perceives *scientific socialism* as realistic and materialistic, then this means that *everyone in the world has right of access to the experiences of science.* That the opposite could become the case amongst so-called socialists is a possibility that Marx never dreamt of in his wildest imagination.

That one hangs honours on idiots, and that the social class division and ranking list is not identical with the differences between the talents and unequal needs of people, this we know in Scandinavia.\* One reads Hans Christian Andersen in the Soviet Union too. We also knew and found it in order that the building up of the Soviet Union was able to move so rapidly because the best and the most costly experiences could be taken over free of charge.

But when the Russian revolution happened, we were promised that a completely new development would happen from then on, and everything that happened thereafter in the capitalist countries would just be decadence and

degeneration. The communist countries had taken over the best that capitalism had made and now nothing further could grow from that direction. This fantastic new experiment attracted the creative elite on the whole world. With this precondition, I can say that my admiration for the Russian people has been without limits for decades, knowing well the cost in sweat, blood, tears and injustice.

Today clean people wash their clean hands and say, 'Experiment – did someone say experiment? We have never experimented and do not intend to do so in the future. It must be a misunderstanding.'

Then we know how bad things are, and it is a great relief to me to be shown that it was a fantasy that I ever should have fought for the Soviet Union. It is just as good to read in modern archaeological books from Russia that all that about the plundering and rule by force of the Vikings, that about the empire of the Goths and so on, now in the true light of history reveals itself as a good old lie. They never were in Russia – apart from a few insignificant mercenaries. So that is one less unpleasant reckoning for the Northerners.

I am convinced that Picasso, just as little as I, would not relinquish a jot of the responsibility attached to our past. Not even if it cost us our heads. For the whole thing was too exciting and significant. But the exciting thing was the enormous work of art we dreamt of, and not the Soviet Union as such, and this dream will live on without the Soviet Union so long as it refuses to socialize its science.

If the new leadership of the Soviet Union comes to us as says: 'You have been fooled. But we are not fooling you', then of course we must pay for naivety. But the same trick cannot, of course, be performed twice. Then we must have the cards on the table. To the progressive population today current Russian propaganda material seems just as sterile as *The Readers' Digest* because in its naive mendacity it is an insult to our intelligence. We found it very heroic that Russians have up to now had a pre-1914 life-style. But when they now begin to introduce 'the best' of what has been popularized in America during the so-called 'decadent and depraved period of bourgeois decline', on the basis of what has been created in Western Europe – and this is what is happening – then we here in Western Europe cannot describe either them or the Americans as anything other than a bunch of untruthful parasites and hypocritical boasters. If the so-called welfare tendency in Northern Europe in the areas of articles of utility and art has created a popular renewal that these states could take over and learn from, then we cannot also put up with being disdained and spat upon precisely because we have arranged our existence to advance humanity. In this shabby process, we have no longer any

responsibility, for we know that it only extends to making people believe that being the poorest of the poor is 'the best' and therefore free of charge.

No one can be blind to the rising Americanization of the Soviet Union's way of life or to the relaxation of tension between America and Russia. The reason is that both countries know that the threat of the atom bomb today is just as empty a political means of terror as the gas war in 'no more war' times. At the same time they are both agreed on hindering the world from becoming aware of the central significance of inter-planetary space travel to the economic structure of the future until they have established their monopolies in that area. *A relaxation actualizes another tension*, and this new tension, which is today automatically growing in strength, is the opposition between the Latin cultural circle and the rest. It is there to be swallowed up, but by whom?

It cannot be done without war, and the USA is trying to establish an advantageous position in this war by promoting a United Europe. Without understanding this, Scandinavia will become a blind plaything in the game. There is dynamite in the problem about the European Common Market.

I am not writing this to meddle in politics in any way. On the contrary, it is to demonstrate clearly that the experiences we have harvested in recent decades have definitively proved that the creative elite can have nothing to do with the power elite. It must establish itself as an independent organism antagonistic to the state but on an equal footing with the state apparatus, although strictly separated from it, if the dynamic of human culture is to preserve its strength. This development is already under way and cannot be stopped. It can gush forth in the anarchic panic of a raging youth or be formed organically in a vital evolution. It is Scandinavia that has the next move in this affair.\*

### **UNESCO in Prague**

*Both national and international politics belong to the past.*

*The politics of the future will be cosmopolitan and independent of the state apparatuses.*

We can separate social activity into three fundamentally different functions, *maintenance, distribution and renewal*. The reproductive, working group in society maintains the vital cycle of society, the state institutions in connection with special organizations, which are private in the capitalist countries, look after distribution or administration, whilst the artists, inventors and researchers create the possibilities for renewal. These three tendencies are complementary, which is to say, that one cannot derive one from the other. This does not mean,

however, that it is impossible to combine two of these three complementary activities, but then one is confronted by a hybrid product.

Dynamism in the modern social structuring, as it has developed with the colonizations since the Renaissance, has given social administration the opportunity of also tying itself to a high degree in with the renewing activities. This possibility for inner renewal vanished with the worldwide grip of imperialism and we now see the various state leaderships more and more tied to stabilizing administrative tasks. This was what the socialist theories had foreseen and were able to calculate.

Today, all this calculation has broken down because of the Russians' invention of the *sputnik*. An expansion has hereby been opened up which makes the whole development of colonialism a small provincial intermezzo. Whether modern politicians, industrialists and military leaderships today already know this, and the social power elite, without telling to the people and the leadership of the lesser states, are already about to alter their economies on this basis is not known. Much indicates that this is so. At any rate, this and nothing else is the economic perspective of the future, and the small states who relinquish their economic integrity will be anonymously sucked of all strength when this new dynamism gradually gets going. Only by recognizing with foresight the inevitability of this new perspective and by avoiding being threatened into turbid combinations, can this expansion also become an inspiration and advantage to cultural development on earth. Otherwise it will just become a state driven impoverishment. It must be separated from the administration of the national states.

As the international power elite is already today a comprehensive net independent of any iron curtains that could be set up, only the development of a corresponding organization with an independent economic basis can secure a movement also being created for the elevation and enrichment of human existence on earth. This combination must consist of a direct collaboration between the renewing and the reproductive groups in society, of artists, scientists and the various organizations for production, and thus between the people and the so-called 'professional celebrities'. In the superstitious and handcrafted period of the Middle Ages, the monks and the adherent part of the Catholic Church were the guarantee and mainspring of this development. Today, where such a work has to be international and in accordance with the most modern thinking and science, this medieval organization is completely powerless. We have no use for more churches. That solves no problems.

It is here I believe that Scandinavia, in contrast to the forces of social violence, has fostered the basic structure for the development of humanity with

its system of Folk High Schools and public buildings for community or cultural centres.

I mention *the buildings* deliberately, for it has struck me that Professor Hal Koch in his astonishing admiration for Constantine the Great makes an even more astonishing reservation about 'his disastrous need to build', the only worthwhile side of him.\*

No economy without containers. Houses, countries, organizations and nations are containers. If the Scandinavian labour movement comes to have a surplus working force at its disposal, then it is to be hoped that it will not allow this to remain unused, but that it will be precisely informed of the current requirements, even where there is funny business about this or that being 'necessary', so that it can discern what is in the interests of the people and what is not. Advancing this development does not mean doing anything other than is being done in other countries. It just means beginning *before* the others, and this can be done precisely because as a tendency it was already sketched out in Scandinavia with the development of democracy in the previous century.

That this development is also the only thing that can bring life to the mortally sick UNESCO justifies us in demanding that the principles of the Folk High School and the communal buildings be adopted as the basic tenet of this organization. At the same time we could demand that the inter-planetary experiments are taken from the social power combinations which have threatened the public with atom bombs since the end of the war and administered by the same organization in accordance with the dynamic requirements of human life

In order to avoid the UNESCO centre being unilaterally influenced by one great power, we could demand that it be moved to a neutral country, and as *Prague* throughout the whole of European history has always shown itself to be the neutral point, then we could demand of the Soviet Union that Czechoslovakia be made into a practically autonomous economic area, where all the peoples of the world could freely meet, regardless of their ideas and opinions. If these demands are not in accordance with the opinion of the Scandinavian people, then I can safely say that the Scandinavian people have no meaning any more.

The whole of Scandinavia's position as a pioneering territory in certain areas is based upon the idea that a so-called 'under-developed' land has use not for investment but for *knowledge, ability and self-respect*. Scandinavians today are confronted with the choice of betraying this idea in favour of establishing a European monopoly in this area, the so-called Eurocracy, or bravely allowing the world take part in its experiences and relying upon its own abilities in such

an open competition without artificial privileges. We have already shown that our centuries-old tradition is unsuitable for administering colonies.\* Is it really necessary for us to discover by experience that we are not suitable to be colonized either?

**Scandinavians today are choosing between a peaceful, progressive situcracy,\* the lines of direction of which are given here, and a military Eurocracy without any perspectives of progress**

What is the difference between Eurocracy and situcracy?

Eurocracy is the establishment of a common military, political and economic structure for Western Europe, planned according to classical Latin patterns, where it is impossible to take any regard of the modernization of the structure of society that has taken place in the Scandinavian countries in the last century, and even less of the ancient norms of action and customs of thought in the North.

Situcracy is a new social structuring based upon the possibility of uniting the oppositions in the structure of European society in a vital dynamic which uses them for a mutual elevation and enrichment, instead of for the mutual destruction which must automatically occur from a refusal to recognize their character and significance. Such a refusal would allow these forces to act blindly and without restraint.

**England and Denmark are preparing a Western European conflict**

The dangerous secret huckstering in Denmark around the Common Market has meant that most people, even intelligent people, just cannot find out what is going on. However, if one is not entangled in the threads oneself, the whole thing looks quite simple.\*

The whole lack of clarity arose when England left the Nordic group without warning.\* It was the same story when they at one time took our fleet without a declaration of war.\* Danish politicians have such an admiration for English cunning that they have not enough honour to protest strongly. As they are not smart enough to do the same themselves, they run after the English like a dog after its master. They do not realize that he who is a dog for a master who acts without merit gets all the kicks intended for the master when no one dares attack him directly. To The Six who call themselves 'Europe', this is the

position of Danish politicians, and it is to a great degree a deserved position.

The English forsook the Scandinavian group to go on their knees humbly to The Six. This has been an enormous moral victory for that group which did not have not many feathers left in its tail after the war. Our Lord has arranged that they got their privilege without either fighting or weeping. This can be said in truth, for the tie that binds The Six is the Catholic Church. But one is only given so much in heaven, and Europe is not heaven. This humble flock of Englishmen, with an even more crawling flock of Scandinavians in its train, is an all too appetizing sight for The Six, especially the Germans.

The French are objective and cynical in politics, but their allies are not. The conditions for admission are cunning, humbling and clearly disadvantageous, but the English and the Danes are swallowing the lot, if only they can be allowed into the henhouse, sorry, I meant paradise.

Of course both the English and the Danes protest, to save face, that they will also get the necessary insignificant modifications to provide the requisite raw material for the Nordic propaganda apparatus's empty victory bulletins. But in reality they are swallowing it whole.

It seems even more astonishing that England and Denmark should be so broke that they have to throw away all concepts of honour, all self-respect, overboard to get some money in. Any talk of national traditions and Nordic attitudes to life has suddenly become so reactionary that it defies description. It also sounds too good to be true. No, we know what is going on. Those who believe in this comedy have forgotten their history, especially about England. When the game is first set up, then you will see the whole of the nationalist life-guard mobilize. Nationalism is not antiquated today. It is *ill-timed*. It does not suit the politicians' book at the moment. We must lie low a little until the whole thing is in order. Then we can take a grip, and thus one of the greatest dirty tricks in the history of Western Europe is prepared.

The French understand politics. One cannot therefore treat France with impunity as England has treated Scandinavia. Thus it is in earnest that The Six demand that no one can leave the Common Market once they have entered it. Because of this, I have long made it public in Denmark that Denmark should refuse to sign this passage from the point of view that what comes easily, should also go easily. But the politicians in Denmark say one cannot take that kind of thing so solemnly. If we wish to leave, then there is nothing to hold us back. That is correct. We have nothing to ignore other than our given word and the honesty of the Danish people. If one has understood this idea thoroughly, then one has also understood that the whole of England's and Denmark's interest in a united Europe is a swindle and betrayal from the start. For those

interested in the fate of Europe, this situation is threatening. Denmark is going completely in for England's antiquated political method, which only works under colonization. Behind them stands the United States, and it is easy to see what this is all about. There just remains to be said, that the development that England and Denmark are preparing today cannot be carried out without a bloody war between the southern and the northern European states.

My knowledge of the whole of Latin civilization makes me say: *it is not on!*

Why did The Seven fall apart and why is the unity with The Six being developed? Because Latin culture is specialized in building up such a unity, Scandinavia is not. Today the English newspapers write that England does not possess a technical and administrative elite able to undertake the administrative tasks that the Common Market demands, Denmark even less so, but that both the Italians and the French possess the best trained and chosen elite ready to take all the demanding key posts. *England and Denmark have to accept them, for there is a use for them*, but when the whole thing has been put on its feet, will they allow them to remain? Will they go, if required? Why should they? Here we have the coming conflict. It can be calculated in advance. It is the shabbiness of the whole perspective.

It is doubly shabby because the precondition for picking up the art from the French is that Scandinavia begins by imitating the Latin system. This can only be done by denying our own best features in order to take them up later with fanaticism, a fanaticism that will only benefit the Americans. Both are pretence and bluff. From their military alliances, the English are known for the self-sacrifice by which they fight to the last Frenchman. Today USA has taken over England's role and will let us fight till the last European. The ridiculous thing about the whole situation is that we will just be fighting with ourselves. It is even more idiotic that it is those who are the sharpest opponents of Latin culture in Scandinavia who today have to mobilize to protect it, because it is simply a condition for also protecting our own ground.

When Gustav Adolphus won, he stopped at the border between the mental oppositions in Western Europe. This mental opposition is based upon an economic, political and practical opposition that more or less follows the borders of the old Roman Empire. It is here that England, after the invasions of the Anglo-Saxons, Vikings and Normans, comes to play its peculiar cultural double game, which the Danes can neither copy nor take advantage of. This double game is made impossible in a united Europe. The two oppositions will enter into a direct conflict, the result of which can only be negative for both sides.

As Germany is today a militarily occupied area, it has no independent

attitude. The whole of European opposition is centred around the position of the Scandinavians. Latin egocentrism is bounded by *geographical space*, and is concentrated around Paris and Rome. Scandinavian egocentrism is decided *historically* by time and is concentrated around our historical traditions. Conflict between these two points of departure is unavoidable, if Scandinavians do not maintain their geographical integrity and build it up according to Latin patterns and let those in the South take care of their own. This would advance cooperation.

