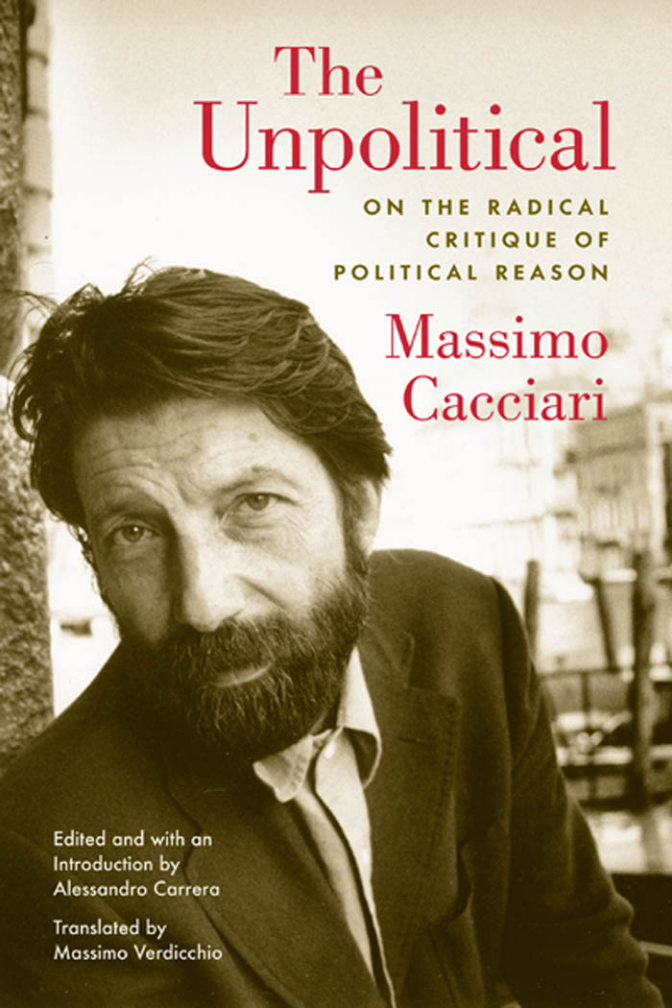
The Unpolitical

ON THE RADICAL CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL REASON

Massimo Cacciari



Edited and with an Introduction by Alessandro Carrera

Translated by Massimo Verdicchio

The Unpolitical

This page intentionally left blank

The Unpolitical

On the Radical Critique of Political Reason

Massimo Cacciari

Edited and with an Introduction by Alessandro Carrera
Translated by Massimo Verdicchio

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY PRESS

New York 2009

The editor wishes to acknowledge the financial support of the University of Houston GEAR (Grants to Enhance and Advance Research) in the editing process of this book, and the financial support of the University of Houston Small Grants Program in the publication of this book.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Cacciari, Massimo.
The unpolitical : on the radical critique of political reason / Massimo Cacciari ; edited and with an introduction by Alessandro Carrera ; translated by Massimo Verdicchio.—1st ed.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-8232-3003-7 (cloth : alk. paper)
ISBN 978-0-8232-3004-4 (pbk. : alk. paper)
1. Political science—Philosophy.
I. Carrera, Alessandro, 1954– II. Title.
JA71.C23 2009
320.01—dc22
2008047115

Printed in the United States of America
11 10 09 5 4 3 2 1
First edition

CONTENTS

This page intentionally left blank

The Unpolitical

This page intentionally left blank

INTRODUCTION

On Massimo Cacciari's Disenchanted Activism

Alessandro Carrera

Negative Thought and the Autonomy of Politics

Massimo Cacciari's career is nothing short of impressive. Both an academic philosopher and a public figure who has devoted a significant part of his life to active politics, he is also one of the high-profile intellectuals in contemporary Italy. Born in Venice in 1944, Cacciari graduated in philosophy from the University of Padua with a dissertation on Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. When he was twenty years old, he and literary scholar Cesare De Michelis started *Angelus novus*, an innovative journal that lasted from 1964 to 1966. Between 1968 and 1971 Cacciari coedited another journal, *Contropiano: Materiali marxisti* (Counterplan: Marxist Materials) with Alberto Asor Rosa, later an influential scholar and a leading literary critic. Between 1967 and 1969 Cacciari was close to the radical leftist movement Potere Operaio (Workers' Power). In the early 1970s he abandoned his initial radicalism and in 1971 was appointed professor of history of architecture at the Architecture Institute of Venice; in 1985, he became professor of aesthetics in the same school. In 1976 he joined the Italian Communist Party and served as representative to the Italian Parliament from 1976 to 1983. In 1983 he abandoned his party militancy.

At the beginning of the 1980s, Cacciari began an intensive collaboration with two new journals, *Il centauro* (The Centaur, 1980–1985), and

Laboratorio Politico (Political Laboratory, 1980–1985). Without neglecting his scholarly production, which culminated in his massive theoretical oeuvre, *Dell'inizio* (On Beginning, 1990), Cacciari remained in the political arena. After 1989, the official left wing being still reluctant to accept the broad ideological changes made inevitable by the fall of the Berlin Wall, he decided to act at the grassroots level. For two electoral terms, from 1993 to 2000, Cacciari was elected mayor of Venice. During his mandate, he demonstrated that the philosopher could indeed rule the *polis*, winning the respect of the citizens and even of his political adversaries. In the meantime he founded another philosophical journal, *Paradosso* (Paradox), coedited with philosophers Sergio Givone, Carlo Sini, and Vincenzo Vitiello. In 1988, thinking that a federal reform of the Italian Constitution was the solution to the excessive centralization of the Italian government and bureaucracy, Cacciari coauthored a "Federalist Charter" that was supposed to anticipate and prevent the separatist tendencies of new political entities such as the Northern League and the Venetian League. He received little or no political support from the official left wing, where many career politicians were suspicious of his maverick position. With or without their endorsement, Cacciari became a major force in the so-called Movimento dei sindaci (Mayors' Movement), a loose organization, or better, a forum, of one hundred Italian mayors who set out to convince the reluctant central government to give more political and fiscal autonomy to city councils. The year 2000 was another turning point in Cacciari's career. He resigned from his position as a representative in the European Parliament in Strasbourg and, still championing his federalist agenda, became a member of the Regional Council for the Veneto Region. In 2002, his decision to give up active politics came as a surprise to many. He accepted the position of dean of philosophy at the new Università Vita-Salute—San Raffaele in Cesano Maderno near Milan, where his aim was to create a school of high politics and to provide the Italian and European political scene with a new breed of public intellectuals and political scientists. In 2004, giving in to pressures from several Venetians, he accepted to run for mayor again, and he is now in his third term. He remains on the board of directors at San Raffaele University.

