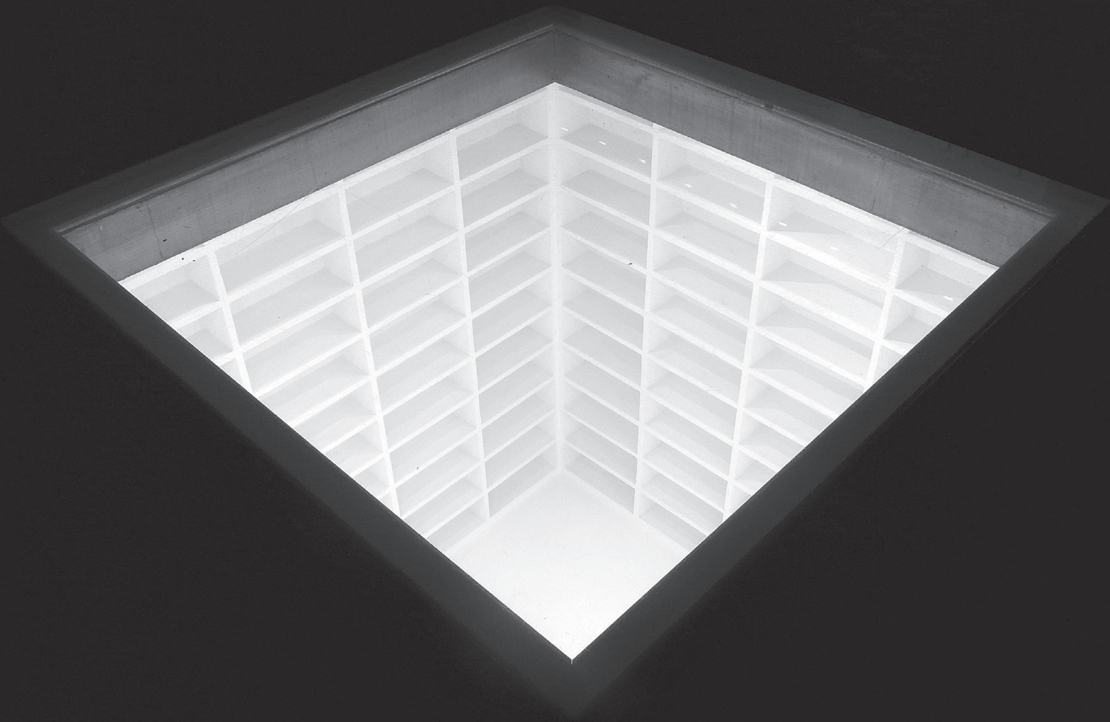
German and European Poetics after the Holocaust

Crisis and Creativity



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GERT HOFMANN, RACHEL MAGSHAMHRÁIN,
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German and European Poetics after the Holocaust

Studies in German Literature, Linguistics, and Culture

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Crisis and Creativity

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Contents

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Introduction

In this sixty-fifth anniversary year of the end of the Second World War and the liberation of Auschwitz, we are fast approaching the eight-decade death-knell for all "lebendige Erinnerung"[1] (living, or communicative, memory) of the Nazi genocide. It would seem, then, that we have reached another critical milestone on our path backward into the future. As the last witnesses, survivors, and perpetrators pass out of real time, the imperative of Holocaust remembrance and attendant conundrum of how to express that re-presented past, seems to be entering a new and particularly perilous phase, one that will soon be exclusively characterized by "post-memory," to borrow Marianne Hirsch's term.[2] The idea of a dawning age of post-remembrance is associated for many with a terrible sense of urgency, fueled by the idea that such a transition may take us a step nearer to a coming time of complete erasure. The act of remembrance is now engaged in a "race against time,"[3] requiring such massive interventions as, for example, the Survivors of the Holocaust Visual History Foundation, which aims to record and archive on film and *in aeternum* the memories of all remaining Holocaust survivors. So, nearly seven decades after the "break" of 1945, another major sense of caesura has come upon us, arguably even more radical than that first Zero Hour. With this sense of an impending end comes the sense that returns, recall, and representations are needed now more than ever. The awareness of the coming break prompts us also to revisit with renewed vigor old debates of total, partial, and impartial recall, and discussions of the hows, ifs, and shoulds of Holocaust testimony, representation, and rememoration, not to mention the question of the proper and improper reception of the resulting cultural material in a consumer age.