The programme for a harmonious, united Europe was torpedoed when France prevented Brussels becoming the centre of Europe. European politics today is just a struggle between great powers, nothing more, and what has been lost cannot be recovered. The only thing Scandinavians can do now, if they do not want to keep to themselves, is to get the English to respect them and stop playing blind man's bluff with themselves, but perhaps this is also too late. It does not concern me. The creative elite in Northern Europe no longer wish to be placed under an official policy according to Latin patterns. To an all too high degree, we have learned to value the freedom that was forced upon us, and, as we know its conditions, we will fight to the last to preserve it.

### **The Danish Ministry of Culture and international scientific socialism**

The *Kulturkammer* of the German Nazis, who understood so thoroughly how to distinguish between well-behaved and decadent art, is still so much with us that the judicial authorities in Germany are maintaining its principles about modern German art.\*

Today a Danish Ministry of Culture has been set up. What this instrument is to be used for depends not upon the men who have set it up or their intentions. It depends solely on the lines of direction that are laid down for the activities of this ministry, on its right to dispose freely of the economic means that exist in and arise from culture, and on its direct contact with the broader population, independent of the power elite's political, industrial and military demands. If this independence is not secured by law, then the setting up of this ministry will probably be the hardest blow directed against Danish art and culture for many centuries.

Georg Brandes perceived the greatest advantage of the French Revolution to be freedom of research.\* We must today demand of the Danish Ministry of Culture that it be confirmed by law that the Danish nation requires that all scientific results are and should be universal common property, that it will not

relinquish the principle of the international socialization of science, that this is our perception of what is called international scientific socialism, and that Denmark will maintain this rule independently of whatever position other countries take to the problem. If the Ministry of Culture cannot prevent Denmark entering into an economic community with other nations who refuse to follow this rule, then this ministry is not an institution for the protection of Danish culture, but an instrument for the foreign exploitation of it, and has nothing to do with either socialism or democracy.

By separating the Ministry of Culture from the Ministry of Education, an organ has been created which, if this independence of ordinary and technical education as well as of religious belief is maintained, has the possibility of making the development of popular culture independent and of counteracting the gulf between the masses and the personalities. With the setting up of the academy suggested by Grundtvig in Sorø, and with the support of those Folk High Schools which still maintain Grundtvig's High School programme and all the philosophical and humanistic faculties, there would be the possibility of developing a completely new and necessary structure in Danish society which could be a model for the whole world. If only a half-step is taken on this point, then the whole is lost. Here for once no compromise is possible. It is either – or, kill or cure.

### **Who owns culture?**

Exploitation consists of extracting the value of a so-called raw material or a substance and leaving it an empty and worthless shell. The best object for exploitation in human society is human desire and enthusiasm and the creative results of this, our cultural past.

What is special about the methods of modern industrial society is their unique effectiveness, and in the development period of this society creative enthusiasm was exploited to the utmost. The last mortal blood-letting was realized, not by gangsters and unscrupulous capitalists, but by state apparatuses, to the degree that no one with a drop of intelligence could mobilize even the least grain of sympathy for them. Even their most stupid threats are taken with a shrug.

In the Latin countries, where artistic prestige has never been completely disparaged, attempts are being made to retie the connection between the power elite and the creative elite with the help of the aesthetic traditions of the Catholic Church. This has succeeded to an astonishing degree and has created

a dynamic flowering, noticeable by everyone who has anything to do with French or Italian culture. However, it has been precisely the strength of North American science and industry that the power elite has perceived the creative elite as free of charge for a century. This has at once made the creative elite independent in relation to the power elite, and given this independent elite a strong centre in Bohemian Paris, that remarkable no-man's-land where so much incredible new stuff has flourished.

For these many years, the creative elite has fought for its freedom by combining frugality with richness. It is the strength of this struggle that the modern state apparatus, even with the help of the Church, is more and more unable to control, in the East as well as in the West and North. If this problem is far more controlled in Southern Europe, then this is because of a cultural structuring that can no longer be introduced into Scandinavia, and which will also in the South turn out to be insufficient in the long run.

If N.F.S. Grundtvig, who thundered against things Latin, was nevertheless wrongly perceived by Georg Brandes as a clandestine Catholic, then this was because he clearly saw both the advantages and the lacks in the structure of Latin culture and struck at precisely the weak point both of us and in the Latin area, projecting a new development that could take advantage, on the basis of modern democracy, of what was valuable for the people in both systems. However, this new cultural creation is incompatible with the old both in the South and in the North. But what is far more significant to us, it is incompatible with all perceptions of economics hitherto. It presupposes that the people are both able to save and themselves use what they have saved.

Since the end of the war, there has only been disdain and scorn for the Scandinavian welfare state from American and Southern European sides, and our politicians and economic leaders are gradually acknowledging our inferiority, and asking whether we could get *the foreigners* to direct us in the right ways, just as in the Middle Ages, when German nobility was called in to rule the people. I have not heard much else than this abroad and have had to admit that I myself only found elbow room outside Scandinavia. Yet I have never for a minute doubted that this could be changed and will be changed the day the Scandinavians themselves become clear that they are a source of amusement the world over and about what it is that is being mocked. I think that Scandinavians are traditionally no slaves to the hierarchy of riches, and are perhaps the only people in Western Europe who lose none of their dignity because of poverty. In Denmark and Norway this characteristic is about to be lost, and precisely where it is most important, in the peasantry. If Sweden is able to stand today out in its relationship to the rest of the world, then it is

above all because of the free and worthy mind of the Swedish peasantry.

What the Swedish poet C.J.L. Almqvist wrote a hundred and twenty years ago, and what today turns out itself to be the wealth of the Swedish people, is that they possess the free person's superiority over poverty. This is an old commentary on Swedish foreign policy that is valid up to the present day:

#### 'THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SWEDISH POVERTY

The Swede is unpatriotic to the degree that he seeks *help* outside himself. He has done so now and then, and what has he got? By himself, he has always been helped. This does not mean that the Swede wilfully should relinquish "literary, political or commercial" context with the rest of Europe (that would be to seek poverty), but he should not look to any other country for his assistance in his hour of need. He should firmly maintain that state of mind – to be able to do without Europe without loss and pain.

This state of mind "of finding oneself strong in poverty", makes up one of the secrets, although often deeply hidden, in the Swedish being. The Swedish peasant, on the other hand, has learnt to be poor. He can work and he can even accumulate, but for the most part he squanders all the accumulation away. "The Swede lives above his capacity" has become a proverb. He is almost never cautious in the French or German sense, even less is he frugal like the Russian or the Jew. If foreigners accumulate money to own it, then the Swede collects it to distribute it. Poverty is his basic state, affluence just his interim, and wealth a little game he has now and then.'

C.J.L. Almqvist 1838\*

Welfare is a *journey*. Well-being is a *state*. Welfare is a *luxury*, but well-being is a *comfort*. To be equipped for welfare one must be master of the conditions that are offered during the journey, and only allow oneself the luxury of living in the utmost poverty, as well as in the greatest lavishness, without ever becoming a slave of either one state or the other, but by taking them both with the same superiority. The day a person loses his freedom in relation to life's external conditions and ties his fate to a particular pleasant form, he has become a slave of the external world. No one needs this superiority more than the Scandinavians, for it is the only thing we have. When the Americans emphasize that it is the Norwegian Thorstein Veblen who founded American sociology with his book *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, but that his biting criticism of the snob-hierarchy built upon types of enjoyment is *un-American* and without reality, then we Scandinavians in retaliation must emphasize that we sympathize with precisely the part that the Americans will not acknowledge

today. What Veblen criticized in Americans was that they did not seek the various pleasures that life offers for their own sake but because they belonged to a particular social rung on the ladder. That he himself had *joie de vivre* meant that he never got a position that recognized his work. Modern American sociology no longer wishes to attach the social hierarchy to pleasures. Instead they now wish to construct a hierarchy on the Latin pattern without any form of pleasure, and to combat 'the professional celebrities' who, like Veblen, prefer their pleasures without hierarchy or fame, and who want to develop the pleasant on the basis of the ability to amuse oneself and others and nothing more. We will probably be treated in the same way.

This Scandinavian ability to prefer luxury above comfort has today gradually acquired chains, and these chains are called *the trade unions and employers' organizations*. In their fight to give the working population an existence of human value, these organizations have today been blocked in their struggle against each other to the degree that they dare not say a word about whether or not it is advantageous to renounce anything voluntarily. The result is that the Danish people as a whole today are unable to take an independent decision on anything. It is on this that these organizations today should be tested *in Scandinavia*. If they fail, then they will be smashed and crushed, regardless of whether they seek help abroad to stabilize their immobility.

The working population of town and country created the Danish Folk High School in order to take part in intellectual and artistic culture, to take possession of humanity's noblest forms of enjoyment. One would have thought that this century-long development would have preserved the working classes's superiority to the most superficial perception of the economic routine. But no. The trade unions and employers' organizations in Denmark have become completely will-less robots, subordinated to timeless and perspective-less 'public opinion'. How could the Folk High School become bankrupt in such a crushing way? That is easy to explain. The Folk High School is dead from metaphysical idealism and the lack of an independent economic basis. This basis exists neither in industry nor the state treasury, but in what is earned in popular culture, art and entertainment. We have discovered this now, so let's get down to it before it is too late. Either that or subordination to the American entertainment industry. *There is no alternative*. The Church cannot make a difference either way.

In a war, in a cultural struggle even, it is always the last minute that counts, and in that minute it looks as if all is lost. 'But all good ideas, they cannot die before even better ideas have grown from their seed'.\* Let this be a matter of faith. Seed can fall on stony ground. I believe *the ground is in the people*.

Weeds can drift over the hedge, but I am not afraid that they will not be pulled out. The only thing I am afraid of is that *the even better* ideas will be confused with the weeds, because they are unknown. But if this happens, then they will throw roots out in alien soil, where they will be looked after and valued, like the work of Tycho Brahe. So I ask the Danish people, if history is to repeat itself today on this point. Has the hundred-year-old existence of the Folk High School in Denmark been in vain?

### **Money is the unit of measurement for the general tempo of society**

How should socialists justify their demand that inventors work for them without pay? This can only be done by continuing to allow the old metaphysical and idealistic superstition to serve as a means of compulsion against anyone possessing extraordinary abilities. Such a compulsion can only be carried out by religious means. This is the reason that modern socialist governments are so busy polishing up the church facades again. But here the basic Marxist thesis that everyone has the right to what he created himself is also given up. Only by inventing a god to whom everything is owed can society find an argument to abolish this right. Only the painful thing is that if this right is abolished, it will not be long before invention also has to be abolished, because it is precisely this right that is the condition for the development of invention. This characterizes the opposition between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

This inventiveness or condition for variability is strongly threatened by the constancies developed by the capitalist and socialist systems. This will become noticeable above all through the increasing socialization of finance, for money is nothing other than the completely socialized commodity compelling the same standard of values upon all. This is a consequence of money only being able to measure social or common values. Values in their individual character of variability cannot be measured in money at all. Now the gold standard has been forsaken, monetary value just rests upon a concept. But what is the actuality behind this measurement, which cannot be a value in itself? It is not work. Neither is it use value nor the usefulness of things. Everything points to *money being the measure of social or common time*. But if this measure is to be just, which every measure seeks to be, then money will work towards a levelling of variations in the social tempo. Money thus neutralizes the tensions. The Anglo-Saxons say, 'time is money'. This is not correct. 'Money is time', but time of a quite particular kind. Not all time can be measured in money. Only the common tempo of social space corresponds to money. Outside this, money is

absolutely nothing. The discovery of money is the foundation of 'scientific' socialism. To break the power of money as the framework for humanity and society is to surpass socialism. Money is nothing other than art transformed to numbers. Artistic communism will transform life to a natural, all-embracing work of art.

One of the reasons that the economic question today is logically inaccessible is the lack of understanding that there are three complementary ways in which one can *study* it. However, it is not possible to *work with* this question unless it is posed in a two-part opposition, in a dialectic. Hereby arises the war between the dialectical systems, each of which maintains it is correct, whilst the others are wrong.

*Wealth is and remains surplus*, and, being extraordinary, can never be a part of an order, not even at the top. Then it would no longer be a surplus, but a part of an economic hierarchy. Wealth has to be chance and directly futile, something I have defined as the aesthetic, variability or change, the unstable and fleeting in existence, represented socially by an irresponsible upper class.\*

Economics must, on the other hand, be the neutralization of a variability or of wealth in a constancy, an equilibrium, between production and consumption – socially represented by a responsible state.

The gratis or free of charge can definitively arise if an equilibrium can be repeated, taken out of its context and reproduced. We in Scandinavia especially misunderstand the situation here, as we do not have a clear perception of the opposition between the economic and the free of charge. However, this relationship is quite simple. We have seen that surplus value is created by the newly discovered object which represents a new quality. This quality becomes value through its use, and the industrial use of this article is as a model for reproduction. Through this reproduction the quality becomes more and more devalued, until by achieving a sufficiently great number of reproductions it must be considered free of charge. It is this process which is perceived by Marxists as the transformation of quality to quantity.

If the *Scandinavian* dialectic is based upon a fusion of the economic and the gratis, then, in contrast, the *Latin* dialectic is based upon a clear perception of the purely economic or order, where no distinction is made between wealth and the gratis. As it is precisely the Latin doctrine of economics which is the starting point for all this science, then we find in the expression of the gratis itself the Latin perception of wealth or the beautiful, as the word gratis comes from the concept of *gratie*. This beauty is perceived simply as the *gift* of God or the gods. That such a perception has come to prevail is because the primitive

form of surplus is used to be given away, as gifts, and this is called *the Potlatch system*.

### Gift – debt and sacrifice

Professor K.E. Løgstrup has committed the feat of writing a book about the philosophy of art without ever touching on the concept of aesthetics.\* As a work of art it is reminiscent of Heiberg's *No*,\* but, although its objective method is commendable, as philosophy this doctrine of unaesthetic art is so shallow that only one point of the concept of beauty remains, that life is a *gift*. However, this is completely sufficient to open up an artistic perspective going in exactly the opposite direction to the one Løgstrup is pursuing.

There is not room here to develop an acquaintance with the pre-economic system of barter called Potlatch, so strictly pursued today by the modern tax authorities. Neither can we go into the materialistic origin of the principle of sacrifice and its later social utilization, and even less into its definitive establishment as a debt system. The opening of the dimension of the gift, its grace or beauty, between the precious and the gratis, between the unique and the ordinary, would perhaps have given Løgstrup an interest in reworking this material, to which he is closer than I am.

Today the question of art's relationship to ethics has come to a head in a series of problems, from which we can choose a concrete example. The Mexican state is currently sending an exhibition of the most ancient Mexican art through to the artists of our time around the world to show off the best in their possession. One room is dedicated to pictures by a painter who is at this very moment sitting behind the bars of a Mexican prison, condemned to be punished by the same state. His name is Siqueiros.\*

If a politician, organization's man or military person is accused of a crime, he is instantly suspended from his position, and if he is condemned his work is denied any value. So we can see that the artist lives in a quite different world from that of the power elite, the power of whose members depends upon their moral renown. One could throw the artist or the research scholar into the most humiliating situation and yet at the same time value his work as outstanding. Thus what the artist is condemned for is completely irrelevant. One is obliged to acknowledge his 'criminal' disposition whilst giving him high honour.