This busy man's bibliography is enormous: more than forty authored and coauthored books (several of them translated into all major European languages), and literally hundreds of articles, essays, interviews and journalistic pieces. Cacciari's range of scholarship has always ignored the boundaries of academic specialization. He has written with impressive competence, often breaking new ground, on Hegel, Novalis, Kierkegaard,

Leopardi, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Simmel, Sombart, Wittgenstein, Hofmannsthal, Musil, Kafka, Kraus, Benjamin, Lukács, Heidegger, Michelstaedter, Weil, and Jabès. A fine scholar of the aesthetics of architecture and the arts, he has published seminal essays on Adolf Loos, Otto Wagner, Pavel Florensky, and Marcel Duchamp. His works on political theory, ranging from Austrian Marxism to Max Weber, and from Walther Rathenau to Carl Schmitt, have challenged and continue to challenge the commonplaces of the postcommunist European Left. In his most ambitious theoretical books, Cacciari shows a masterful command of classical antiquity, Neoplatonism and Christian theology. In the 1960s and 1970s, he developed a new critique of classical idealism, based on the notion of "negative thought," or antidialectic. During the 1980s, he investigated the nexus between philosophy, political theory, and theology, engaging the most prominent Catholic theologians to challenging debates. In the 1990s he laid the foundations for a new "geophilosophy" of Europe that has received much critical attention among professional philosophers, even though it failed to enter the political discussion the way it was intended. Many of Cacciari's works are far from being easily accessible to the reader who is not well learned in Greek and German literature and philosophy. Cacciari possesses a distinctive, polyglot, "musical," and very dense style. No introduction, no didacticism. Cacciari plunges into the heart of his subject from the very first line. His early articles, published in the 1960s in *Angelus novus* and *Contropiano*, do nothing to hide the impervious side of his writing, but they are also revealing about the future direction of his research. In "Sulla genesi del pensiero negativo" (On the Genesis of Negative Thought, 1969), Cacciari is already on the path that he will follow for the next ten years: a strong reevaluation of nondialectical thought in Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Wittgenstein, and Heidegger.

As I have mentioned, in 1969 Cacciari was close to Potere Operaio. Although he was never a spokesperson for the group, Cacciari's coming of age as a philosopher and political thinker would not be understandable without some reference to the theoretical roots of that group. At the end of the ebullient 1960s, the movement attracted followers among the union workers at Venice's harbor, Porto Marghera, disillusioned by the official leftist organizations that had abandoned revolution and accepted small-time reforms in return. The radicalism of Potere Operaio wholly inherited the uncompromising legacy of the splinter Marxist theory known as Neomarxism. In order to understand the influence of Neomarxism in the history of the Italian Left, we need to go back to the beginning of the 1960s

in Turin, when philosopher Raniero Panzieri gathered a circle of young Marxist intellectuals around his journal *Quaderni rossi* (Red Notebooks).[1]

At that time, Panzieri and the Neomarxists were trying to bring the working class back to the center of the revolutionary process, only to find that their claims fell on deaf ears once they reached the arena of the institutional left wing. In 1967, however, the members of Potere Operaio in Venice (some of them attended Panzieri's informal meetings) were ambitious enough to put the Neomarxist theory to the test without waiting for official sanction. When in the spring of 1968 the student riots broke out, followed by the large-scale workers' strikes in the fall of 1969, it seemed for a moment that Potere Operaio had a chance to propagate to the masses its vision of worker's centrality (*centralità operaia*). The founders of Potere Operaio (political philosopher Antonio Negri and Cacciari among them) strived to transform Neomarxist principles into revolutionary practice. But, as he was looking for political support among the Porto Marghera chemical-plant workers, Cacciari was also investigating Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's philosophical systems. No one has ever accused Cacciari of being a populist. He appreciated neither the metaphysics of freedom nor the Sorelian aesthetics of revolt that Negri found so appealing. While he was pursuing his Neomarxist agenda, Cacciari had already stumbled upon the nondialectical contradiction between dialectical and antidialectical thought. In the end, Cacciari's philosophical determination was to lead him away from romantic radicalism.

Before that happened, there was the new journal *Contropiano*, edited by Cacciari and Asor Rosa amid the turmoil of 1968 and dedicated to investigate the notion of "planning" in its economic and political implications. The journal's goal was to oppose a revolutionary counterplan to the condition of permanent crisis that was now endemic to capitalism. *Contropiano* was the most ambitious attempt to add a new chapter to Panzieri's legacy of Neomarxism. Panzieri had stressed that capital, far from being anarchic (anarchic and irrational capitalism was an article of faith for the traditional labor movement), was *social* capital—capital, that is, having planning capability. Panzieri did not go as far as to deny the old Marxist tenet that the laws of capitalistic accumulation were contradictory. Yet, he pointed out that capitalist planning operates at every level, including the factory. Once it was understood that the capitalist productive mechanism was objective (that is, scientific and technological), and that it objectively affected the forces of production (since nothing was left outside the capital's planning capability), the dominant Marxist view that the only rational moving

forces of history were the workers and their parties was no longer tenable. Contrary to the old assumption that capitalism was essentially market capitalism, Panzieri identified capitalism with the organization of labor. It was a Copernican revolution in Marxian hermeneutics, but it left the traditional labor movement with no clear perspective about the direction to take. The official left wing had assumed that the working class was rational because of its close relationship with the intrinsic rationality of technology. After Panzieri's warning that capitalism was rational in its own way, what new strategy could be elaborated on the part of the Left? How could it outrationalize the rationality of capital?

Panzieri died in 1964, not having dealt with the complexity of the question. The young Neomarxists' answer to Panzieri's conundrum was a full-fledged flight forward (*fuga in avanti*) toward extremism. A new and radical antagonism between workers and capital was quickly theorized. If capitalism was organization of labor, then the revolutionary movement should declare war against labor. Qualifications and professionalism were vilified as mere capitalistic tools to divide the working class into skilled and unskilled workers. In his enormously influential *Operai e capitale* (Workers and Capital, 1966), Neomarxist philosopher Mario Tronti stressed that the factory, being the only place where the worker was in control of his own labor, was also the only place where true antagonism was possible. Maybe society was nothing other than market, but the factory was the temple of real conflict. Neomarxism grew into worker-centered Marxism (*operaismo*), and Potere Operaio followed. Although Tronti was not and never would be a hard-core extremist, his book provided the theoretical ground both to Potere Operaio and to Antonio Negri's subsequent and most extreme ideas, from the refusal to work to the sabotage and destruction of work tout court.