In this sense, the aesthetic and theoretical debates of this volume are particularly timely. It would, however, be a mistake, despite the attractiveness of neat periodizations and of clear beginnings, endings, and breaks, to see them as something new. After all, one of the most revisited diagnoses of the postwar cultural period is Theodor W. Adorno's statement of statements announcing the barbarity of the poem after Auschwitz. Apparently inexhaustible, it has given rise to some sixty years of reinterpretation (and of course misinterpretation). As such, our anxious returns to the Holocaust debates of the past may be restoked by, but are certainly not unique to, the advent of a post-memory period. The contributions to the current volume are merely the latest realizations of an on-going struggle with the issue of the present's representation of, its relationship, and its duties toward the past, a struggle that is revealed in all its complexity in the context of the Holocaust.

One of the most pressing difficulties with which the fault line between past and present confronts us in the case of post-Holocaust poetics is how to resist and replace the *lingua (et cultura) tertii imperii*, which, in Adorno's and others' eyes, constitute the heart of darkness of the entire modern European Enlightenment project.[4] All post-Holocaust writing must return, and defy oblivion, and yet it must perform this while resisting what Ernst Cassirer called the Enlightenment's *restitutio in integrum,* too perfect a return.[5]

Initially, it was Adorno's famous dictum that unleashed (mainly in Germany) both the ethical and the aesthetic discourse on the conditions of possibility for the survival of literature, culture, and humanity after the Holocaust, which eventually transmuted, on the global stage, into the terminologically more focused discourse about the (negative) principles of Holocaust representation[6] and remembrance,[7] in the context of the historical event of total annihilation as a traumatizing[8] *factum brutum* that paralyses every attempt at conceptualization.[9] Adorno's dictum is a categorical verdict against the continuation of any traditional cultural practice after the Holocaust, using "Gedicht" (poem) and "Kulturkritik" (cultural criticism) only as examples of the most advanced and therefore most striking productive or cognitive modes of cultural discourse as a whole:

> Kulturkritik findet sich der letzten Stufe der Dialektik von Kultur und Barbarei gegenüber: nach Auschwitz ein Gedicht zu schreiben, ist barbarisch, und das frißt auch die Erkenntnis an, die ausspricht, warum es unmöglich ward, heute Gedichte zu schreiben.[10]

> [Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism. To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today.[11]]

Having articulated his view for the first time in 1951 in a *Festschrift* for Leopold Wiese,[12] Adorno differentiated, but also radicalized his position significantly during the following two decades,[13] intensifying the ontological apodicticity of his rhetoric. It is the triumphant attitude of culture, its ignorant and pretentious aspiration to represent sublimity, that ultimately proves its failure:

> Sie perhorresziert den Gestank, weil sie stinkt, weil ihr Palast, wie es an einer großartigen Stelle von Brecht heißt, gebaut ist aus Hundescheiße. Jahre später als jene Stelle geschrieben ward, hat Auschwitz

> das Mißlingen der Kultur unwiderleglich bewiesen. . . . Alle Kultur nach Auschwitz, samt der dringlichen Kritik daran, ist Müll.[14]

> [It abhors stench because it stinks — because, as Brecht put it in a magnificent line, its mansion is built of dogshit. Years after that line was written, Auschwitz demonstrated irrefutably that culture has failed. . . . All post-Auschwitz culture, including its urgent critique, is garbage.[15]]

This is arguably the bluntest version of Adorno's dictum, taken from his magnum opus *Negative Dialektik*, published in 1966. This formulation uses all available rhetorical and literary means to reinforce its claim to irrefutability, utterly defying any attempt at reinterpretation in a mitigating or relativizing register. At the same time, the uncompromising negation of culture in its historical entirety prepares and necessitates a final and paradoxical shift out of Adorno's sociological thought, and into an ethical debate about the pre-societal sediments of the human condition. This means taking a step beyond the societal range of his critical theory and its dialectic tool of "ideology criticism" into a state of basic awareness of the omnipresence of physical suffering ignored by the critique of culture and ideology, an awareness that requires a "new categorical imperative" as a precondition for any possible cultural or intellectual discourse:[16]