The question then is this. Has an artist's artistic value anything at all to do with his moral and legal make-up? Then there should be no more people amongst the artists who have been condemned by the courts or psychiatrists

than amongst those from other activities. This is, however, not the case and creative ability therefore has something to do with the individual's uncommon behaviour, and cannot be classified according to the general moral and legal yardstick. If one investigates this thoroughly, one will see that it has always been so. *The moral, legal and psychiatric yardstick has thus only a limited validity.* The church addressed this problem in its time, and anyone pursued by the authorities could seek protection from the law in the interior of the church itself. But with the increasing demand for justice, the church has in practise lost this concrete right to establish a higher court on aesthetic principles. They then went over to killing the criminal and afterwards raising a monument to him, thereby ascribing to themselves the right to value his efforts. But, with the modern demand for tempo, there is no time for that kind of thing. One has to *at the same time judge and imprison, value and press the best out of the man.* This is also the consequence of the concealment of scientific results.

I hardly need recount that the political, military and economic elites have in certain periods also been evaluated as artists or beneficial criminals and bandits who were first decapitated and then honoured, nor that the process by which the myth of Christ was glorified as a general social pattern. It just so happens that the criminal potency of the power elite has become so great that it could wipe out the whole of humanity and is difficult to reduce, even if what can be done to vary its effect is done, and just as Christianity became indissolubly united with the power elite against the artists through the efforts of Constantine the Great, so today the Christian elite finds itself in the same position as the power elite.

The result is that the Church has to be sympathetic to an extension of the power elite's 'artistic' freedom, whilst having to move into a sharper and sharper oppositional relationship to the world of free art. The result is that he who today chooses or follows the call for a free creation, must prepare himself in advance to be persecuted to the very end with threats and persuasions and, if they do not work, with condemnation. There is no longer any way around this. One often wonders why the small criminals are condemned, but the great ones go free. The explanation is that great crimes happen in the name of 'justice', and either the majority or progress profit, whilst at the same time washing their hands. In relation to the political game, artists can never be other than small criminals – and therefore absolutely punishable.

This split evaluation of the artist is a purely schizoid method of presentation, which is systematically used against art life. The cultivation of an unconscious schizophrenia is clearly apparent in the postulation by Løgstrup and other philosophers that an *identification* operates between the spectator and the hero

in a drama. If this were really true and actual, and not just apparent, the performance of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* would not just require the death of the players, as in the Roman arenas, but also those of the public. But it is only the play of the politicians which automatically transfers the dramatic consequences to the public. This is the direct difference between the definition of politics and what in the classical sense is called art.

**The precious, the economic and the free of charge are complementary concepts**

The strange thing about Scandinavian economic doctrine is that the fusion of the beautiful and the free of charge or gratis cannot take place at all without the whole dialectic dissolving into a crippling confusion. Christians believe that God's grace and forgiveness are the same as what the French call '*grâce de Dieu*'. This is a fundamental misunderstanding that led to the Thirty Years War, and in the USA to the war between the northern and southern states, and what, with unavoidable consistency, will lead to a new civil war because of Western Europe's economic union. This is the reason why Russia is taking the steps towards Western Europe's economic union with astonishing peace and goodwill. They know that we can only harm ourselves.

The Eastern European dialectic works upon a third opposition between the completely free of charge on the one hand and on the other the fusion of the surplus and the economic, which has given birth to the *sputnik*. However, if the Soviet Union is not itself able to consume the extraordinary advantage that this system has created, then this is because the Russian system has cheated its own dialectical principle, as there is no longer anything in the Soviet Union that is free of charge.

*The only thing at all that can take the shape of something free of charge is the past or experience, that is to say repetition, pure science. Had the Soviet Union been able to maintain the source of its own dynamic, then it would have been on the basis of the international socialization of the results of science and of universal information. The Soviet Union should have been the purest information centre in the world. By barring information to the outside, the demand automatically arose to limit more and more the circulation of information until today scientific information is a state secret the people are not allowed to know, and the scientists are state prisoners with the duty of silence just as in the USA. The whole development from the Komintern over the Kominform to nothing is sufficiently well-known.\**

One cannot distinguish between the precious and the valueless within Latin culture because it is impossible to measure the value of the extraordinary. The only peoples in Europe who have a clear and unequivocal perception of the precious as the opposite of the normal, and the whole of whose life dynamics are constructed upon this opposition, are the Scandinavians and the Jews. This is the reason why the whole development of free artists in Europe after the Renaissance is above all the work of Jews. On the other hand, the Nordic dialectic led to the first purely aesthetic philosophy, founded by Kierkegaard. However, this did not lead to artistic realizations because any realization is a normalization, and here the leap can only occur in conflict with the Nordic dialectic. This is the reason for the desperate asocial position of art-life in Northern Europe and North America, a position that the Jews have even made their religious ideal. Despite this, art-life has nevertheless been able to develop in an independent Scandinavian form because the artist has been accepted as *a necessary enemy of the people*.<sup>\*</sup> Here the contrast to the modern USA is clear.

Where Marx cheats his materialism is in his endorsement of the classical perception of art, in the Greco-Roman principle of beauty, which made him believe that he was talking about economics whilst in reality he was talking of wealth or surplus. This perception starts from the principle that what we cannot all see and thereby in community know has no existence. To see and know results in a conscious statement. However, Marxists fall in the trap that they over-value our ability to see, for people see only what attracts our attention or interest, and only changes do this. It is not the strange but the all too accustomed that loses the ability to catch our attention. This superficiality of our interests means that *from this perception what is most obvious has no existence because we are no longer aware of it*.

This process can be called devaluation. *The free of charge is in itself is absolutely uninteresting because it is obvious*. This obviousness is what is called the purely quantitative. But as everything has a purely quantitative character and everything thus also has the form of an object or a purely qualitative character, and as everything is in one way or another in an uninterrupted process at the same time, then the transition from quality to value and to quantity is a relationship only systematized in humanity's relationship to matter, not in matter itself, nor in humanity itself. Quantities can be observed. This observation becomes more and more precise the more objects that are observed at any one time. The quality can be observed. This happens with greater and greater precision the more the individual objects can be isolated. The process can be observed. This happens with greater and greater

precision the more the objects can be influenced. These different observations can be compared and combined. But this is *art*, not science. *A thing's lack of meaning is the futility of being conscious or being aware of the thing*, and thus something completely subjective, nothing else, and the lack of necessity of being aware of a necessary and obvious thing means that it has become gratuitous, that it has become a natural part of one's existence, and that it has lost its sensory or artistic value. Politics consists of catching people's attention and is thus an art.

### The game without risk

Only changes can catch people's attention. To create changes is what is called to play or vary. Establishing an area on the basis of the necessity principle is to say that in this area the possibility of play or variation is abolished. The game can be perceived as the very foundation of what are called the fine arts, because the attraction lies in the dangers we run in this game, which thus demand that one gathers all one's abilities and achieves the ultimate piece of work. Only when something is at stake can top performances occur. *In the principle of equivalence one gets like for like. In the game the opposite principle is valid, here one wins or loses all. Either – or, black or white.*

The institution of the state in society has to secure tranquillity, order, security and peace. On the other hand, the ruling class, if there is such a thing, secures tension, change or the game. This game can be artistic or unartistic, creative or unproductive. The peculiar thing about Byzantine culture was that its politics were ruled by a completely unartistic game, by the sport that occurred on the hippodrome. The political dislocations of power were decided by horse races, so to speak, and the political parties were just adherents of one or other of the competing groups. The emperor also had to belong to one or other of these groups. The whole affair could just as well have been decided by the casting of dice. This created the strange ahistorical equilibrium in Byzantine culture.

In Roman culture the game became absolutely safe for society as the game had justification only as a performance or the entertainment of the people. The consul was raised above the people, who were again raised above the players, who were all prisoners of war and gladiators. The consul was the referee, but only in an aesthetic sense. *He could not condemn a player to death, only pardon a player who was beaten.* This hierarchy is the model for the Roman Catholic perception of Christianity, just as the Byzantine attitude to the game

is the foundation for the Greek Orthodox perception of Christianity, where it is the spectator, not the referee, who sits in the high seat.

Nordic or Germanic culture has always placed the game highest. Only what went on in the arena in Byzantium and Rome found a place in Nordic art. When the Christians refused to play and fight in the Roman arena, their entertainment lost any artistic character and became meaningless slaughter, which only awakened the public's disgust and sense of shame. The Roman hierarchy thereby collapsed like a house of cards. Only with Catholicism was a new interpretation of the same picture found. The condemning God was enthroned uppermost instead of the consul. Under him spread the heavenly hosts of saved souls instead of the public in the amphitheatre. At the bottom, the lost souls writhed in the tortures of hell instead of the heroic struggles of the gladiators in the arena.

However, this arrangement came in conflict with the image of the principle of justice, according to which heaven and hell were placed side by side, separated by the scales controlled by the archangel and the devil, so that the sheep and the goats could be distinguished. This principle of equivalence took on greater and greater power up to the Renaissance.

### **Arians – Donatists**

#### **Grundtvig – Kierkegaard**

That the Germanic tribes refused to subordinate themselves to these two systems and chose Arianism instead has hitherto been explained as an accident, based upon the Arians being the only group who had any missionary activity. How great a role was played by accidents in history is in this case quite immaterial, but a rule cannot be explained by accidents. Then it was explained that the Germans found in Arianism a principle that protected them from being swallowed up by the Roman and Byzantine civilization. This explanation is also a good one, but it does not explain why the Germans kept strictly to this third European combination and have maintained it to this day. The astonishing superficiality with which Nordic religious historians treat this Scandinavian perception of religion is seen in its right light when it is discovered that Arius was poisoned the day before he was to take up his place as the supreme head of the Christian Church, and that all the Arian texts without exception have long since been burnt. Today not a single book on Arianism is to be found, even in Scandinavia, despite the Germans, and thereby the largest part of Europe, having been Arians for several centuries. This is probably the greatest and the

most inexplicable hole in the history of Europe, but if it is filled, it will perhaps be seen that Grundtvig's teaching has to be described as a renewal of Arianism. In the current political situation, it is, however, important to point out the interesting fact that the English historian Moss stresses in his book of the origin of the Middle Ages,\* that the special position of the French in medieval Europe was because they had produced the strange combination of Arianism and Catholicism that is reflected in the Avignon disturbances and which brought out that extraordinary Catholic chauvinism which we here in Denmark experienced with Absalon, whose fate is tied in with the Hvide family in such a singular way that Palle Lauring imagines that the whole thing is a matter of a banal family feud.\* We find this same contempt for the specifically Scandinavian in Hal Koch's admiration of Constantine the Great's opposition to those who were to rescue Greek culture throughout the darkness of the Middle Ages, the Muslims and the Germans.\* In North Africa, the Vandals were greeted as liberators by the Donatists. The disturbances that could spring up between the Arians and the Donatists seem to a high degree to be reflected in the opposition between Søren Kierkegaard and Grundtvig. *Søren Kierkegaard's demand for witnesses to truth was exactly the same as the Donatists demanded from the Catholic Church. [...]*

It is typical of Germanic culture that only the player who dares run the risk, and preferably risks all, is recognized as belonging to the elite, and this is what makes it so dangerous. This has the effect that we can never allow ourselves to get involved in a game where we are not consulted about the stakes. When the game has started, the Northerner commits himself with such violent energy that he can no longer control anything at all. To those who organize a game without taking part themselves, in order to profit from the game's results, the Northerners are the most welcome players, but the Northerners' fate always becomes the fate of the game itself. As a rule, they forget to be interested in what happens afterwards. If one has this gambling nature and is confronted with the unknown, then one is drawn to it precisely because it is unknown and therefore offers an opportunity for play and risk. So as not to be drawn into fixed games, it is therefore an unavoidable necessity for Northerners to be able to withdraw from such a situation.

Today the political game is made up by the social authorities, who secure the peace and order of society, at the same time giving the public to understand that they do this work with valour, that they have risked the most incredible dangers in the struggle for this order that they have become national heroes. As the capitalist and the socialist administrations are becoming more and more monotonous and tiresome, both systems have a mutual advantage in giving each

other a role as the great danger. The power elite of the Eastern block is daily seen depicted in the newspapers of the West as an ugly face, whilst the West's power elite appears as the devil on the front-pages in the East. Then they meet in bloody feuds, where each number calls down destruction and annihilation upon the heads of the people. Then they can return home from the peace conferences as victors. Everyone breathes a sigh of relief. It had not gone as badly as one had feared. This fascinating game is called 'The Cold War'. However, it gets a little boring in the long run. Adenauer had to put off his election because there was an international football match. When people would rather see striptease on the TV than politicians, what can one do?

The heads of state know that the Nazi leaders were condemned for crimes against humanity. They must also be able to understand that whichever power uses apparatuses like the atom bomb for the destruction of the people, whether provoked by other powers or not, will be judged by the people as war criminals, and that any member of a government possessing bombs meant for human mass destruction must be seen as latent criminals, and that all governments connected to military groups which develop atomic weapons are accessories to the use of these weapons and will be judged in accordance with that responsibility. That will weigh on the conscience.

One hesitates, and the time comes where artistic entertainment takes up its place in this heroic drama – a few monuments here, some portraits in Greek draperies there, some well-turned novels and poems. The artist is useful, but he no longer believes in this comedy. This where we stand today.

Eisenhower has dismissed Scandinavians as a flock of drunken psychopaths with a tendency to suicide,\* and now we are given to understand that Kennedy wants to send American artists to Europe to create prestige for the USA. So we can be delighted that the Americans wish to pay their best artists to entertain us and be pleased to see Ezra Pound and Henry Miller appearing in the name of the American people. Kennedy obviously seems to be blissfully unaware that the creative American elite has long since fled to Europe, where they are perhaps better known than in their homeland.

Before there can be talk of these politico-cultural arrangements, a little account has to be settled. We are owed a lot. This is not what depresses us. We can easily cross that out. But when they come and turn the affair on its head and maintain that it is us that owe the power elite and the people something, and base this on some poetic drivel about the gift of ability and the duty of talent, then we can only answer that this is a talentless composition, and within our own area everything can be forgiven except lack of talent combined with cheek.

If we are to talk about cultural politics, let us do it objectively. We will take care of the poetry.

It is especially comic when Eisenhower today declares that what he says as a statesman is not his *private* opinion. As if we did not know. But perhaps this new 'private' confession is also a political move to wipe out the fact that the Scandinavian stamp on the United Nations is fortunately being liquidated.\*

### **Servants of the people – the majority's exploitation of the elite**

Art consists of demonstrating and invoking differences of value and therefore stands in the sharpest oppositional relationship to the principle of equality. Capitalists believed that they could tie art to occupying itself exclusively with the inequality of objects, with the emphasis on the value of one commodity in relation to another. They got only a pseudo-art out of this, for they did not themselves believe for a minute in this pseudo-difference between one commodity and another. In the meanwhile, art vegetated and flowered on small canvasses in artists' attics.