After 1969, the magical moment that had brought together the radical groups and the traditional workers was over. The workers' unions were exhausted after the long struggle to force the government to sign the Statuto dei Lavoratori (Statute of Laborers). Right-wing reaction was mounting against the labor movement (a neofascist bomb in a Milanese bank on December 12, 1969, signaled the beginning of the terrorist era in Italy), and the gap between students and workers widened again. But the revolutionaries who had had their glorious days were not backing out. The organization of what was left of the avant-garde movement was now their most pressing issue. To what extent could radical workers organize within the factory and be autonomous from their official representatives in the political arena? "Autonomy" is the word that holds the key to an understanding

of Tronti, Negri, Cacciari, and the political mayhem of Italy in the 1970s. Tronti soon realized that the struggle of the working class at the grassroots level was not turning into permanent political gain. It was the political network that held together the economic foundation of society. The lack of a theory of the state being a persistent weakness of Marxism, Tronti cut the Gordian knot and broke off with the old assumption that the structural conflict was the only acceptable basis for the superstructural conflict. According to the "new" Tronti, who had incorporated John Maynard Keynes into his Marxism, the way to fight capitalism in its multiheaded articulations was to view politics as autonomous, independent of society.

Panzieri had initiated a Copernican revolution in Marxism. Tronti's autonomy of politics was now the beginning of a Machiavellian revolution. As Machiavelli separated politics from morals, Tronti put Marxist politics at a safe distance from the ups and downs of the working-class struggle. He argued that the political representatives of the working class had to be relatively free from their constituency in order to pursue purely political gains within Parliament and the state's institutions. When his *Sull'autonomia del politico* (On the Autonomy of the Political, 1977) was published, many observed, and not without malice, that Tronti was providing the theoretical legitimization for his own retreat into the official ranks of the Communist Party, at a time when extremism had become incendiary. It may have been partially true, but in the autonomy of politics there was more at stake than Tronti's career. Militancy, state repression, the energy crisis of the early 1970s, and the increasingly violent radicalism of many disaffected young militants were coming together in a way that needed drastic solutions. Tronti found his in the disengagement of politics from street politics. Cacciari's and Negri's responses were very different.

On a superficial level, Cacciari's decision to join the ranks of the Communist Party seemed to be catering to Tronti's Machiavellian realism. Cacciari, however, was consistent with the path he had already undertaken. After the great tides of 1968 and 1969 began to recede, *operaismo* needed a strong theory of counterplan in order to oppose capitalistic planning. It was at this point that Cacciari's critique of the romantic and populist side of *operaismo* clashed with Negri's intention to reformulate the autonomous role of productive forces in a new and even more revolutionary way. The rift between the two intellectuals became larger and larger after the first year of *Contropiano*, when it was clear that Cacciari wanted the journal to be a Trojan horse of Potere Operaio into the walls of the organized labor movement. A few years later, Cacciari's decision to leave the movement and "enter" the Communist Party created even more of

a fuss than Tronti's retreat. Even the old term *entrismo* ("entryism" or "entrism"), once used to describe Trotsky's 1934 "French turn" (when he suggested that his French followers dissolve their Communist League and join the Socialist Party), was revitalized for the occasion.

Unmoved by Cacciari's defection, Antonio Negri participated actively, between 1973 and 1977, in the creation of Autonomia Operaia (Workers' Autonomy), a new movement whose base was the faculty of political science at the University of Padua, where Negri was now professor. Much more radical than Potere Operaio, Autonomia Operaia expanded the notion of the worker far beyond the gates of the factory. In a way, Negri was just pushing Trontian autonomy to its extremes. If official politics was autonomous from society—so his argument went—society was autonomous from official politics, too. In the past, the pivotal figure of the institutional left wing was the *operaio di mestiere* (skilled worker). With the advent of mass capitalism the *operaio di mestiere* had been replaced by the *operaio massa* (unskilled mass worker), who in 1968 had stricken fear into the middle class with its spontaneous revolt. Now, according to Negri, the time was ripe for the third phase, from the *operaio massa* to the *operaio sociale* (socialized worker). The factory was no longer the center of class struggle. Given the capitalist tendency to proletarianize and marginalize large segments of white-collar workers, only people at the margins of society were now ready to be turned into revolutionary forces.

It should not come as a surprise that hardly one blue-collar worker could be found among the militants of Negri's Autonomia Operaia. And, although falling short of endorsing the terrorism of the Red Brigades, Autonomia openly advocated the use of revolutionary violence to sabotage capitalism. On April 7, 1979, Negri was arrested in Padua, along with fifty other militants of Autonomia Operaia, mostly academics, writers, and journalists. One of the charges was armed insurrection against the state. Pietro Calogero, the magistrate who signed the arrest warrant, convinced the judges that Autonomia Operaia was more or less the political branch of the Red Brigades. Negri was sentenced as the spiritual father of left-wing terrorism, and it is still in question today whether there was any legal basis for putting him in prison or whether the whole trial was a blatant violation of freedom of speech. It is interesting to note that judge Pietro Calogero was close to the Communist Party. In fact, the "April 7 Trial," as it was known, was tacitly endorsed by the official left wing and used to decapitate the intellectual leadership of the extreme left-wing movements. Occurring one year after the kidnapping and killing of Prime Minister Aldo Moro by the Red Brigades, the attack on Negri was supposed to

mark the distance between respectable leftists and the extremists, and to that extent it achieved its objective. It would take many twists and turns before Negri would become the successful author of the antiglobalization bestsellers *Empire* (2001) and *Multitude* (2004). Suffice it to say that Cacciari's political writings of the 1970s could be hardly appreciated without knowing that at times they must be understood as answers to Negri's most provocative statements.[2]

In 1976, as I said, Cacciari "entered" the Communist Party. Given his expertise in the issues of the chemical plant in Porto Marghera, the party selected Cacciari to sit on the parliamentary Industry Committee (Chemicals Subcommittee). For Cacciari, 1976 was a breakthrough year in many respects. After several articles and a few books that had already established his reputation as a provocative critical Marxist, the publication of *Krisis* signaled the presence of a new, strong voice on the Italian philosophical scene. It would be difficult to underestimate the impact that *Krisis* had on a generation of young intellectuals who, had they been not warned by Cacciari's uncompromising style and approach, were on their way to becoming the latter-day incarnation of existentialist, idealist, historicist, structuralist, Lukácsian, or Frankfurt School Marxists. *Krisis* was hard to digest for the well-meaning, stubborn, humanistic, and utopian intellectuals of the historical Left. With *Krisis*, Cacciari made clear that negative thought, or antidialectical thought, was more effective in guiding capitalism through its crises than dialectics was in its endless shaping and reshaping of Marxism. Far from falling into the Lukácsian categories of "irrationalism" and "destruction of reason," the criticism of dialectics elaborated by Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Max Weber, Wittgenstein, and ultimately Heidegger, was extremely rational in its core. As anyone who had eyes could see, negative thought had served its purpose well, namely, in providing the theoretical legitimacy of capitalism as a crisis-based system.