> Denken und Handeln so einzurichten, daß Auschwitz sich nicht wiederhole, nichts Ähnliches geschehe. Dieser Imperativ ist so widerspenstig gegen seine Begründung wie einst die Gegebenheit des Kantischen. Ihn diskursiv zu behandeln, wäre Frevel: an ihm läßt leibhaft das Moment des Hinzutretenden am Sittlichen sich fühlen. Leibhaft, weil es der praktisch gewordene Abscheu vor dem unerträglichen physischen Schmerz ist, dem die Individuen ausgesetzt sind, auch nachdem Individualität, als geistige Reflexionsform, zu verschwinden sich anschickt. (*Negative Dialektik* 359)

> [to arrange their thoughts and actions so that Auschwitz will not repeat itself, so that nothing similar will happen. When we want to find reasons for it, this imperative is as refractory as the given one of Kant was once upon a time. Dealing discursively with it would be an outrage, for the new imperative gives us a bodily sensation of the moral addendum, bodily because it is now the practical abhorrence of the unbearable physical agony to which individuals are exposed even with individuality about to vanish as a form of mental reflection. (*Negative Dialectics* 365)]

"Das Übermaß an realem Leiden duldet kein Vergessen"[17] (The abundance of real suffering permits no forgetting).[18] Adorno's categorical imperative commands an aesthetic response that resists in principle the sublime and "cold"[19] refuge in any kind of "redemptive thinking,"[20] be it discursive (critical) or revelatory (theological), because this would imply forgetting the suffering. As an act of reflection, its purpose cannot be to revise and hermeneutically restore the historical past, but must instead be to amplify and perpetuate the "Krise des Sinnes" (crisis of meaning) that has revealed its absoluteness in Auschwitz. Acknowledging and adopting the state of crisis affects both constituents of reflective production, the cultural subject and its object, the "sinnvolle Verfassung der Welt" (meaningful constitution of the world): "Die Kunstwerke heute, die allein als sinnvoll sich legitimieren, sind jene, die gegen den Begriff des Sinnes am sprödesten sich zeigen" (Today the only art works capable of legitimizing themselves as meaningful are those that are least accessible to the concept of meaning).[21] Commitment to Auschwitz, as the meaningless fact of world history that obliterates the conditions under which cultural production, art and poetry were possible, is the ethical "impulse" that nevertheless, in face of these impossibilities[22] and as an erratic act of pure defiance, "animates literature" (Commitment 87). "Auschwitz" denotes a reality of irredeemable suffering and an all-devouring crisis of meaning that demands a response that cannot be discursive or cognitive — therefore it has to be artistic and creative. Only an art that does not aim to reproduce discursive consistencies and therefore does not depend on conventional or conceptual means of communicability — Adorno suggests the "avant-gardism" and "anti-conventionalism" of the 1920s as a historical model ("Zwanziger Jahre" 50) — is deemed capable of capturing the historical void of meaning after Auschwitz: "Weil jedoch die Welt den eigenen Untergang überlebt hat, bedarf sie gleichwohl der Kunst als ihrer bewußtlosen Geschichtsschreibung. Die authentischen Künstler der Gegenwart sind die, in deren Werken das äußerste Grauen nachzittert" (However, because the world has survived its own downfall, it still needs art as its unconscious historiography. The true artists of today are those in whose works absolute horror still quakes; "Zwanziger Jahre" 53).

In Adorno's and Horkheimer's interpretation, Hegel's philosophy of history described history as the articulated progress of historical consciousness,[23] and historiography as the dialectical discourse on historical meaning: the dialectic of enlightenment. If Auschwitz marks the ultimate, total, and irreversible failure of this discourse and manifests the complicity of cultural history with barbarism, then the ethical response to it must necessarily be neither discursive nor dialectic (that is synthetic),[24] but only erratic and, in a supplementary sense, creative: presentation of absence itself. Adorno's meditations on poetry after Auschwitz thus exemplify the paradoxicality of his "negative Dialektik": if the act of cultural criticism becomes complicit with the depravation of culture, meaning can no longer be seen as a product of historical synthesis. Culture only persists, and survives, in an act of self-resistance. Negation of any given predicament and the refusal to provide ready-made sets of meaning is then the very impulse that propels art. This art proves inaccessible to any attempt at sociocultural and economic appropriation; it is committed to the excluded, exploited, and annihilated not because it adopts and promotes their positive claims, but because it resonates and exposes both the absence of historical meaning and the societal presence of their torment: "jenes Leiden, nach Hegels Wort das Bewußtsein von Nöten, erheischt auch die Fortdauer von Kunst, die es verbietet" ("Engagement" 422; that suffering — what Hegel called the awareness of affliction — also demands the very art it forbids, "Commitment" 88).