At the same time, the politicians with their *theory of social equality*, which was adopted in the American constitution, had dug their own graves. Even when reduced to one person's *working hour* being equivalent to another person's working hour, the principle that an hour of one person's life is equivalent to one hour of another person's life makes the whole parliamentary voting system a meaningless farce, as the only reasonable thing would be to draw lots about who should do what.

The only thing one does at a political election is to agree in community about *the difference in the social value of two different people*. Political choice is therefore a break with the principle of human equivalence and un-Marxist. It was possible to avoid taking a position to this idiotic condition so long as there were still remnants left of the old aristocratic traditions which allowed the chosen to defend themselves against the ruthless exploitation of their abilities. But as this armour has gradually crumbled away, modern politicians are more and more subject to what one can call the exploitation of the diligent by the majority. So we have now reached that point where one can reckon that a good and conscientious prime minister (and the people have an increasing ability to discover them) can be carried to the graveyard after three to five years' service. This is true the world over, from Mao Tse Tung to Maurice Thorez, from Denmark to America.

Here it is then that the politicians, the industrialists and the military are

gradually about to discover that they have committed a tremendous howler, for the same condition rules within industry. They will discover that the powerful can relax a little by allowing artists to perform before the people in their name. This is the reason for the great interest politicians and industrialists have in art today. This is the reason why they have again begun to dig up the old Roman principle, 'bread and circuses'. However, it just so happens that in Northern Europe there has sprung up an art of a completely new kind, which does not allow itself to be brought to heel and which is superior to subservient art, being more than simple popular entertainment or authoritarian propaganda. In contrast to most modern French artists, they have set up a directly inspirational relationship with the people, and they will not give up this again.\*

*A true art is the transmission of a true enthusiasm that develops in an artist,* and before an artist can be enthused by the politicians, he has to be enthused by the methods, the art these politicians use to advance political events. These methods all result in the threat of war, and today this war is an atomic war. When war was an expression of *human* strength, then the artists could be enthused about such an elementary form of vitality. But not an artist is to be found in the world who today would lift a brush in enthusiasm for the little Jack-in-office who is to press the button in the East and the West every time the atom bomb is to go boom. Nothing at all can be done about this, even if a prime minister has to be carried to his grave every fortnight. Tøk weeps with dry eyes.\* To make art *well-behaved* again is impossible. There is nothing more to be done than to copy the Germans and declare all modern art *decadent* and forbid it. But even such a precaution would not help, for there is also a demand on the side of the people upon the arts for liberation from the valueless existence being offered, and it is from here that the surprises will come in the future.

### **The gold standard and the artistic yardstick**

In a previous passage we have set up the economic problem in three mutual complementary areas, the precious, the economic and the free of charge. Everything that can be controlled is economic. If something is placed under control then it is no longer free of charge. As the precious also lies outside control, generally one has a tendency to perceive the precious as free of charge. But if one does this, then it is no longer possible to set up a scale of values that has to go from the precious to the free of charge. It is this scale of values that

the socialist doctrine of economics throws away, as it makes the economic value of an article identical with the working time necessary to produce it, and abolishes the value of the working hour by ignoring the variability of work effort, so one hour can only be calculated according to time, and the clock thus becomes the standard for the article produced. The basic structure is hereby set up for the clock-watcher mentality, to which the modern citizen must learn to dedicate himself, if he is to be reconciled to his fellow man.

There is so much of the free of charge that one does not need to save it at all. The precious is what is desired, but is rare. The most precious is the unique, which is passionately desired by all: in its indivisible form some have called this principle god. If such a unique thing has quality or constancy in time and yet can be divided, then it can be used as a unit of measurement for the scale between the precious and the free of charge. Diamonds, pearls and above all gold have been used as such a standard, but industry today can produce these things on as large a scale as one wishes, and this objectivized standard has thereby become so unstable that it is being given up in the capitalist countries too. That the gold coin standard is being forsaken is above all connected with the rising socialization. The result of having nothing by which the value of money can be measured has been that the various conflicting economic advantages of the different societal groups cancel each other out so that only the number on the note increases to such an extent that a couple of noughts have to be knocked off now and then.\*

Before currency was invented, all precious things were artistic and aesthetic, and now after the war, strangely enough, economists have discovered that art works of an acknowledged value are the most stable of all precious objects. The Suez crisis revealed that a couple of big art collectors survived a collapse that made other firms break up, because they possessed two of the world's largest art collections. This has awakened the interest of economists in art to a high degree. Every art work is an absolute original and at the same time part of an artist's output, so the advantages of having gone over from the gold standard to an art standard are quite big. But the artists hereby take on a quite grotesque role as producers of the most precious things in society. The question is if it is an illusion that art is the most precious thing, or whether it really is traditionally identified as the precious itself by the people. Here I can refer to Karl Marx, who has proved that what can be perceived as social values never can be created by machines, only by people, and that humanity is thus the only real value-creating factor in society. A work's value is the direct expression of the interest the members of society show it. As the fine arts have no other meaning at all than to make people immediately and directly interested and interesting,

art thus represents the highest value in society, as it is the result of unique achievement. What, in the narrowest sense, are called the fine arts are those arts the special essence of which consists in being and remaining unique. This is not the case with technical inventions characterized by being able to be reproduced without changing character, or even being directly meant for this.

As art can also be used to throw an interesting light upon phenomena that are not interesting in themselves, it has always been in the interests of the powers-that-be to set up the social task of art precisely as that of being their servant in this way. But as the bond with the transition to the monetary system's final victory has been broken and an independent artistic development thereby created, it will not again be possible to reduce art to this subservient role. So there are only two other ways to go, either the social powers-that-be have to forbid and destroy art, or the economic means that stand special groups in art-life in good stead must be dispersed into the general art life where the economic income is poor. The first possibility has already been attempted without success by the social powers-that-be.

### **Distribution without conversion**

The opposition between the inventor – the artist in this connection is a kind of inventor – and the worker is that the worker's reproduced product can be *compared* with another product and evaluated on the basis of their *common* characteristics. The new cannot be compared with anything at all in this way. If it can, it is not new. It can only be compared in its *dissimilarity*. The doctrine of value that Karl Marx, and before him the capitalists, set up is based upon equalities in comparison. Its principle is the dialogue, exchange. *For the new there is no given equivalence*. The new is, as one says, irreversible, just like progress. What is called reversible is the basis for what is called communication or community. This reversibility is called dialogue in the intellectual sphere. Only where there is dialogue is it correct to talk of communication. Only on a telephone, where one can talk and hear from both sides, only on a train, which goes in both directions, can one talk of a communication. If the movement is only one way, then it is called transmission or distribution. Therefore when the press, the radio, the television, the film, even the whole of art life are called communication, this is a giant swindle. Here there is only radiation. Once one has understood this, then one understands why the whole of this colossal activity cannot be calculated on the basis of an exchange of goods, for there is simply no place for exchange.

Capitalism and socialism maintain that value occurs the instant an object is recognized as a commodity and is exchanged with another commodity. In the amount of commodity that can be obtained for this commodity occurs its social value. The Danish painter Carl-Henning Pedersen has gone against this postulate in an enormously effective and illuminating way by allowing his pictures to be exhibited but refusing to sell them.\* The rising interest in his pictures demonstrates the whole absurdity of this capitalist/socialist principle of economics. Carl-Henning Pedersen's pictures have never been commodities. Their price cannot be reckoned in working time and yet there is a question how he can inhibit them ever being used as commodities and so reaching a high price. The only thing Carl-Henning Pedersen could get for his pictures is commodities and he does not like commodities. The only thing he really does like are his own pictures and he therefore retains them. But as his pictures are highly valued as commodities, then one could say that he possesses a great capital. It is not constant, for its value rises constantly. It cannot be evaluated as a fortune and cannot therefore be taxed. He likes exhibiting the pictures if he gets the chance and if one day he wanted to burn them all, then he is also allowed to do that. But that Carl-Henning Pedersen's pictures are *wealth and at the same time not a commodity* is proof that artistic value, even if at a given time it can be reckoned in money, and thus as a commodity, can nevertheless not be a commodity value. So the problem is: where is the natural home of art in the perception of social value?

### **The art work as counter-value**

It is in the fight for humanity's leisure and interest that Northern European art and cultural development is today showing those strengths that it developed after the Reformation, which was first and foremost the detachment of art and leisure from the hands of the Church. The stakes today are about the wider existence of this development or its annihilation. To date the only instrument that has been found for the protection of this liberated leisure was found by N.F.S. Grundtvig and called 'the free Folk High School'. That, just like that of socialism, this organization has up to now only been used for just the opposite of this purpose changes nothing about the interest both of these ideas in their original forms must have for all thinking people.

In order to understand how this game works, it is first necessary to get a purely materialistic explanation of what art and what is called artistic value is

and has to be in relation to what is called practical value, with which it is often confused.

The art work in its highest form is *valuable quality*: the form that always distributes its content without even being exhausted. It fills itself up in the most wonderful way. Art is the spiritual creation which preserves its quality simultaneously with spreading its value. This singularity has provided material for innumerable explanations about the metaphysical and religious essence of art, whilst at the same time the rationalists have simply denied that there is anything called art. The reason for this special character of art, which Marx was the first to acknowledge but the last to understand, is, however, quite a simple condition. Art never supplies values. Art gives nothing. It takes all. Art is the strength needed to influence a body and liberate the values confined in that body. Art is thus a destroyer of human quality and integrity, and it is this destruction of one's own absolute integrity that one experiences as beauty. The secret of art consists of the simple fact that it is more blessed to give than to take, but also that this blessedness is dependent upon a *voluntary* giving, so that what is given is felt as a *surplus*, a wealth, and not a duty. This is the simple materialistic explanation of the value of the art work and for all the other things called spiritual values. Art is opium for the people. It undoes, subverts, liberates.

In relation to the practical values, art is thus a counter-value, the value of productive pleasure. *Art is the call for a discharge of energy* without a precise goal, except the one that the receiver can discover. In this way, art is the source of benevolence, is what is called *grace*. By making God the origin of all grace, God has become identical with the artist, and by perceiving the artist's demand for the ownership of what he creates as blasphemy, creative art has been killed. In a practical sense, art is a meaningless value. At the same time, to the individual it is the very proof of his own freedom of action. This does not mean, of course, that the viewer can do what he likes with the art work. What he is freely and independently determining is the energies he has liberated in himself through the artistic experience. No one is able to control these energies except himself. If the viewer has no energies to liberate in this area, then he will see or hear nothing at all. *The most primitive answer to artistic provocation is the will to crush the art work that has brought one out of balance.* This is the reason why so many artists are at first persecuted and then later mourned. Politicians have always been incredibly diligent at manipulating this natural reaction whenever an art has occurred that has worked against their interests, for art is the most disquieting element of all in society, and yet, at the same time, the element that has the greatest political interest because it is the method

of enthusiasm, of revival, of inspiration, and *nothing is so valuable to exploit as the enthusiasm of a people*. This is the highest form of politics.

As the industrial process is built upon the principle of equivalence or indifference, artistic enthusiasm was the worst enemy of the industrialists. The only art they could accept was that which could provoke a popular enthusiasm for the commodity that was produced and was to be sold. These advertising methods are so well known that they do not need to be discussed here.

Seen objectively or scientifically, one interest cannot be of a higher kind than another. Any accentuation of an interest at the expense of another is thus absolutely unscientific. *Even the most ancient city society understood the utility of art as an advertisement for the authorities*, and the subservient function given to this art shadowed developments from this point on right up to modern industrial society. If at the same time this art happens to be some of the most wonderful in the history of the development of art, then this is not because the art served the authorities, but because those authorities were able to identify their position with something central to the development of the world-picture itself. It was this character of universal authority that was able to inspire all the artistic capabilities, and that was suddenly split asunder by Christianity's distinction between universal and secular power, which were set in an opponent relationship from then on. From that moment, art becomes an expression of the independence of the universal idea from the secular powers, and any attempt to set the old unity up again falls to earth as a baroque and forlorn absurdity. However, as Christianity in its opposition to the secular powers became an *absolute* or unchangeable symbol world, the artists in their ceaseless need to create had to forsake it too in order to carry on their work completely on their own basis. These are the stages of the development of the independence of art.

*Enthusiasm is the spirit of self-sacrifice, is artistic experience*. If it is to be true, this experience can only take place as a *voluntary* action. In order to advance the industrial system, that artistic capability of the people, popular enthusiasm, had to be made ridiculous and forbidden in the name of economics, and gradually as this development has advanced and demonstrated its very limited significance, politicians have become more and more afraid of the artistic strength of the people, of the people's spirit of self-sacrifice. *After the war*, in which this spirit of self-sacrifice was put to its hardest test, politics in the East and in the West were directed exclusively towards reducing the significance of the people's enthusiasm to nothing. When the war was over, the people stood prepared to make sacrifices for the advancement of life, which during the war had been sacrificed for the advancement of death. As our country was one of the few that retained its production apparatus intact after

the war, the greatest insult to the Danish population was that it suddenly had to have Marshall Aid from outside. That this aid was only a trick is evident from the fact that we had then to help the so-called 'under-developed countries', then we had to be helped militarily, and now we cannot even take care of our own housekeeping, but have to have help with our own administration. *How could such a thing be at all possible?* Because only one thing was forbidden, to appeal to the Danish people's artistic sense or spirit of self-sacrifice about our own. If there were tendencies towards self-sacrifice, then they had to be exported immediately, whilst at the same time we too received our import of 'self-sacrificing souls'. The whole of this enormous anti-Scandinavian swindle could not have been carried out so deftly and without friction, if we had not had that pillow that is called the Folk High School, which has had *a monopoly on Scandinavian enthusiasm and popular revival*, but which has only administered sleeping pills, every time someone snored.\*

We have now come to the end of the road, and if Scandinavian reflection and resolve is to be awakened in time, then it must be done with such hard means that the anger of the people will probably at first be directed at whoever is trying to shake it out of its sweet dreams. But this is the risk that has to be run, for the Nordic peoples have previously shown before that, if they just understood *what* was going on, then they were the quickest to take decisions in fellowship, and with artistic magnanimity to get a change of system going rapidly and with intelligence.

### **The symmetry between production and consumption**

With the quite insignificant variations that exist between wages, the capitalist and socialist economies that rule modern society can on the whole maintain that one hour's work in the machinery of society is uniform in pay to all. If one ignores all insignificant special cases and reckons with large numbers, the effort is uniform, for all individuals have the same value, and one hour's work is, as they say, equivalent to one hour's work. In this way the productive ability of all individuals is of equal value.