This was *Krisis* in a nutshell, but Cacciari's scope was wider than that. The entire turn-of-the-century Vienna in all its artistic and cultural glory, from Wittgenstein to Freud, from Mahler to Schönberg, from Kandinsky to Kokoschka, from Otto Wagner to Adolf Loos, was summoned in Cacciari's negative thought trilogy: *Krisis* (Crisis, 1976); *Pensiero negativo e razionalizzazione* (Negative Thought and Rationalization, 1977); and *Dallo Steinhof*, 1980 (English translation, *Posthumous Men*, 1996). The purpose was to show not only the historical effectiveness of negative thought, but also its intrinsic rationality.[3]

Marxists who grew up in the 1950s and the 1960s reading Lukács and Adorno were outraged. Even worse, they felt bypassed. The respected poet and essayist Franco Fortini went as far as to call Cacciari and some other young philosophers the "last Cains," eager to prostrate before the violence of history in order to solve their Oedipal problems with their own bourgeois upbringing.[4] Actually, the accusation could make some sense with reference to Antonio Negri and his romantic-Sorelian students of political science at the University of Padua (a.k.a. "autonomous workers"), but it was off the mark when aimed at Cacciari.

But when did it all begin? How did a former *operaista* like Cacciari turn into the pied piper who would lead so many unsuspecting young minds into the territory of counterdialectics? To find an answer, we must go back to Cacciari's 1969 essay "Sulla genesi del pensiero negativo."

The Politics of Renunciation

Not unusually for Cacciari, his philosophical analysis begins with an exercise in literary hermeneutics. Heinrich von Kleist's theater is his focus here. According to Cacciari, Kleist's *Penthesilea* (1808) constituted the first blow to dialectical thought. There is no romantic aura in Kleist, where the form of the tragedy nullifies reason and grows entirely separate from dialectics. Kleist dissolves romanticism as much as E. T. A. Hoffmann dissolves the "I" of his characters. Throughout Kleist's nullification of reason, however, "form" (the form of tragedy) is still saved. Or better, what is saved is the opposition between form and life. But form is authentic only to the extent that it withdraws from life, and there is no dialectical solution to this contradiction, which remains mired in its "negative" moment. Schopenhauer, in Cacciari's view, is the first philosopher who addresses negative thought in all its ramifications, including a strong criticism of bourgeois society and its acceptance of Hegelian dialectics. And yet, just by showing the limits of dialectics, negative thought is still functional to the society that it criticizes. As much as capitalism abandons its dreams of dialectical reconciliation among the different forces of society, negative thought turns into an essential tool for the capitalist *esprit fort*. Neither Lukács nor Löwith, as it seems, have understood that negative thought was not just the bourgeoisie's reaction to the revolutionary potentiality of dialectics. When Schopenhauer affirms that the contradiction between subject and object will *not* be resolved, from his "reactionary" point of view he denounces liberalism as the latest incarnation of the

Schillerian "beautiful soul." This is capitalism's modernity, from Kant to negative thought, bypassing Hegel. The subject remains absolute, but it is not going to be integrated into its object—be it life, or history.

Negative thought, however, strives to develop a system that aims to be more consistent than dialectics. As long as it exposes the contradiction instead of overcoming it, Schopenhauer's will is the "form" of this new, post-Kantian schematism. Contradiction, therefore, ceases to be an anomaly, or an aporia. It can be denied only ideologically, by overlooking life's violent aspect. As in post-Ricardian (non-Marxist) economy, where value is determined negatively, in Schopenhauer the value of bourgeois society is determined in the same negative way—as the opposite of reconciliation. The synthesis is possible only within life, and not in the realm of form. But what is the value of this synthesis, when we know that in Schopenhauer life results in self-denial? It takes Kierkegaard to demonstrate that Schopenhauer, as long as he is still convinced that it is possible to achieve freedom from the evils of life, is still an optimistic bourgeois. The Kierkegaardian man has no intention to free the world from evil. That would be an impossible abstraction. The contradiction must be lived through, and not overcome. The life of the Kierkegaardian "individual" is always given in specific circumstances—in the leap from one situation to another. Only religious faith realizes dialectics, not by reconciliation but by annihilating one of its opposites. This is how bourgeois reason is truly voided. And yet Kierkegaard cannot annihilate society entirely. After all, he still maintains (especially in his last phase, after 1849) that faith must have practical consequences in personal and collective life. Faith makes life repeat itself. As Job's life begins again, even the defender of faith can still get married and live a middle-class existence. After the conversion, his "difference" is over. But dialectical form has not been broken. It still possesses value.

Negative thought achieves fulfillment only in Nietzsche, where dialectical synthesis, once devoid of any moralistic or metaphysical value, is reduced to pure immanence without justification. In so doing, Nietzsche is the true interpreter of the spirit of his time. After 1870, capitalism enters a new phase in which mastering the negative *qua* negative is more important than overcoming it. That explains why there is no irrationalism in Nietzsche. He negates precisely those values that now get in the way of capitalistic domination. His criticism of the bourgeoisie rebuilds the system in a more effective way. Tragedy, in Nietzsche, is the blueprint of a world in which contradiction is accepted and considered unredeemable. Schopenhauer was deluded, and Wagner in his last years was also deluded, when they thought that grief and pain could be transcended.

The real free spirit knows that tragedy is only pessimism—overcome without redemption.