In order to avoid a saving which remains in the pocket of the working class, it is necessary that what is spent on consumption corresponds exactly to what is paid for production, and that on the whole there is also an equilibrium or equivalence between the production and consumption of the individual. If we set this up schematically, then this would show that *one hour's production corresponds to one hour's consumption*. This is the foundation on which every

modern capitalist or socialist society bases its economic equilibrium. What is given for work is taken back for consumption.

The proletariat without property had as a political goal to make this equivalence between production and consumption really actual, so *anyone who worked an hour, really got the equivalent for his work, as he had the right to an hour's production of another individual*. If this equivalence is achieved, then exploitation no longer exists within social production. Everyone is equal, and all share equally.

This system functions irreproachably when it is a matter of the practical, necessary production for the establishment of life. This is also the reason that the Marxist doctrine of economics, as well as the capitalist one, can only account for the necessary. Now it just so happens that a person can normally only eat for three hours and his need for clothes and shelter are covered by one hour's daily work. Let us say that he works eight hours, rests for the other eight hours, then he has eight hours' consumption, of which only four cover his necessary needs. He then demands the *right to a luxury need in the remaining four hours. He wants to be entertained*. He has the right to be distracted by another person for four hours. He has paid for this with four hours' work. That is just.

Let us say that he wishes to play chess. He then seeks out another and asks him to play chess. We have now suddenly entered a world where all the theories of capitalist and socialist economics break completely down. If the other man has worked eight hours and hates chess, then he can refuse to play, but if he says 'yes' but is a complete duffer at chess, then it is the other man who gets angry. Or let us assume that they can both play chess well and that they like to do so, then they have entertained each other and both have saved an hour's production. Then they should both pay this in tax.

But society, seeing that these people have plenty of energy left, now squeezes production up so that everyone is tired. Let us now suppose that they are interested in chess but too tired to play. Well then, they can amuse themselves by watching the game. Let us suppose that two players entertain a hundred spectators. Then they have, in accordance with the economic rules that are valid in modern society, the right to one hour's production from each of the spectators, if they play for an hour. This becomes exactly one hundred hours' productive work that they earn in an hour.

Of course, those who wish to be entertained gladly go along with this, and thus it goes. But suddenly someone cries cheat when the two collect the money. This cannot be right. These players are not even production workers, they live like good-for-nothings and in no time at all earn enormous sums. How can that

be? They have the right to one hour's production and no more.

Yes, but the one who wishes to be entertained would be the first to protest in rage and indignation if one said that anyone could then be allowed to perform as entertainers. No, the criticizing, choosing, rejecting and praising, elevating one above another alone is one of the greatest enjoyments, especially in sport. *In the entertainment branch the theory of equivalence has not a shadow of existence.* There just the opposite rules are valid. Only the best is accepted, and the better they are, the more people come to their entertainment, and if it is especially fine, it can be sent out on radio, television, film, gramophone record etc. filling up thousands and thousands of hours of entertainment, and what is more, everyone will pay with pleasure if the entertainment is good, and do it absolutely voluntarily. Thus there can be no talk of exploitation or force. In this way, all the modern means of production have multiplied the efficiency of the entertainment activity, have industrialized it. But this thus means that everyone who is able to do something that other people gladly devote their leisure to cultivating must become enormously rich. This is, however, seldom the case. Almost all the money that is paid for unnecessary consumption or entertainment goes into the pockets of the various governments, whether in the East or the West.

The socially productive people can be indifferent to this as they get their entertainment any way and even, on the strength of somehow representing the government in a democratic society, can be quite satisfied. Just, however, it is not. How then should one explain to the entertainer that he is going to be cheated of the money that in justice's name he should have had? This can only be done by maintaining that his talent is a *gift* which others don't have, and which he is *obliged* to use for the betterment of others. But who then has given him this gift? This is where *having to invent a god, who will compel certain individuals to achieve, not the normal, but their utmost*, comes in, whilst everyone else just has to achieve the normal. Today such an argument is, of course, perceived as pure rubbish. But it is nevertheless the only explanation that, even in the countries which lead in Marxist theory, they have to take refuge in, if they will not look at the affair in a purely scientific way and admit that the majority exploit those with unique abilities.

### **The enjoyment of output and output versus enjoyment**

If we are thus forced to recognize the foundation of social justice as the establishment of an equivalence between production and consumption according

to the old method that one reaps as one sows, then this does not lead to a universal solution unless one forbids both art and entertainment. I wonder if there is anyone who would deny that the greatest happiness of humanity consists in having done one's best in the area one loves to develop, that the highest output here is identical with the highest enjoyment. It is here the people are cheated by trying to kid them that they love something that is unimportant to them, and that what they really want to do is or ought to be unimportant to them. In industry everyone has to work at the same tempo. Those who desire to work more than others destroy the rhythm and are called to order and have to seek an outlet for their strengths and abilities in their leisure time. But if industrial production is to be absolutely universal, then they are simply forbidden to produce anything. They have to make do with sport and non-productive work. Because it is a joy to them, their special effort is perceived as an enjoyment and is treated as consumption. The result of this unartistic perception of work is that only the most boring work is the foundation for the judgement of value, and the most boring is monotonous reproduction, which is not creative. One therefore sees that a researcher who has had the same education as a teacher gets less in salary because his work is in itself interesting. *What creates value is here prized less than the purely reproductive.* The more boring it is the dearer it is.

### **How money is earned from art and culture**

If it is an abstract generalization that we accept the principle that one hour's reproductive work has the same value as one hour's reproductive work, regardless of what is made and who does it, and that one hour's reproductive work has the same value as an hour's consumption, then it is still a fact that an hour's reproduction will be paid for an hour's entertainment, regardless of who is paying. Nothing in this system can hinder huge sums being earned from entertainment, without entertainment simply being forbidden.

You have probably been asking for some time what the whole of this problem of recreation has to do with art and culture. This is because, as in the question of public opinion, one only thinks of the present moment and does not value the length of the recreation. It is here that the fraud goes on, taking from art and culture the money which rightly belongs to them. If I amuse myself with a book for an hour, then I owe the author one hour's productive work. The longer an author preserves his actuality, the more money he will realize for art

and culture. Try to imagine how many hours have been utilized in the course of time in the reading of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales.

The artistic culture of a people is in this way a directly measurable source of economic income. When it is said that something is sacrificed for art and culture, this is a pure economic and political swindle. Art and culture retain only a minimal part of the sums they earn. If therefore it is at all possible to be discussing how far a country's prehistorical collections should be preserved under accountable conditions that give humanity the greatest returns, then it is time that the people in artistic, cultural and entertainment life went on strike and refused to give the Finance Ministry the money that rightfully belongs to us. All great popular entertainers draw nourishment from the creative activity that can only be experienced by making an effort. Popular entertainment is only a facade. Behind it extend enormous constructions. This is human culture. Tearing down and building up, researching and re-making go on, and money is paid in abundance by those who enjoy it all. If the Americans just paid according to the tariff for the time they occupy themselves with European culture, then the whole of Europe could live off it. But then our artistic culture would stagnate.

Creative culture is not gratis, but it can only live in beauty or grace. An unartistic world is a graceless world.

Grace belongs to artistic people and no one else. Culture belongs only to those who do something for culture, but art is full of grace and culture is grace. It is this fact that the power elite try to utilize and hide from people. No means are too dirty in this work. The greatest American poet in America in our time, the pacifist Ezra Pound, champion of American neutrality during the last World War, was after the war placed by the American military in an open cage in a square in Milan and then put in a mental hospital because he was too intelligent, and because the American military could not have him killed for high treason. Here at home, children sing, 'I know a lark's nest', but I will not say more about this affair, as Bergstedt's film *The Feast of St. George* is not played today either in Russia or anywhere else.\* It is a little too revealing for the whole comedy. There is no book about one of Denmark's greatest writers, Martin Andersen Nexø. On the contrary, his clothes were covered with spit at the time of the Finland war because he did not follow public opinion.\* Today the value of Hans Kirk's books is explained by him having two faces, one beautiful, one ugly.\* We have gradually become so used to this that it seems to be part of the conditions of cultural life. Perhaps it has always been so. The only new thing that industry appears to have brought to culture is increased productivity and mass effect. The threatening thing about the German

concentration camps as well as about the American Hiroshima explosion lies in no way in the atrocities, which are no worse than those happening in many other places on earth. The shattering thing is their colossal and blind mass effect that makes humanity more and more valueless. The great crime against humanity today is therefore the belief in the right of the mass effect to dominate. The mass effect is the graceless effect.

One of the strangest phenomena in medieval art is what I will call the art of indignation. This anti-artistic art aims at frightening people away from everything that is beautiful here in life. The perfidiousness of this art consists in it uniting the enjoyment of beauty with a remorseless indignation about what is enjoyed. This art form, to which we here from the North must admit having been godfather, has in America today developed into forms, the cynicism of which paralyses the whole civilized world with admiration, as it has been combined with the old Roman insistence on the people's desire for amusement. The zenith must have been reached with the so-called Chessmann affair.\* A young man is accused of having raped a woman. This is the prelude to an entertainment in the name of indignation that lasted twenty years. Probably no woman in California will ever again report a man for rape. If it was calculated what the entertainment industry earned during the trials of these twenty years, then it would be better understand why they were kept going in the name of so-called justice. When the woman had finally been so besmirched by the public that she went mad, they could find no other way to absolve themselves of the responsibility for their crime than to declare Chessmann guilty and kill him. This last show number was carried out with dazzling brio. But that was a postlude. As Chessmann was an excellent author, he left a series of books. Like all other so-called and supposed criminals, he had in life served as popular amusement in the stocks of the modern information media. But today the American state is earning money from his books. Purely economically, it is this amount that can be called grace. *Chessmann has graced the Americans*. A graceless people void of beauty is an uncultivated people without anything to fall back on. One has to beware of that – but also to beware above all of those who maintain that culture has nothing to do with economics, for they are swindlers and demagogues.

### Valueless output

If it is possible to allow a person to give of his utmost in an area he loves without his output having any productive result at all, then it is possible to

perceive this output as a purely personal output without social consequences. He must therefore pay an hour's production for this pleasure, if it lasts an hour. This is possible in gaming and sport. We will assume that the man wants to play chess and that he finds an opponent who beats him, then he has had the enjoyment of giving his utmost, whilst his opponent could have played a better player. He thus owes his opponent an hour's production. Neither more nor less.

If they both perform for an audience, then in fellowship they have the right to an hour's production from each of the spectators, as well as each of them having won an hour from the other. But what would the result be if all entertainment were paid in this way? The result would be the same as we are experiencing today, for money is paid out in such a way. It is just not the players but also those who own the organizations that rule this economy and shovel in the money. In this game, one can even win fortunes. However, care is taken that this is not conditioned by ability but by chance. Pools and lotteries.

It was believed that the whole question could be solved by distinguishing between professional production and amateur activity. That has been the Nordic solution. Here much has already been gained, as this side of entertainment is freed from speculation. One just loses in another way, for, despite everything, some speculation does lie behind it, namely, that of stopping money being mixed up with recreational life. This is the Protestant solution. It is not brilliant.

It is said that the Italians, who are some of the world's worst football players, have not lost an international since 1910. They buy their players abroad. Thus here we have another method. However, regardless of how one twists and turns it, the modern life form has called forth a broad popular demand for entertainment that is of such strength that the politicians and the rest of the leadership of society are powerless before this so-called public opinion, which has more sympathy for racing cyclists, film stars, artists, musicians, etc., than for 'the power elite'. Amongst other things, this condition has created a rising opposition between recreational life and politicians in the USA. That this opposition is hardly so banal in Europe is because a greater culture has accumulated.

Only the day that it is acknowledged that recreational life can not be arranged on either a professional or an amateur basis in the economic sense, will it be possible to give an enriching leisure back to humanity. Art is not craft, but it cannot be separated from it either. Art is the anti-professional profession. The artist is a professional amateur, and his output has the greatest value in society, also economically, regardless of who gets the money. Money-free amateur activity is a sheer metaphysical fraud.

## The opposition of mass and tension

This short survey of the problems shows that here we have suddenly come into an area that neither sociologists nor economists really understand. The problem around this question cannot be explained by old-fashioned individualism. The selection of the individual who performs the best entertainment cannot in general be identified with the selection of the best individual. One wants to see the best performer, but at the same time he has to give of his utmost, in contrast to the normally working person who works to a common cadence, that must not be faster than the slowest can keep up with. *Society is not interested in individuals who entertain, it is only interested in abilities that have an interest to others.* If one knows something about top performances in recreational life, then one will also discover that the public are the hardest and most pitiless employers in existence. That the entertainer is forced to stimulate himself by artificial means that systematically destroy his physique does not move them. Harshly and systematically they demand the best of him, and the day he falls apart only scorn and oblivion remain. The public would rather see blood.

Mechanical work is the product of amount and tension. In normal production the tension is so uniform that one can ignore this factor and calculate the work as a pure amount or quantity. This is surely the reason that entertainment takes on an exactly opposite character. As compensation for tension-less work, spiritual equilibrium requires being able to swing over into an activity that *gives the greatest tension, but demands the least amount of work effort.* This is the reason for the colossal significance of the entertainment industry in modern society: the mass production of impotent tension.

We can demonstrate that this same industrial development, which to a greater and greater degree is developing *the principle of equality*, is within reproductive work developing a world of entertainment where only anarchy's law about the *difference* of people is valid. If industrial work tends towards indifference, then here only the law of the difference of values is valid, and the tendency is going towards higher and higher tension with a lower and lower input of work amount. As the scientific definition of the concept of work in mechanics covers both amount and tension, we are correct in stressing that we are confronted with two opposing forms of work carried out by two opposing types of worker whose life conditions are fundamentally different. This difference can be taken to the point where an entertainment uses a man up in one go, so to speak. To reach this high point he could perhaps have been preparing himself for decades. The question is what becomes of the man when he is used up and is no longer of any use. One could imagine a man becoming

world champion at boxing and at the same time being destroyed. Similar cases are more common than one believes.

Even if every citizen only pays a fair price to experience a top performance these days, incredible sums are being scooped up from those entertainments that achieve the interest of world opinion because of modern means of transmission. It is obvious that the money earned in this way justly belongs to the one who has given the performance, but he just does not get it. Rising socialization makes entertainment or recreation the best instrument for the exploitation of the masses by the state apparatuses. At the same time, it is obvious that he who hereby gives of his best is only able to do so if his way of life is strictly adapted in such a way that, in relation to a well-paid worker, he lives as a rule the life of an ascetic. Thus if the entertainer himself had the right to the money earned from his entertainment for his personal consumption, he would, however, be terrified if he had personally to consume to such a degree. As his entertainment is at the same time an expression of a passionate interest in the area in which he is giving his performance, the money naturally and justly has, of course, to be invested in the raising of the level of his performance. The working population today must take a clear and unambiguous position to this requirement, if they wish to create the best conditions for the best performance.

### **The known and the anonymous – the remarkable and the normal**

Does society not have the right to demand that the best give of their best? No. Democratic society has the right to demand that all offer exactly the same. If this is valid only for the great majority, then society is automatically established in two classes. If it is the majority that decides in which region and how the best are to give of their best, then the best form an exploited class, a subservient class, an under-class, regardless how this is twisted and turned, regardless of whether the selected group of people is perceived as an elite, as the best. Perhaps they are perceived as a higher class by the rest, but it is far from certain that they perceive themselves in the same way. Their highest endeavours are perhaps perceived by themselves as a most degrading and dangerous activity. What is called higher in their endeavours is only what *the others* perceive as higher, and they themselves are perhaps so intelligent that they can see that the things one can get them to do are sheer madness.

Without any right at all, modern society thus selects a group of people especially useful to the majority because of their special characteristics. These perhaps stem from original or special talents, but in all circumstances they are

developed through upbringing and cultivated with the intention of suiting them to as high a degree as possible to practising what is called their best. As this system gradually reveals its character more and more in the modern democracies, both in the East and in the West, a crisis is about to occur, as it has become a disaster for a person if it is discovered that he is particularly intelligent and diligent. The result is that in Moscow academics would rather sweep the streets and meditate on existence than take the responsibility for the management of factories. On the other hand, there are protests that many years of education having been invested in them and the money is required back, but as these people have probably not asked for such an education, the argument has no moral force. The interesting thing about this crisis is that it is common to both the socialist and the capitalist countries and is already so far advanced that it is extremely rare today to find what one calls an eminent personality in any significant post. An American industrial leader can perhaps earn as much as he likes, but the whole of his time is tied up in his efforts in industry and in social representation to the degree that he can be fairly sure that it is only his wife who can enjoy the advantages of his fortune before and after his death around the age of 45. One can understand when it is said that pretty women in America are the real power factor. They own most of both the leisure and of the capital, and are called the gold-diggers of our time.

However, this condition does not hinder increasing investment everywhere in developing what is called an elite to be placed in the various key positions. In America this group is called, curiously enough, 'the power elite', the secular power, and is the only elite that has social justification in the United States and the Soviet Union. It is divided into three intertwining groups, the political, the military and the industrial or commercial elites. The comical thing about modern American sociology is that, having excluded the artist from this goodly company, it has been discovered that the so-called power elite is completely powerless if the people do not have an idealized picture and a personal conception of them. People have to know them. They have therefore become strong competitors to commodity advertising. It has been discovered that the most important thing is to be known. Now, however, the total of people who can be said to be known in a particular period and in a particular place is limited by people's ability to maintain the name and image of a personality. The limit seems to lie about 500. This gives the pleasing fact that all the people in a village are personalities. In a larger provincial town, there is only a limited number of people who can be seen as personalities, the rest being perceived as more or less anonymous. The colossal increase in population has thus not increased the number of personalities. On the contrary, the increased knowledge

of the population of other parts of the world lessens the chance on the home market. We see, for example, that the great number of literary translations clearly give far less scope for the development of literary personalities than in the previous century, especially when it began. There can reign no doubt that the severe isolation during the war played a great role in the development of the strong character features of modern Danish art.

### **What one does – what one is and what one has**

Of course, it is completely meaningless to believe that only known people have a personality. Every person who is born on the earth is, just like his fingerprints, different from all others, but only known people have the right to have a social personality. *In every historical period known people have represented human society's elite.* It is about this elite that historical writing weaves its images of vanished times and makes our past human.

If one looks at history from a socialist viewpoint, the 'same thing would have happened' if other personalities had been in place. This is probably correct on the macro-level. What interest then do the personalities have? We will simply reverse the question. What do the innumerable series of numbers in the different five-year plans mean to us, when we cannot discern one human life in them? In themselves they are just as boring and uninteresting as the dirty stories that are told about Stalin are interesting. This is entertainment of rank, this is history, inhumanly human. The world becomes unknown if one does not know the people in it. The same is the case with history. It is the relationship between people and events that interests us. Not the events in themselves nor the people in themselves. The idea that the human elite, the known personalities, represents individuals in contact with events who are higher, more effective and nobler than all others, that history collects human events and gathers together material of a higher significance independently of the individual's position on the social ladder, whether rich or poor, popularly known or unknown, admired or despised, represents the ideology of European humanism. Today this idea has been completely removed from sociological observations in the United States as well as the socialist societies, and this is not absolutely without reason.

It is completely abstract to talk of an unknown elite, an elite that cannot be situated anywhere. In order to be able to talk of an elite, there must exist certain facts attached to it and obvious to the consciousness of others. The concept of an elite can thus never be attached to certain beings of remarkable character, only to certain *actions*. With individuals, others can only evaluate their actions.

The American sociologist C. Wright Mills is therefore completely correct in his book *The Power Elite* when he perceives the old humanistic attitude as pure sophism.\* Only he makes the attitude to the problem even more absurd by replacing the perception of the individual's human power, the question of what one *is* into the question of what one *has*, instead of moving it over to the question of what one *does*, and thus to the personal dynamic, which is precisely the historical value of power, a strength in activity and never a latent power.

Human abilities that remain unutilized in their latent state, people who remain unknown because they have never had occasion to realize their abilities, have no reality. In spite of this, humanity's quality of latent genius is the very essence and substance of our strength of development. No instrument, no property, no social possession, no money, no social position, is in itself of human or social value. They are just as lacking in intelligence and sensitivity as what is called 'the power elite'. Power is the manifestation of strength and consists only in the will, ability and right to transform and change something, the right to vary or gamble with something.

*Thus against secular power we place the power of art.*

This arrangement of the problem seems simple, but it is not. What is perceived as most precious is *the art work*, and thus the article, the quality. It is something one *has*. One could easily develop this interest without being interested in *the artist*, for an artist is something one *is*, and one cannot evaluate the full value of an artist before he is dead and has completed his work. Consequently, there lies a great risk in buying the work of a living artist. But even recognition of the artist is just a recognition of a quality, of what he is, and thus of a momentary evaluation that could change. It is not a direct evaluation of the original, of what he *does*, of *the creative development of art*, which disturbs fixed evaluations all the time. If one wishes to value an artist for what he is, then one is at the same time forbidding him to change. Only a direct interest in the creative artistic process itself (and only creative artists themselves can have this completely) gives an unhampered artistic renewal. This engages, if one may say so, *everyone* to take part in the creative process of art. This is what this new development implicates humanity in, and it demands a common social framework similar to that which has been developed for sport and other light entertainment.

The only alternative to this development is the tendency that is today taken care of by the state apparatus and the power elite, and which depends on the standard for humanity being the human himself, as he *is*. Where it is perceived materialistically, this perception must either be an aristocratic tendency towards the raising of humanity's *quality*, a tendency which, if it is to be taken

seriously, must end in racism, or be a real democratic tendency and thus has to set its target in the purely *quantitative* development of humanity. This last tendency is dominant the world over. One needs only to investigate the birth statistics. This is in context with the family being the basic community, where any productive surplus the individual possesses has to be distributed. In human terms, states and the power elite can only offer us these two perspectives – work to give birth to children or to kill each other.

### **On to be able and to know**

The American sociologist we have already mentioned stresses that it can be statistically proved that ‘the societal power that possesses the greatest destructive force, has also the greatest power’,\* and thus is the greatest power factor. This is the reason why the Americans maintain the production of atom bombs, not because they feel threatened, but because they are thereby able to threaten. Public opinion permits itself to be frightened, it seems. This cynical statement places the Europeans’ subordination to the American military, politics and economics in a glaring light, as it shows that the Americans are clear that we have done it out of dread and respect for them. At any rate, this is how Americans themselves ought to see the affair according to their own statements.

It was believed that the German Nazis had reached the highest effectiveness in popular destruction with their crematorium ovens. But this shows how craft oriented the thinking of Europe still is. When the atom bomb was exploded over Hiroshima, the modern destruction of people was invented, where mass destruction takes place without the law of ‘the survival of the fittest’ having any validity any more. Hereby the personal characteristics of the individual in the struggle for life have finally become meaningless.

What, however, fooled the Americans and which today creates their greatest problem is the discovery that the power elite’s power has, at the same time, become unusable because it is too great. The effect is too great and what does one do then? Remarkably enough, one works energetically to make it even bigger. It was discovered that the power elite has to be known by public opinion to have any significance at all. People have always lived on the edge of Vesuvius. The whole of Holland lies below sea level. Million of people live in constant mortal danger to this day, but feel themselves in no way subordinate to the forces apparently threatening them. Obviously one takes care, but one does not interest oneself in it at all. *For a group of people really to have power*

*over others, it seems that these others have to be interested in them.* It is this interest that gives social value. Today it is difficult for the American and Russian power elites to attract the people's interest and, as they have colonized Europe, the same thing is happening here. Interest is beginning to be shown in the problem, and on the American side to collect around the method that has shown itself so effective in the fight about consumption. Like any other commodity, the elite has to be sold by the most hard-handed advertising. In order to avoid seeing what is really hidden in this problem, academics have made a false separation between what they call art and what they call advertisement. They simply refuse to admit the obvious that all art, even that of Beethoven and Rembrandt, is art because, amongst other things, it is an advertisement for something, and that to advertise is to give a sensory experience an extraordinary significance. That a sensory experience is given an extraordinary significance is first and foremost to say that one is conscious of it as something important and something present. This conscious reaction is what in the most elementary sense could be called intelligence. In order to avoid acknowledging the intellectual element in this process, academics have simply denied that intelligence occurs in this psychic sphere and that intelligence does not occupy itself with experiences of reality but only with concepts, even the concept of reality being defined as something that cannot be experienced but only comprehended.

Art is to be able, but to be able is also to know. To maintain the above-mentioned crippled concept of art, academics have had to remove knowledge from art. The achievement here is the isolation of direct knowledge from the problem of intelligence. That this formulation is commonly carried out in America demonstrates the above mentioned sociology, where everyone who is publicly known without belonging to the power elite is simply defined as a 'professional celebrity', which means that they are known only because their work 'depends upon being known'. Into this bag one can throw film stars together with scientists, pin-ups and fighters for enlightenment, artists, racing cyclists, religious preachers, boxers etc. and complain that these so-called clowns are taking the limelight more and more from the power elite, so that they too are required to clown for the public in order to attract attention. Eisenhower's speeches on television are repeated exactly like a play, without a spark of interest in what he is saying. Texan politicians have to perform in cowboy clothes and have no chance if they do not know how to handle a lasso. No wonder that the power elite has become more and more angry about these so-called 'professional celebrities'

Where modern capitalists and socialists lack understanding only becomes

clear from our definition of value. The citizenry took over from Greek materialism the conviction that only the known has existence. Strangely enough, Marxism is probably constructed on the same principle. We have to maintain that it is only the consciousness of a phenomenon that confirms its existence. However, it has been overlooked that it is only those phenomena that interest people as sensory phenomena, only those that, as we say, attract their attention, that have meaning to them. This invokes the illusion that phenomena that can be ignored also vanish. *Everything that has become necessary becomes at the same time without direct significance, without interest as it no longer invokes problems. From being significant it has become obvious.* One need think of it no longer. Ruling ideas, ideologies, societal groups and individuals are what have significance, the unusual. Those who are governed are those that have become obvious. As the lacking interest in the significance of a necessary thing is the same as the lack of the necessity of being aware of it and of being oneself conscious of it, this means that Marxism's disdain for free intellectual life and its development of the principle of necessity makes humanity's existence more and more unconscious and meaningless. What really happens when a phenomenon is made necessary is what is called its '*Entfremdung*', its removal from human attention, the diminution of its interest in relation to humanity. The process in itself has, however, neither changed character nor essence.

### **Public opinion or the slavery of the moment**

Modern democratic society has become a complete slave of a strange, awe-inspiring being called public opinion. Even the power elite is more and more subordinated to its judgement. To perceive this as the opinion of the masses in opposition to the understanding of the intellectual aristocracy is completely mistaken, for we correspond to everyone and daily realize all public opinion, for public opinion is nothing other than our momentarily requested meaning, without precondition and without consequence about affairs about which we have neither time, desire nor ability to inform ourselves, but where we are nevertheless required to pass judgement.

Public opinion is thus nothing other than everyone's opinion at a certain point in time, and thus a cross-section of a popular instant. It is for this public opinion that there has to be new information at every moment of the day and this pours in such amounts that the new impression erases the previous one, and this makes people dafter and dafter from too much and too indifferent information. The amount and the rapidity hamper anything weighty getting a

place in the current. This is even true of thought. A new form of newspaper philosophy of a quite special, non-contextual sort has arisen, so self-contradictory and windbagological that it excludes any form of overview.

The greater significance public opinion gets, the more timeless becomes modern civilization, and the more it is stripped of culture, which is the patience to cultivate characteristics.

The same is the case with the adaptation of practical production to instant consumption. This too is actualized to the degree that production and consumption have to follow each other in a faster and faster cadence. The Scandinavian resistance to this tendency is identical to the quality of Nordic production. This resistance can only be made economically understandable and calculable if the dimension of duration is also reckoned into the evaluation of value. *To reckon with the dimension of duration is what one calls culture.* When Danish politicians today say that culture has nothing to do with economics, then this is a denial of the economic structure of Scandinavia. I am not the only one to feel a premonition that this structure is richer than the one we will be forced to accept. The discussion around the activity of radio, television and other information and transmission organizations shows that the instinct is there, but the arguments are too weak. The latter is what I want to attempt to alter. But I cannot do it alone. I can only open the discussion on a new basis.

Ought a cinema ticket not to be cheaper than a theatre ticket, and a television presentation cheaper than a cinema ticket? Ought a gramophone record not to be cheaper than a concert, the reproduction of a painting cheaper than the original? Ought classic books not to be free? Apart from the purely technical question that creates a variation in price, the answer in principle has to be a no. The only way by which a diminution of the indifferent mass of information and the just as sickening amount of farcical entertainment is possible, is to make people pay directly for it and thereby force them to criticize, as the money they have to give out should then go directly towards raising the level of entertainment. Amateur sportsmen are actors without cost to the spectators. The sports presentations of television are experiences of the moment which take all significance from sport. Culture is context in time and it both costs and brings in money. By utilizing this without breaking new ground one eats up human history without renewing it. This is what is happening today.

**Technical cadence is artistic decadence**

The position of the artist, the inventor and the discoverer is superior to that of the power elite, because the latter only exists the instant that it has forced itself upon the attention of the whole of society. Only when this universal attention has been established, does the power elite begin to be able to do something. Whether this attention is compelled by violence and threats or by charm and the invocation of sympathy is in itself irrelevant. It is established on two opposite emotions, anxiety and confidence. Only an infantile person can unite anxiety with confidence about the same power.