Total acceptance of destiny is not an ideal for the masses. Only the free spirit is ready for that. But Nietzsche's free spirit only anticipates Max Weber's disenchanted intellectual. The Weberian intellectual accepts the spirit of the world with no hope, or even desire, to redeem it with an injection of *Kultur*. This is the only decision he can make. As a matter of fact, it is not even the intellectual's decision—but he is aware of that, he has decided to accept that he cannot decide. It is not the single philosopher, but the capitalist system itself that periodically gets rid of the old and obsolete values. And the Nietzschean-Weberian system wants only power; it is the will to power incarnate. Weber fully integrates Nietzsche and empowers his vision, or so it seems, but a difference remains. Nietzsche's *Übermensch* is not directly involved with the system. He still keeps an aristocratic distance. That distance is annihilated in Weber, who demands an active role for his intellectual and/or politician. Furthermore, Nietzsche's "superman" cannot be separated from his subjectivity. This is not so in Weber, where the intellectual is merely functional. And yet, Weber unveils Nietzsche's real project, because the secret of Nietzschean subjectivity lies in the unavoidable dissolution of subjectivity itself. The ruler of the Weberian "administered world" has no time for the systems of values that are not functional to the stage reached by the capitalistic organization. The Protestant phase of capitalism is over, and the system is on the way to becoming a pure manifestation of power. Nietzsche knew that already. No transcendence is left outside the system. As a matter of fact, there is no outside. The situation is unprecedented, but it captures perfectly the tragedy of capitalism's mature phase. The will to power is the new substance, the new perfect form. Life is not synthesis, but will—toward domination and incorporation. And, since will to power embodies the essence of life, it will never be overcome. This is the meaning of Nietzsche's eternal return: the capitalistic system has now taken the place of the ancient tragic destiny.

And yet, as Cacciari observes, this is still a dialectical synthesis. Apparently, every contradiction has disappeared. Being and becoming have been reduced to identity. Negativity "comprehends" itself in a way that is not altogether different from the way the Hegelian absolute spirit coincides with its wholeness.

Cacciari brings his essay to this brilliant conclusion, which nonetheless does not dissolve some perplexities. On one hand, Cacciari's account of the history of negative thought is strongly deterministic, and in the most

Marxist sense of the word. Each thinker matches almost perfectly the corresponding historical phase of capitalistic development, with little "autonomy" left to the mind. On the other hand, Cacciari's interpretation of antidialectics is even more deterministic than any Marxism could bear, because it annihilates the very possibility of theoretical and social antagonism. If dialectics is not effective, and all nondialectical critiques of the bourgeoisie end up reinforcing the same society that they criticize, then what is the possible alternative to capitalism? With its strictly rationalistic and deductive approach, Cacciari's critique unveils the rationalistic side of Nietzsche's thinking. The downside, however, is that no rationalistic criticism of capitalism (including Cacciari's) will be able to outline a different political scenario.

Cacciari struggled with this aporia for the next ten years, from 1969 to 1978, and only in his late 1970s works he was able to overcome the deterministic side of his political philosophy. First of all, he investigated the crucial category of *Entsagung* (renunciation) from Goethe to Schopenhauer and Thomas Mann. How does the capitalistic system maintain itself open, avoiding the rigidity that seems to be implied in its own perfection? Something must be sacrificed to make the system work, and what is sacrificed is the capitalist's enjoyment. Like Goethe's Faust and the tormented couples in *Elective Affinities*, like Schopenhauer's will desiring its own vanishing, or the ascetic old merchants in Mann's *Buddenbrooks*, the heroic capitalist is the one who gives up pleasure, postponing it indefinitely in order to keep the system in motion. Max Weber and the ghost of his Protestantism dominate these observations, but Cacciari would point out that the ascetic solution springs directly from the theoretical obligations of negative thought, regardless of Protestant ethics. From his essay "*Entsagung*" (1971) to *Pensiero negativo e razionalizzazione* (1977), Cacciari insists that the capability of capitalism to postpone its fulfillment is one of its strongest assets, if not *the* strongest. Why not bring the same ascetic asset—which is also highly strategic—into the socialist camp? Cacciari has always despised revolutionary-schizophrenic *jouissance*, whether it came from Negri or Deleuze. In his essay "'Razionalità' e 'Irrazionalità' nella critica del Politico in Deleuze e Foucault" ("Rationality" and "Irrationality" in Deleuze's and Foucault's Critique of Politics, 1977), Cacciari had very harsh words against the "bad literature" that occasionally affected Foucault, Deleuze, and Guattari, and he accused them of intellectual "indecency" on the account of their claim to an immediacy of thought. Cacciari learned from Wittgenstein that when you discard a set of rules, you just start playing with new rules. Every set is limited, but there is no game

outside the game, no privileged position from which one can look at the whole system and decide to change it without being affected by the change. Of course, while he criticized Deleuze and Foucault, Cacciari's not-so-hidden polemical objective was Negri's "total autonomy" of the revolutionary subject—which Cacciari discarded as mere mythology. (Cacciari, however, overlooked both the Nietzschean side of Foucault and the Spinozian side of Deleuze—which did not escape Negri.)

In 1976, when *Krisis* reached the bookstores, Fortini and other Frankfurt School critics were not the only ones to cry foul. Gianni Vattimo scolded Cacciari for choosing speculative abstraction at the expense of revolutionary praxis, while Negri himself wrote a scathing review in which he accused Cacciari of mysticism pure and simple.[5] Cacciari's refurbished *operaismo* was mystical, according to Negri, because it was based on an assumption of naturalness about the economic datum. It celebrated the organization of labor as a pure game devoid of any values, but forgot to explain how the capitalistic division between value and labor was determined in the first place. Cacciari, in Negri's opinion, was turning into one of those negative thinkers he was writing about—a negative theologian of bourgeois humanism, ready to brush aside the question of labor because he was fearful of its revolutionary power. Cacciari could understand the power of labor only negatively, as authoritarianism or terrorism. By separating class-consciousness from the revolutionary subject, he had turned the autonomy of politics into pure theory, alienated from the reality of the class struggle. In the widening gap between political strategy and labor movement, negative revolutionaries like Cacciari would rather choose political conventionalism instead of a real confrontation with the masses and the urgency of their needs. Negri felt that all Cacciari wanted was an opportunistic revolution from above, inured to failure by its very absence of foundation.

Putting aside for a moment the issue of Negri's really being in touch with "the masses," Negri's remarks were not entirely unfounded. But no one more than Cacciari was aware that the autonomy of politics could not escape its lack of foundation. If politics (revolutionary politics) detaches itself from society, what legitimacy can it claim? If revolution is removed from the revolutionary masses, where is the difference between revolutionary power and the capitalist system? After all, Marxism conceived revolution as discontinuity and utopia. How can revolutionary politics find the same élan when revolution is reduced to administration? Was not the bureaucratization of politics what killed the socialist states of Eastern Europe? It was not enough to suggest, as Tronti did, that politics was more

powerful when it was reduced to technique. Capitalism always acknowledged that. If the labor movement was to become the heir of bourgeois politics in the age of technology, then one had to admit that the labor movement had much to learn, since it never conceived its struggle in terms of "high politics."