On the other hand, the artist has use for neither anxiety, confidence nor attention established in advance. On the contrary, in itself his work consists precisely of *creating anxiety and confidence*, of creating attention. If this exists in advance, then he will either believe that his art is stronger than it really is or be acknowledging that he has lost contact with his creative activity. This is why the modern form of success, which is not based upon the direct effect of art itself but on a purely mythological recognition through indirect (in artistic terms) sources of information, can be inhibiting to artistic development, if one is not able to look behind the scenes and locate direct experience again.

However, as it is precisely the instant artist reaches this personal or indirect success that he gets in the way of the power elite's demand for attention, it is here that the power elite must either get him in its service as its charming representative or have him stamped as a criminal. The latter solution seems to be the least damaging to artistic development today.

On the other hand, the power elite cannot itself create attention around it. It has to have the apparatus that *advertises* under its control, and as this apparatus has been today industrially perfected to the degree that it can distribute its opinions to the great mass of people at a moment's notice, the power elite has become a slave of its own perfect apparatus incessantly demanding novelty from hour to hour. Because of its quantity, the new thus becomes more and more meaningless to the degree that there is no longer any place for the meaningful. The power elite has hereby become just as cheap and uninteresting as the data it needs to deliver. For this reason the artistic and creative elite is distancing itself more and more from this apparatus and simply refusing to read the newspapers regularly, listen to the radio or to see television and film, except on chance occasions. *To improve the level of these institutions would just be to trivialize the real creative areas, which demand a far narrower and more intense form of attention.* Therefore the development of art after the war can be seen not to have had its real creative development in the

changing tendencies one called ‘-isms’ before the war. Instead it is decentralizing itself, not into movements but into more or less closed *circles*. It is this necessary hermeticism that has protected the development of art in these years from the attention of the public, which has rather been gathered around a number of superficial pseudo-isms. Today the results of this long confined activity are beginning to spring up and overturn all the concepts. I believe that in this new development Nordic culture, in the shape of the Folk High School, possesses a perspective that can offer the soundest fertile ground, being a bulwark against the otherwise unavoidable aristocratizing of this movement, a movement which cannot be stopped anywhere in the world, even with imprisonments or bloody violence, because it has the strength and right to life.

**The poor – the good – the best. The disorderly – the orderly – the extraordinary**

Capitalist society’s transition to socialism is above all characterized by the power elite’s transformation from a force working against the masses, an upper class, to a group of officials administering for and ministering to the majority.

For an elite to have real power it must have rights and regulations other than those of the rest of the population, it must form an extraordinary order. As this monopoly is abolished in modern democratic society, the administrative posts can only be occupied by the best amongst the mediocre, chosen from the good citizens. The disorderly and the extraordinary, the poor and the best are excluded automatically by the administrative hierarchy, except in crisis situations where normal people give up because they are confronted with the abnormal they have learnt only to hate and fear. There is indeed no test that can indicate the extraordinary, because, in relation to the good, the best as a rule resembles the poorest. No doctor would be able to foresee who would become the best sports people. Not even something that simple can be ascertained and it is far less likely in more complicated areas. A chance X-ray investigation once revealed that all the Dutch football team had bone deformations, a weakness that perhaps in fact drove them to achieve the extraordinary. Thus the best are met by the poorest. It is almost a rule. Therefore good and proper people literally never offer anything extraordinary.

This fact has produced the strangest results in the United States, where there is a demand that known people, who thus represent the extraordinary societal group, are immediately displaced if it comes to the people’s notice that they are

not at the same time more proper and normal than the great majority. This results in the public having the right to nose into the most intimate private affairs of known personalities, and the most unattractive form of hypocrisy we have yet experienced. This tendency to socialize the so-called private lives of known people has spread to Europe too, and in its false 'humanity' plays an enormous role as a means of keeping in the broader population's eye. The 'power elite' has gradually had to give in to the fact that so-called 'public opinion' plays a more and more dominating role in modern society and do what it can to appeal to it. It is here that it then suddenly collides with another group that it has hitherto been able to avoid noticing, a group it calls 'the professional celebrities', and which is simply those people that one likes and is interested in, not for what they are or have, but for what they do directly.

### **The human being owns himself\***

A human being's variable capital is his life. If this life were not his own personal property, then the concept of exploitation could not be formulated at all, and a socialist idea would never have come to light. This does not, however, mean that socialism would thereby have been excluded. There are primitive socialistic societies where no one has any inkling what socialism is. Indeed, even highly cultured societies like the Egyptians and the Peruvians seem, in certain periods at any rate, to have had a socialistic structure.

The human being's only value is the development of his own life possibilities and of whatsoever else interests him. Every hour that he is forced to do something that does not amuse him is stolen from him, if he has to act in others' interests and not work voluntarily as a gift to others. The rules for this course of action have already been laid down: it is a matter of the production of things that are seen to be necessary for the maintenance of life. If, on the other hand, it is a matter of entertaining others, of amusing and carrying out something that is not useful, then the whole affair is arranged differently. No one has the right to force people to do that kind of thing. This is the reason for the rising opposition towards phenomena like prostitution. On the other hand, one cannot force people to be entertained by something they do not wish. Here freedom rules. Therefore no one can be exploited by entertainment, regardless of how dearly he has paid for it. He can be cheated, fooled and swindled by the entertainment not being as promised. But that is something quite different. This is part of his right to and possibility of criticism.

Artistic critique and scientific control are two dialectical activities that work

directly against each other. What characterizes the newest industrial development is that through automation it has become more and more subordinated to scientific control. The results of this control can be compared with actuality to give a basis for a scientific critique, and it is this scientific critique which is more and more identified with the concept of the critique itself, so there is agreement that a critique can be rejected because it is not scientific. That a critique is scientific is to say that it is unartistic, and therefore the rising monopoly of science as a critical activity is a growing indifference and downright disdain for artistic critique. We can therefore see that it is artistic critique which is in rapid dissolution to a far higher degree than art itself.

Control is *constant* attention, an attention without variation, which is thus changed from a value to a quality. Now it so happens that a machine can achieve a constant of attention that no human being can approach. The old opposition between the worker and the inspector hereby begins to crumble away. If society has been divided between the known and the unknown who have to know the known, then we become aware that *the relationship between master and slave is based upon the master having to know his slave and to direct his attention incessantly at him*, whilst the slave must do his job without having his attention directed at anything other than the things he is working on. Thus the master has to have his attention constantly directed at the slave, but also finds himself in the humiliating situation that every time he needs to attract the slave's attention he has to shout loudly. At the same time this attraction of attention acts as a cessation of production and is thus always something negative and irritating to both parties. This is both disturbing and unjust.

On the other hand, scientific control has no direct critical effect. It just states. Instead of being unjust it is absolutely ruthless. It has become unartistic. In the belief that the master is a slave-driver by desire and need and lust for power, the working class, which has never been interested in psychology, has made its catastrophically wrong calculation. On the strength of its own programme, it has brought about the development towards scientific control which is taking place today, and therefore has to see itself being reduced to a more and more insignificant social phenomenon to which no one need direct his attention. It will either find itself implicated in this new development or there are only two other possible reactions: that it will want to hinder a natural advance that cannot be avoided in the long run and so become a reactionary and braking factor, just as when the craftsmen in their time attempted to storm the factories and destroy the machines, or it will demand the opportunity to lead *a new productive double existence* in automated industry as well as in an artistically creative production. This tendency is not unknown either. It was in this

direction that the Englishmen Ruskin and Morris pushed the opposition to the industrial degradation of people as well as of objects of utility. *It is today generally recognized that the beginnings of all modern design came via Jugendstil and Functionalism.*

Artists have never given up their critiques and for once the modern working class is now standing on the dividing line. Is it to take up again the connection with artistic critique and participate in giving it a creative development, or what?

I would like at the same time to stress that such a development appears impossible except on the basis of the Folk High School movement and by a radical development of its structure, and thus, together with the English, *uniting* the two critical tendencies, the artistic and the intellectual, which each on its own has meant so much in the development of modern Western European democracy, but is today played out as an individual role.

When after the last war there was a desire to rebuild the old Bauhaus under auspices of the Scholl Foundation, this was done in connection with a Folk High School on the Nordic pattern. The leader of this so-called new 'Bauhaus' was the Swiss architect Max Bill. As this combination is precisely the only possible solution with perspectives for the future, I went in for a collaboration when it was about to open in 1953. This was refused with the reason that the new 'Bauhaus' should be a 'technical craft school' without any connection at all with the Folk High School. Modern design could not have anything to do with free and spontaneous creative artists.\*

The lack of foresight that characterizes all the so-called left-wing intelligentsia in its patterns of action after the war has thrown Germany into the arms of the most conservative intellectual movements. My critique of Max Bill was only utilized – by an efficient intrigue – to get him chucked out of the school he had built himself and have it given over to an absolutely undangerous reactionary nullity, and the same thing has happened with the Folk High School. Today in Germany, Nordic thought is oppressed with all available means. Even the books of Vilhelm Grønbech,\* which are officially in the libraries, cannot be borrowed because they are always 'on loan'. No one knows to whom. One just knows that it is not to the readers. To my mind, such a fact is far more indicative than the lacking translations into German of Ibsen and Selma Lagerlöf.\* It is this accumulation that makes the breakthrough of Gruppe Spur so uncontrolled and brutal. With the 'Bauhaus defeat' in Ulm, modern development in Germany was inhibited to the advantage of a political rearmament of the reactionary forces for which the USA and France have use

in that country. Only England and Denmark are now left. Are they to go into the same casserole too?

When Grundtvig in his time came back from England, his great enthusiasm was expressed in a critique that is valid to this day. This critique has never been taken up again because Danes do not seem to understand that criticism is a necessary part of a sincere sympathy. The sympathy is there but the sincerity has gone. I wish to change this again precisely because my sympathy for the English is sincere and therefore they will have to accept that I am also sincere in my criticism of them, as this criticism is at the same time a criticism of my own country – and in that way of myself. My criticism is directed at the horrible English ideas about the setting up of what they call a ‘eurocracy’. It is about time to get that tissue of lies rooted out. Perhaps this will not succeed. Perhaps it will go as in Ulm. Then the only thing I would have to say is that there is a choice, an alternative and thus a personal *responsibility*. No one will be able to squeeze in under the excuse that they did it from necessity. Untalented and lacking artistic critique is not a necessity. It is defeatism.

### **Can the opposition between art and work be weakened**

Today the modern state apparatus is the same as the state’s finance ministry. This apparatus can best be compared with the systems we have for the consumption of water and gas, with the difference that the system is double. One network branches out over society and sucks up the results of work and collects them in its container, which is the national bank. The other network redistributes the same quantity for the maintenance and advancement of social activity. So long as the money is in the container, no one asks where it comes from. Money does not smell. No one knows what it is created from. The result is that one activity can work for the other, and be thereby exploited by this other. If this happens because of the socialist theory of equivalence, then no one suffers need, whatever he is working on, and then is little to say about this, unless certain people are occupied just to keep them occupied, even though the same work could be carried out swifter and easier. If this happens then it can no longer be a matter of work. It is about entertainment, and this entertainment has to be evaluated according to whether it is boring or exciting.

This is the new problem that is today confronting the modern trade union movement, and where it is about to enter into a conflict which will perhaps be just as violent as the one that occurred around the very foundation of the trade union movement, but with the difference that it will not only become a struggle

against society's external rulers but to a far higher degree an inner conflict. This will condition whether the trade union movement will in the future become the worst brake upon modern social development or the solid mainspring in the new construction.

How this problem is to be solved, the trade union movement's own people must discover, but this cannot happen unless the whole of the trade union movement's history, practice and possibilities of development are taken up in an intense discussion by the most intelligent part of the workers' movement.

Consequently, *Christian Christensen*, the greatest theoretician of the Danish skilled workers' movement, was the first to demand a reorganization that liberated it from *its trade* character, which he perceived as a relic of the craft period, and go in for the introduction of non-trade *industrial unions* on the American pattern. How far he was right, I will not discuss here, as I have not the competence. I can, however, mention one thing that is against the industrial union. When the Italian architect Nervi was about to cast his new constructions for the UNESCO building in Paris, the American builders pointed out that there were no carpenters in the United States who had sufficient experience to build the necessary cast-forms. However, this changes nothing about the fact that industrial mass production has no use for professional craft education. Thus if the highest trade professionalism, despite everything, still plays a fundamental role today, it is not least in the creative activity of working out *models and patterns* for industry. We have already indicated that *it is the creative process which, even in industry, is the value-creating factor*. This experience consequently shows us that today it is in the most despised part of manual work, the craftsmanly elite, that the highest exploitation takes place. At the same time, we have drawn attention to exploitation being above all the prohibition on the disposal of one's own surplus production.

### **Idleness is the root of art**

The modern trade union movement has to face the fact that the United States will not under any circumstances be able to ease its current violent production crisis. This is a direct reason why that country is pressing for the opening of a European Common Market where it hopes to distribute some of its surplus output. The threatening spectre of unemployment will in the future become a reality of an even wider scope than that which began in America after the First World War because automation has reduced purely quantitative work to a phenomenon which, in the long term, will not have nearly so much significance

as it had pre-war. The trade union movement can solve this question, but only in one way. This solution is above all conditioned by the working class beginning to look artistically at things. That is to say that it stops looking at unemployment as a curse and understands that the curse in modern society is work totally without quality. The more workers who are liberated from this work, the more artists we will have. Art is not a necessity, it is surplus or luxury. *No wealth is more precious than the valuable unemployed human being, if he can be placed in a creative production that increases the wealth of the country and the culture.* If the Scandinavian trade union movement were to begin today to prepare a development where the concept of relief work was erased from the programme and replaced by collective luxury work, then it would become a model for the whole world. This is dependent first and foremost upon to how great a degree the leaders of this movement have the understanding to draw the consequences of the special strengths in the Scandinavian workers' movement and to conquer the traditional dislike in Scandinavian culture towards collective luxury building.

If I were here to bring out something that I would call typically Scandinavian in the social perspective, then I would define it as the union of the popular and the celebratory, in the sense of the opposition between work and festivity. The current development within modern industrial society is going in quite the opposite direction towards a simultaneous mixture of work without quality and entertainment without value, so that everyone lugs around a shrieking pocket radio in the woods, on the beach, in the street, in the kitchen, in bed, on the cycle and in the car. I have stated a certain resistance to this fusion and this is connected with my feeling that Scandinavians are the only people who, like the Negroes in the United States, still really understand what a festivity is, and demand and understand what has to be offered by the individual on such an occasion. But I will not deny that I have also found people who are ashamed of this ability in us.

Social law decides the behaviour necessary for every individual to have the right to live in society. What he has to do and what he has no right to do. In a democratic society, this law is based on the concept of equality, which decides the equal rights and responsibilities of everyone before the law. Right in itself, developed for its own significance, can only be a prison of duties, the suppression of freedom. Therefore it is only the freedoms and the liberating element in life that can justify laws and rules. In itself freedom is unjust, and it is only that positive injustice called art and beauty which gives the system of rights any justification at all.