As we see from the major points of this debate, ten years after 1968 the autonomy of politics was already an empty shell. The next move was toward the centrality of politics. It was a conscientiously cynical move, since it acknowledged that the working class had lost its ethical centrality and, very much like Weber's intellectual, was now merely functional to the political battle. In "*Sinisteritas*," a 1982 essay not included in this volume, Cacciari went so far as to claim "grand opportunism" as the only possible substitute for "grand politics," when grand politics was no longer viable.

But the crucial year, both for Cacciari and the Italian Left, came in 1978. Again, we need to take a step back in order to place the historical facts in the right perspective. In 1972, a splinter faction of sociology students at the University of Trento (one of the most politicized universities in post-1968 Italy) established the left-wing terrorist group known as the Red Brigades. When compared with what was about to follow in the next few years, the actions of the so-called *nucleo storico* (historical cell) of the Red Brigades were mostly propagandistic. In the mid-1970s, however, after the police arrested or killed the Red Brigades' first leaders, the new generation openly turned to armed violence. In the meantime, after Augusto Pinochet overthrew Salvador Allende's socialist government of Chile in the 1973 coup d'état, Enrico Berlinguer, then secretary of the Italian Communist Party, decided that Italy was not going to risk a similar civil war and proposed a *compromesso storico* (historic compromise) between the Christian Democrats (the majority party since 1948) and the Communist Party (the second strongest party). Among the Christian Democratic leaders, Aldo Moro was the one to pick up the olive branch. A moderate Catholic known for his extremely cautious behavior, tortuous speech, and Byzantine writing style, Moro had already brought the Socialist Party into a joint government with the Christian Democrats in 1962. In the 1970s he did not dislike the idea of repeating his gambit with the Communists. Either because he wanted to ease tensions within Italian society, or because he preferred to keep his friends close and his enemies closer, Moro worked for five years to build up the appropriate conditions for the historical compromise. In early March 1978, when he was secretary of the Christian Democrats, Moro felt that the moment had come.

On March 16, Moro was on his way to Parliament, where he and Berlinguer were going to formalize a loose governmental alliance that for the first time since 1948 would see the two major Italian political parties on the same side. But before Moro could reach the Chamber of Deputies a commando of the Red Brigades kidnapped him after killing his five bodyguards. Fifty-five days later, on May 10, Moro was found dead in the trunk of a Renault car, left by the Red Brigades in Via Caetani, a street in Rome that was halfway between the headquarters of the Christian Democrats and the Communist Party. The historical compromise, loathed by the radical groups for fear that this bipartisan regime would kill the revolutionary potential of the masses, was over. But Moro's killing was also the beginning of the end for the Red Brigades. The nation was shocked by their brutality, and their network of sympathizers thinned out considerably. By 1982, the Red Brigades militants were mostly in exile, arrested, *pentiti* (repentant), or in jail. Right-wing terrorism made a comeback with the deadliest attack in Italian history (a bomb at the Bologna train station killed eighty-six people on August 2, 1980), but after reaching this peak, it too was on the wane. In the meantime, Cacciari had a seat in Parliament, and Antonio Negri, who thanks to his temporary election as a representative of the Radical Party had been released from prison, became a political exile in France, where he obtained a teaching position at the Sorbonne.

Up to 1978, with the exception of two earlier papers, the antidialectical Cacciari had never confronted the very ghost of dialectics. With *Dialettica e critica del Politico. Saggio su Hegel* (Dialectics and the Critique of Politics: Essay on Hegel, 1978), Cacciari added a significant chapter to his bibliography. It was one of his most brilliant essays, and it provided some much-needed answers to the dead end of revolutionary politics. In his analysis of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (1821), Cacciari was obviously looking for traces of antidialectics. It would have been easier to find them in the realm of international law, since Hegel himself admitted that states recognized no laws and therefore no dialectical reconciliation above themselves (the rise and fall of international law is one of Carl Schmitt's great topics, and Schmitt's presence, which I will discuss later, is tangible in *Dialettica e critica del Politico*). Cacciari, however, chose to deconstruct Hegel's philosophy of politics at the level of contradiction between subjective interest and civil society—an opposition that cannot be overcome in the classical dialectical sense, because it presents itself again immediately after being resolved.

Long before Marx, Hegel had already tried to redeem society from its lapse into bad infinity. By putting the ethical state as the redemptive figure

of the economic system, he pointed at the contradiction between civil society and the state. Paralyzed by the rules of economics, a wholly secularized state reduces itself to the mere satisfaction of the needs and desires of civil society (it is no more than the business committee of the bourgeoisie, as Marx would have it). By giving up its ethical-political essence, the state ends up being nothing more than the servant of subjective interests. And, as Hobbes and Mandeville already knew, subjective interests are essentially anarchic, opposed to the very idea of state. The Hegelian state rationalizes subjective anarchy and tempers the spread of needs and desires within civil society, but it cannot achieve more than that. Subjective interests haunt civil society to such an extent that the state will never control them. The endless development and transformation of production puts the state in a dilemma: either to direct the development in an authoritarian fashion, which would amount to the repression of civil society, or to subsume "dialectically" the development itself, at the risk of dissolving the state's ethical form in the anarchy of conflicting subjectivities.

In both cases, the state is condemned to impotence. In the first scenario, no amount of tolerable repression will put the anarchy of civil society under control; in the second one, the ideology of laissez faire would only be pretending that no anomaly exists. Since there is no way out from this contradiction, so argues Cacciari, Hegel chooses to remain in the contradiction without resolving it. The state appears as the culminating phase of the entire process not because it dissolves the contradiction between itself and civil society but because it remains *separated* from civil society. This separateness, according to Cacciari, must be understood as autonomy. It represents autonomous strength and autonomous *language* on the part of the state.

As we can see, Cacciari found in Hegel the common ground between Tronti's autonomy of politics and his own obsession with the autonomy of different languages (one of the key concepts in his "negative thought" trilogy maintains that the languages of different artistic disciplines, different social classes, and different political realities are not translatable into one another).

But, if the state is no longer the guardian of good economic behavior, then what is left to politics? Since it is no longer possible, at the end of the twentieth century, to resurrect the ghost of the ethical state, the only political ethics left is that of *Entsagung*, renunciation. Politics that renounces to resolve the contradiction of civil society into some superior harmony is grand politics. But such a renunciation is decision, which

means that grand politics decides to separate itself (etymologically, decision means separation) from the possibility of representing the whole. Grand politics does not harmonize conflicts. Grand politics *produces* the conflict, and gives up the dream of a reconciled society. Here is where Hegel meets Carl Schmitt. Social harmony is no less a myth than "just peace." It takes a "just war" to reach "just peace," but "just war" is another name for an endless state of war, where the enemy loses the right to be an enemy and is degraded to the status of a criminal.[6]

Socialism has never attained grand politics because it has always tried to reconcile, harmonize, and disalienate the various segments of society in the hope of leading them into universal consensus. Socialism strives to liberate politics from politics itself, and this is where it fails. There is no liberation from politics, and no liberation can be reached through politics. Negri is wrong because his reversal of classical political theory is a mere mirror effect. When Negri posits the revolutionary subject as absolute otherness from capital, asserting therefore the rationality of insurrection, he puts his faith in an authoritarian resolution of social conflict. Once revolution is over, social conflict is supposed to disappear, but the end of revolution is no less a myth than the war to end all wars. Politics, as Cacciari tirelessly repeats, produces and manages conflict; it does not strive to end it. The masses participate in the process of democratization and the inevitable depoliticization of the secularized state, but they do not provide the foundation for the state.