There are people who are boring and others who are interesting and amusing,

and some are even downright exciting. A complete scale is found even in the most primitive and archaic community: stimulators who inspire, passives who look on and grumblers who annoy. Incredible numbers of people are to be found who cannot amuse themselves, but would nevertheless like to be amused. Few, perhaps, are able to liberate their inner energies without being influenced by an outside force. But there are people who just by their presence radiate an energy that seems to illuminate the surroundings. Such people are especially sought after by the community on festive occasions. They could be hunters, fishermen or whatever, and they often use some highly strung energy and are sought after so often that they neglect their practical work. If one values them as shamans, they will probably be helped. But today they are utilized and if they cannot manage existence then they are spat upon. This is the original and the natural state that even today shapes the group called artists.

We have deliberately avoid calling art a trade, for it is irrelevant what an artist makes. It depends upon how it is done. He who does it best regardless of what he does, is an artist in his area. [...] Every artist is king in his area, regardless of whether it is the underworld, industry or music. It must however be added that this perception of art is only typical in Germanic culture, and only covers the talented, not those of genius.

**A peasant for a new time is standing in our paddock.\* He is a boring fellow**

In 1947 the Danish Social Democratic Party set up a committee to investigate the possibilities of an active and contextual cultural politics. In 1953 the programme for this was published in the form of the book *The Human Being in the Centre*, with an introduction by Hans Hedtoft. In a section called 'Cultural democracy', Julius Bomholt writes,\* 'It must be recognized that it is often the loner who leads the way, not least in the cultural area. Therefore there must always be ample place for *the experiment*, not just in scientific areas, but in all fields of cultural life. The big institutions have the responsibility of making room for the experiment so that an authoritative stiffness from thinking in grooves and acting from habit must never come in. The free and perhaps now and again challenging experiment could blaze the trail for things that then become the property of all.

The big, trail-blazing talents are apparently relatively few. It is therefore a matter of them, regardless of the group of society from which they come, reaching positions that allow them to carry out work for which they have a talent. And then it is a matter of preserving the elite in the popular community,

so that the elite performance is given its due. An elite can never in itself be enough...

The cultural ideal is not to get into a culture of passive enjoyment. The goal is this: that as wide circles as possible enter actively into cultural work – each person in *his* own field – so that this is not talk of cultural work *for* the people but *by* the people...

The whole of community life needs a thoroughgoing reorganization. Most communal buildings were built for general assemblies, informative meetings and dances. There is now a need for a community building for the parish or city quarter, the comfort of which is as high as the modern home, and where there is not only room for the discussions of the elders and the dances of the young. It is not enough to have a space for one-sided, intellectual activity and another for one-sided entertainment. A building is needed where people can meet in their leisure time when it suits them, and where they have the possibility of satisfying some of the hobbies they are taken up with, and where the entertainment has the character of a club.'

It would be wrong to maintain that since this has been discussed, nothing has been done in the outlined direction, which in many ways resembles what I myself had imagined in the foregoing pages. An artistic cultural centre like Louisiana could be said to be unique both in its kind and in its effectiveness, and yet it limps along.\* Anyone can see that it is limping, and that it in reality was, on the whole, going in the wrong direction, so that we stand where we, where even the Folk High Schools, to which Julius Bomholt himself has been, today have to declare our bankruptcy.

It would be easy to indicate how indifferent Danish cultural institutions have been to artistic experiments in this period. To allow experimenting artists, who are today celebrated as the nation's heroes, go on unemployment benefit for many years is a strange way of preserving the elite in the popular community. Yet how altogether irrelevant this is in relation to it having being there and having introduced the very concept of experimental art into international arguments around the problem of art. All reproaches are irrelevant today, when it is a matter of finding the way to our own weaknesses and getting help for them. This can only be done by a dispassionate analysis of most current norms of action.

The most remarkable thing in 'the contribution to an active cultural policy' discussed here is that the concept of cultural policy has not meant civilized politics, and that culture is not identified with civilization. For a Scandinavian this is obvious, but it is precisely this separation that has brought the research within Scandinavia's human sciences into conflict with the rest of the world,

where it is maintained that civilization and culture are and must be the same.

Civilization is a quite particular form of culture. It is a centralized city culture. If the representatives of the Danish working class recognize the opposition between culture and civilization, then they are recognizing thereby that agriculturalists are on a level with themselves and at the same time in a different situation. The Russian, American and Southern European agricultural policies are underdeveloped because they only reckon with civilization or urban culture as culture. If the Danish agricultural organizations today wish to get into the economic and political community with the rest of Europe, then they must know that this special Scandinavian perception of culture must thereby be relinquished.

How surprising it is that a flock of people who today ought to represent the most intelligent elite in European agriculture would sell their birthright, which even Marx and Engels discuss with respect, in such a way for a dish of spaghetti.

If one wishes to understand what has happened, then it is first necessary to understand the dynamic in the Nordic dialectic that would rather unite law and knowledge, unite rules of action with experience. It is this unity of wise customs that is called culture. But this unity must always stand in an opponent relationship to both art and renewal, and it was precisely this traditional opposition that Grundtvig wanted to mitigate with the help of the Folk High School method, and it is because this method was suppressed that the connection between culture and experimental renewal has not been established.

Today Nordic community life should have been so well-housed that the help we could offer the so-called 'underdeveloped countries' would have been to build something similar for them free of charge, but instead we are trying to buy into new markets according to the Marshall Plan. I have given myself so much inconvenience in order to demonstrate that, by renouncing any connection with the Nordic perception of culture, the Danish peasantry is first and foremost betraying itself, because I feel that it is my accursed duty to say so, not from any regard for the peasants, but because it is a question that in my opinion is of vital significance to the whole of humanity in relation to modern, technical development. The situation today has shown that the connection which exists between culture and experimental renewal in Scandinavia in Bomholt's conception is a shattered illusion, at any rate as far as Denmark is concerned. Culture is customs, and one does not customarily go and break one's own customs.

# Topical additions

## Art in the service of the object

In *The Natural Order*, I stressed that my triolectic arrangement demonstrated the necessity for the Latin culture to set up a dialectical opponent relationship between on the one side ethics and a fusion of aesthetics and science, and thus of subject-object, on the other. Nordic dynamism works in an opposition between the purely subjective or aesthetic and a fusion of ethics and science. It is this latter dynamic that has ruled the development of art since the end of the war, and has to an astonishing degree paralyzed French art.

In the last couple of years the French have gradually set up their dialectic in a new combination that suits them, a combination also reflected in their politics. I think I have demonstrated that such an arrangement is necessary for the renewal of dynamism in Southern Europe, and at the same time I have indicated that it is completely paralyzing and unusable in the North. If Scandinavia goes into the Common Market, then it will be precisely into the mechanism of this Southern Europe dynamism, which the French naturally wish to be able to launch all over the world, so that they can turn the current which is going against them at the moment in the artistic area. That this has already happened in the USA, is shown by the new Latinized American theories and the peculiar stagnation that has come over American art life. It has been otherwise in Scandinavia. After having been afraid of what we ourselves had made before and during the war and having ignored ourselves a little since, in the last couple of years we have begun to find a way out and with such an explosive energy that a small country like Denmark has three art periodicals of conflicting characters going at the same time. Let us hope that such a colossal fermentation will not evaporate without us having reached a new stage in our artistic self-recognition. This will only be possible if we seek without prejudice to understand our strengths as well as our weaknesses in relation to other progressive tendencies.

In order to demonstrate the intense work being done on the basic problems in France, I would like to discuss a new published book by Robert Estivals, *L'Avant-Garde Culturelle Parisienne depuis 1945*.<sup>\*</sup> In his study of sincerity, he has, without knowing it, arrived at a complementary relationship, which he does not, however, acknowledge could be perceived as complementary, but

demands (like all Parisian avant-gardists) that it has to be solved in agreement with the Latin point of view. He says:

'Sincerity or the love of truth in art, as in science, forms part of the human consciousness's general dualism of subject-object and is used for both elements. For there seems to be exclusivity in a given situation. It is either sincerity about *the ego* or about *the object: the work*. *Everything seems to take place directly as if sincerity about the one leads to a complete or partial artificiality, according to the particular case, about the other*. Sincerity makes what it targets its goal and makes the rest into more or less indifferent means.'

Here is concentrated the whole problem about the centuries-old opposition between Southern and Northern European culture. If we maintain that the sincerity has to be in the action, in the movement, and seek our refinement there, then Latin culture on its side always seeks it in the thing, the work.

It is this strict demand for sincerity in the work, that is the key to understanding the construction of The Six, and also of the Catholic Church. However, it was the recognition of personal sincerity that brought Hammarskjöld to the top post in the UN. Here the choice stands. If one is insincere both personally and about one's work, but nevertheless wishes to attempt to enter a collaboration where a particular form of sincerity indicates the rules of the game, then one can only destroy the game for both parties. If, in order to be in a game, one gives up the rules by which one yields one's best, then one destroys oneself.

Estival's critique of the subjective-expressive art which has come forward since the war shows that Latin people can just as little understand the subtlety in subjective sincerity as we are able to comprehend the finesses of objective sincerity. When he sets up an opposition between the egocentric and the sociocentric cultural idea, he cannot abstract from the hierarchical system which in the Latin perception identifies society with a *centralized* construction. When he says that the egocentric artist who perceives himself as the goal, and must therefore perceive others as a means for himself to be great by elevating him above the others and becoming known and rich, and in this connection uses the painter Mathieu as an example, then he shows precisely how impossible it is for the French to understand what has happened in art in the last twenty years.

The French understand Nietzsche's Zarathustra, but they have never read Gustav Fröding's answer to Nietzsche,\* and if they had they would not have understood it. The French understand the Germans, but they believe that Scandinavians are just a sort of naive and confused Germans. Sartre believes that he has understood existential choice, and yet he is of the opinion that *to*

*behave* as if one is personally sincere is the same as really being so. He is forced to overlook this inexactitude in order to be able to unite anything at all existential with French philosophy and thought processes. This is the reason why that all his philosophy ebbs out into happy nonsense. Pascal's nose is sticking out.

To the Northerner, bragging self-promotion is a sign that one has not one's centre in oneself. If one has to stand on the heads of others to be great, then this is a sign that one feels small. The same is the case if one cannot be oneself unless one has the heads of others chopped off. We have not sufficiently prepared the rest of the world for this collective and decentralized socialism, this valuable and special character of community feeling, and it is, perhaps for this reason, overlooked, although Scandinavians have never allowed any insult against it. Let us hope that the political facts do not necessarily show that I am right.

### Originality, fashion and style

What characterizes art and cultural life in Scandinavia is the opposition between the strict, inexorable demand for personal originality and at the same time a just as bone-hard, conventional feeling of style. These two demands stand in their opposition without any reconciling transition at all, and when such a transition has to be created, we become unsure, fumbling and ridiculous in the eyes of others. This form of transition is called fashion.

In Scandinavia there is an instinctive disgust for everything that can be perceived as fashion. In Paris it is just the opposite. In his definition of the *avant-garde*, Estivals demands as one of the conditions to be so recognized that it is generally acknowledged by society as such. Those who precede the *avant-garde* are precursors, scouts and freebooters. This is the reason why the French, with a good conscience, can describe the English founders of Impressionism, Constable and Turner, as precursors. Of course, such a description from a need to find the original point is meaningless, that is, for us.

That something original becomes *fashion* means that it becomes *method*, that there are certain fundamental processes that can be described, learned and discussed. It is only when an artistic experiment has reached this point that it begins to interest the French, indeed, that it has any existence at all for them, and it is at this point too that the phenomenon loses interest for Scandinavians. The French can only get interested in something original or meaningless, in whether one can enlarge it with one method or another when there is method in

the madness. Northerners cannot value a method unless it is innate and stripped of madness. But at the same time we are not afraid of the happy insanity that the French call raging madness. Northerners stand completely paralyzed before the ability of the French to put system into a madness without giving a thought to the whole thing being idiotic. This is the reason why Paris is the centre of fashion. We find the whole of the French thought process, which is based upon the significance of fashion, in Descartes' *La methode*, which could just as well be called *The fashion*, its ideological elaboration.

To criticize fashions and methods and reduce them to their innate form has always been the Scandinavians' strength. As early as in medieval Paris, the Danish institution was famous for its solid activity in this area, whilst at the same time the Nordic group was regarded as the strongest supporter of reaction. That this perception was one-sided is because the original personalities in the Nordic constellation always fell outside *the normal parameters*. But they were nevertheless there. This always disturbs not only foreigners, but also Scandinavians themselves. It is astonishing to see that Georg Brandes, whilst maintaining that Scandinavians have *always* been half a century behind others, was *himself* not only a Danish but also a European pioneer for a long period. Either we have to come to terms with our special dialectic and learn to make ourselves conscious of and use in a fertile manner its *anti-methodical method*, or we have to subordinate ourselves to fashion. We are not able to do the latter except by dissimulation. It is precisely on this point we have to learn sincerity about ourselves. This sincerity consists in the recognition that we cannot do without Paris, but at the same time we cannot have anything at all to do with Paris except in certain passing situations. To acknowledge the significance that Paris has for us means that we are learning how the French treat the cultural problem from another point of view.

Something that struck me most forcibly when I first went to Paris was the French's strange love of the angled. I wondered how many edges they could get on a hand-basin, and it was the same everywhere. Contacting French intellectual life is like touching a hedgehog with all the spines out. When one comes from Scandinavian intellectual life where everything is about getting as smooth a surface as possible, then one understands nothing at all until one begins to comprehend that there is method in the madness and grasps why the French love the sharp-edged.

We cannot avoid seeing something artificial and mendacious in the sharp-edged way it is possible to control and make merry so effectively with public opinion. On the other hand, it is even more dangerous for Scandinavians to deny that the peaks and high points that really *have* existed in Nordic culture,

but which have always been carefully broken off, have ever existed. That would be just as ridiculous as it would be to paste them on again and deny that they were ever broken off. For they would never get them to sit really firmly again, regardless of how much glue was used, and in Denmark a lot of glue is used.

I have now begun a quite different experiment. I am acknowledging the continued break with the smooth body and beginning to collect the broken-off peaks, the extreme, the rejected outer points in Scandinavian culture together, and then I will attempt to see the pattern they form in themselves. The result of this line of procedure has already been to form new and unexpected pictorial elements that cast quite a new light over Scandinavian cultural life. This is truly almost too exciting: like a jigsaw puzzle where one suddenly begins to see the pieces emerge here and there from the confusion, and if one can thus find new and surprising images, then one loses the desire to make them oneself. But perhaps I will have put my foot so well and truly in it that there will no longer be any artistic or creative significance in devoting my time to it. The top shoots of the Scandinavian elite must then continue to make do with only being able to develop in those countries where the development of top shoots is reckoned to be the only important method of cultural development, or, to put it more correctly, Scandinavians must make do with stressing continually that 'they came from here'. We did not have room for them, but we are nevertheless proud of them.