Cacciari's conclusions were a major blow to the core concepts of Marxism, at least in their popular fashion. On one hand, Cacciari anticipated by ten years the fall of socialist utopia. His personal Berlin Wall came down between 1978 and 1982. On the other, in various conversations and interviews given in those years, he repeatedly stressed that Marxism had indeed realized many of its goals, not in Eastern Europe but in the Western world. The best legacy of Marxism was alive in the West's democratic institutions, namely, that every segment of society must have its own political representation. What politics (including Marxist politics) cannot and must not attempt to represent, is society as a whole, and the state as a common good. Cacciari was and is aware that politics cannot refrain from behaving as if the representation of the good would be possible. Insofar as it strives for the impossible, politics coincides also with inoperativeness, endless scholarship, *otium* and *scholé* (Jean Luc Nancy's "inoperative community" comes to mind). But, according to Cacciari, it would be a waste of time to look for conventional political theory in order to find a theorization of this unsurpassable or, we could say, "sublime" limitation of politics. Thinkers who have remained on the margins of politics have a better

chance of understanding its limits. From their marginality they have perfected a unique, "unpolitical" point of view. "Unpolitical" does not mean apolitical or antipolitical. On the contrary, it means suprapolitical, overpolitical. The autonomy of politics was just a myth, maybe one that was effective to a certain extent, but not different from other political myths. The unpolitical gaze, however, looks at politics with perfect awareness that the political reconciliation of the opposites is and will always be impossible. That does negate the effectiveness of politics. Instead, it stresses the real power of politics. The unpolitical is the only point of view from which politics can be seen both as vocation (in the Weberian sense of the word) and technique. Under the unpolitical gaze, politics ceases to be praxis alone and reveals itself also as *techné*.

The Unpolitical Gaze

With two exceptions, the essays collected in this volume were written between 1978 and 1982, the crucial years when Cacciari calls into question the legacy of Marxism and political activism. The essays did not offer easy solutions, because there were none, and because Cacciari was still struggling with the multiplicity of languages in his own philosophy. Marxism and Neomarxism, the jargon of *operaismo*, Hegelian dialectics, negative thought, Nietzsche's unpolitical dimension, Benjamin's complex theory of political allegory (based on German baroque drama and applied by Cacciari to Hofmannsthal's plays), Weber's criticism of socialism, the deconstruction of key terms of political philosophy such as power, catastrophe (read "revolution"), and project (read "plan" and "counterplan"): all these conflicting legacies coexisted together in Cacciari's pages with no hope of being translated into a new political and philosophical Esperanto. In fact, in other essays of the same period, such as "Trasformazioni dello Stato e progetto politico" (Transformations of the State and Political Project, 1978), not included in the present collection, Cacciari's style reached a level of conceptual and semantic density that even the most benevolent reader might have felt as overwhelming. Cacciari was not saying it openly (because there was not just one language to say it), but he was hinting that the whole arsenal of the postwar political lexicon was now obsolete. The essays collected here, however, are less hermetic than the one just mentioned. Each one is a rite of passage, a transit from the harsh old world of Cold War to the brave new world of Global Conflict. They bear witness

to five years of relentless intellectual challenge. After them, Cacciari was a different thinker.

In 1985 he published *Icone della legge* (Icons of Law), one of his most accomplished books and one in which philosophy, literature, and the arts truly seem to be translatable one into another. In 1986 he achieved commercial success with *L'angelo necessario* (*The Necessary Angel* in the 1994 English translation—the title being a nod to Wallace Stevens's eponymous poem), an erudite book on the semiotics of angelic communication (and/or the nonsemiotics of angelic ineffability) from Dante to Paul Klee. In 1990 he completed *Dell'inizio*, in which he addressed Western philosophical and theological tradition from the circular and nondialectical point of view of Neoplatonism.

His 1980s trilogy *Icone*, *L'angelo*, and *Dell'inizio* would require a long discussion, exceeding the limits of this introduction. The same can be said for *Della cosa ultima* (2004), which completes *Dell'inizio*. "Impracticable Utopias," however (Chapter 1 of this volume) is a good starting point to gain access to Cacciari's mature thought. The text works at different levels. At first sight, it is the book-length postscript to a new Italian translation of Hofmannsthal's tormented drama *The Tower* (1901–1927). As an erudite essay on Hofmannsthal and his source (Calderón de la Barca's *La vida es sueño*), "Impracticable Utopias" includes a discussion of Lukács's reflections on tragedy, Benjamin's theory of Baroque drama, theater as political allegory, and the impossibility of tragedy in the modern world. At another level, "Impracticable Utopias" is exactly what the title suggests: a serious meditation on the failure of political utopias and the problematic impracticability of the very concept of utopia. The original Italian title, "Intransitabili utopie," comes from the first speech of King Basilius in Act II: "Die Mauern wanken von den Grundfesten aus und unser Weg ist ins Nicht-mehr-gangbare geraten," which in the English translation reads, "The walls are shaken at their foundation, and our path has strayed into impassable wastes." The Italian translation, somewhat closer to the original German, reads: "Le mura vacillano dalle fondamenta, e la nostra strada è finita nell'Intransitabile." "Intransitabile" is a road that is in ruin and that cannot be taken. More metaphorically, it is also something that cannot be carried on, for instance from one river's shore to the other. The translator's choice, "Impracticable Utopias," suggests that utopias are both impassable roads and unpractical burdens.[7]

Cacciari goes through the different stages of Hofmannsthal's drama to show how, one draft after another, the author progressively has reduced and, in the end, annihilated every hope of political reconciliation.

Through the various passages of his work, Hofmannsthal struggled with this inevitable, all-political conclusion. Not only Sigismund, the dreaming Prince, has been defeated (which is not surprising), but also no order has resulted from the revolution that dethroned him. And the sinister Olivier, the new tyrant, is also disillusioned. Although he has won, he knows all too well that his revolution has brought about conflict, not peace.

Is this a modern tragedy? Can we call it a tragedy? After Walter Benjamin, who in his *The Origin of German Baroque Drama* (1925) separated Baroque *Trauerspiel* (Mournful Drama) from Tragedy, the possibility of modern tragedy (still entertained by Georg Simmel and the young Lukács) has been largely dismissed. Hofmannsthal, who was familiar with Benjamin's work, could no longer accept a formal or aesthetic reconciliation of utopia's political dissolution. At the conclusion of *The Tower* the allegory remains open. After the Christlike Sigismund has disappeared, politics is left by itself, without any hope of finding a transcendental foundation for its power. God is hidden, does not reveal His face, and His being impenetrable is what marks the difference between *Trauerspiel* and tragedy, where God's will is after all manifested. Cacciari points out that if final peace is impossible, or just the allegory of an unending conflict, then decision will be the only political category left. Quoting from *Politische Theologie* (Political Theology, 1922), one of Carl Schmitt's most influential essays, Cacciari stresses that whoever makes the decision in an exceptional situation holds the power. And, in an unending conflict, an exceptional state is an everyday occurrence.[8] However, contrary to what Schmitt argues in *Die Diktatur* (Dictatorship, 1921), Cacciari emphasizes that decision is not dictatorship. Dictatorship aims at reconstructing form and order, thus bringing decision to an end. But decision knows its limitations—which is, inevitably, the next decision.

In the last scenes of *The Tower*, Sigismund and Olivier confront each other. One character represents pure utopia; the other stands for pure politics. Olivier needs Sigismund, because Sigismund possesses the only thing that Olivier cannot have—popular consensus. But Sigismund refuses to become a figurehead for Olivier's politics and chooses to die. The death of Utopia, as I said, leaves politics unfounded. Hofmannsthal offers no solution to this dilemma—and neither does Cacciari. After ten years of debate about the autonomy of politics, "Impracticable Utopias" made clear that the chasm between politics and society was so wide that no force, no idea, no decision was able to bridge the gap.

To a certain extent, Cacciari's conclusion harks back to Neomarxism's radicalism. In 1968 the word was that if capitalism is rational, we will fight

its rationality. In 1978 it was that if politics has no foundation, we will learn how to inhabit its void. In "Impracticable Utopias," there is no trace of a theory of social mediation. After all, consensus can be won and lost, and common sense holds that democracy's legitimacy comes from representativeness. Modern democracies do not live in the Imperial Spain of Sigismund and Olivier. But Cacciari's views on democracy have little regard for common sense and bear the marks of his philosophical obsessions, namely, autonomy and groundlessness. Every instance of political representativeness is a mournful drama, if not a tragedy, because politics, as we have seen, cannot represent the common good. In this respect, democracy fares no better than totalitarianism. As Cacciari explains in "Misura e dismisura della democrazia" (Moderation and Excess in Democracy, 1984), not included in this collection, the modern state is established neither by natural consensus nor by nonmediated power. Democracy must therefore demonstrate its legitimacy, and it does so by injecting belief and faith in the juridical substance of its laws.

But juridical substance does not mean legitimacy. When the source of the law is the result of a revolutionary act (which interrupts existing laws), the jurist must accept the new legislative subject as a presupposition or revelation, because he has no other means to provide the new law with the same aura as the old. Political theology (in Schmittian terms: how politics represents values) gives way to negative theology (the source of the law is compared to a God the theologian-jurist can say nothing about). As the ultimate secularization of political theology, democracy radicalizes the conventionalism of juridical action. The outcome is paradoxical, and yet absolutely logical. New political subjects start revolutions only to see their subjectivity disappear in the new judicial system that owes its very existence to them. But the groundlessness of democracy is not pathological. On the contrary, Cacciari insists on its physiological nature. There is an excess, a desire for infinitude that is intrinsic to the democratic project, which is not limited by God or natural law. No representation of such boundlessness is possible (nothing will be the symbol incarnate of democracy), but there is responsibility that comes with it and, again, it is the responsibility of renunciation. Only by giving up any claim to finding a historical or anthropological foundation, can democracy become fully responsible for itself and to its subjects.

The cornerstones of Cacciari's political thought are conventionalism, formalism, functionalism, and the strong belief that every attempt to translate the languages of subjectivity into politics is doomed to fail. No longer a practicing Marxist, Cacciari has not embraced liberalism lightly,

or at least he has done it with a good dose of skepticism. Cacciari is a philosopher-politician in the classical, pessimistic, and Platonic sense of the term. His philosophy is the lifelong education of the man engaged in public activities, equally divided between public duties, study, and meditation. It does not come as a total surprise that one right-wing historian and political commentator has provocatively called Cacciari an aristocratic conservative.[9]

Cacciari, however, knows modernity enough to be aware that real conservatives are not allowed in our times. The heart of his speculative enterprise lies in his cold and disenchanted gaze at the relationship between power and representativeness. In Cacciari there is no room for political sentimentality. We may concede that this is his aristocratic side. But his investigation about the limits of politics stems from what he views as the nature of power itself. If there are no limits there is no power. And, since utopias are impracticable, to what extent is politics practicable?

Cacciari's 1978 essays on the "unpolitical" Nietzsche and the "all-political" Max Weber must be viewed as a two-sided answer to the same question. In "Nietzsche and the Unpolitical" (Chapter 2 of this collection), Cacciari addresses Thomas Mann's *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man* (1918) and challenges Mann's definition of Nietzsche as an unpolitical thinker.[10] Cacciari points out that, in order to rescue Nietzsche from his reactionary readers, Mann assigned Nietzsche's legacy to a bourgeois hatred of politics that was totally foreign to him. Nietzsche is unpolitical not because he represents German spirit and culture against the decadence of politics, but because he criticizes every politics that pretends to represent values. Nietzsche's "unpoliticalness" is the most radical criticism of politics. It is, ultimately, a call for grand politics, which is another name for total disenchantment, accepting nihilism and groundlessness as unavoidable features. Grand politics does not strive to free human nature from alienation. The myth of disalienation is a superstitious, theological idea that has affected negatively both democracy and socialism. In the Nietzschean, unpolitical view, democracy does not create values; rather, it dissolves them into the autonomous multiplication of the political subjects. The unpolitical view coldly acknowledges that socialism and democracy hasten the completion of politics, which will coincide with its final entropy and disappearance.

Nietzsche knows that there is no going back. Grand politics is when different subjects recognize themselves as separate and yet united by the common ground of their juxtaposition. As if prescient of the late-capitalistic shift from class struggle to civil and individual rights, Nietzsche points