Therefore, the impulse of such an art — and, a fortiori, of poetry — as a case of negative dialectics is not (for Adorno) an intellectualizing revision or a materialistic (Marxist) reinforcement of the dialectics of enlightenment as established by Hegel, but rather a radical denial of the synthesizing implications of art as an ideological force in history. Art after Auschwitz can only be meaningful as an act of categorical resistance:

> Das perennierende Leiden hat soviel Recht auf Ausdruck wie der Gemarterte zu brüllen; darum mag es falsch gewesen sein, nach Auschwitz ließe kein Gedicht mehr sich schreiben. Nicht falsch aber ist die minder kulturelle Frage, ob nach Auschwitz noch sich leben lasse. . . . (*Negative Dialektik* 356)
>
> [Perennial suffering has as much right to expression as a tortured man has to scream; hence it may have been wrong to say that after Auschwitz you could no longer write poems. But it is not wrong to raise the less cultural question whether after Auschwitz you can go on living . . . (*Negative Dialectics* 362)]

This shows the aporia at the core of Adorno's dictum, which art must acknowledge and come to terms with: art is to incorporate the crisis of annihilation, and refute it at the same time by giving expression, form, and consequently meaning to the suppressed reality of suffering. The only way out of this aporia lies in a creative form of self-denial. At this point Adorno's reflections on the problem of culture after Auschwitz offer suggestions with regard to possible future forms of art and poetry: Any artistic practice can no longer present itself as *autonomous* in the sense of a morally conscious, socially communicated, and culturally established state of *being in and for itself* (in Hegelian terms) but must manifest itself instead, in an inversion of this discredited tradition, as an aesthetically sovereign act of dedication to nothing but the brutal fact of crisis in a state of being "für anderes" (for something else).[25]

Without relying on terminologies derived from the increasing impact of psychoanalysis and semiotics on cultural and literary analysis, Adorno invokes questions that became decisive for the Holocaust discourse of the decades that followed, particularly the ethical and representational state of the witness coming to terms with the humanitarian crisis of Auschwitz as an absolute trauma.[26] It is the uncompromisingly ethical thrust of Adorno's reflections that raises the awareness for the specific agony of the surviving witness between guilt and shame.[27] He still has to live on, but finds himself deprived of the necessary healing powers, that is, of all the symbolic tools of "redemptive thinking" that culture once used to provide but that have effectively proved irrelevant in the event of Auschwitz. Therefore, testimony itself is to be recognized primarily as an ethically necessary act of quasi-redemptive *fiction*, as an act of creativity by the survivors on behalf of those others who perished. But on a secondary level of fiction it could then even "inspire poems" because it is also representing a "struggle for humanity in its own right."[28]

Acknowledging Adorno's categorical imperative regarding the urgency of writing since Auschwitz, and paying homage to Maurice Blanchot's literary fragments on Auschwitz, "scattered throughout his texts," Sarah Kofman, for instance, formulates her own version of the pledge, undertaking, "as a Jewish woman intellectual who has survived the Holocaust," to find a new way of writing: a "writing of the ashes, writing of the disaster, which avoids the trap of complicity with speculative knowledge, with that in it which is tied to power, and thereby complicit with the tortures of Auschwitz."[29]

Similarly, Jean-Luc Nancy described the Holocaust as the "ultimate crisis of representation."[30] How is writing still possible here? Or should we rather understand writing now as an attempt to make the *impossible* possible or real? Crisis is always a moment that simultaneously imposes change and creativity. It is a period of transition, paving the way for the new. Henri Meschonnic expresses very succinctly the necessity of crisis for all creation:

> La crise est permanente. Elle l'a toujours été. . . . La crise est la condition même, et l'histoire, des concepts, des stratégies. Le conceptuel ne se fait que de se défaire. Inchoatif. Dès qu'il s'installe, il devient du pouvoir, il devient un obstacle à lui-même. Il faut le casser pour penser.[31]
>
> [Crisis is permanent. This has always been the case. . . . Crisis is the very condition and the history of concepts and strategies. The conceptual cannot be made without unmaking itself. Inchoative. As soon as it establishes itself it becomes power, it becomes an obstacle to itself. One has to break it in order to make thoughts.]

Cathérine David applied this idea to the visual arts on the occasion of the *documenta 1994*, affirming "Krise ist immer" (There is always crisis).[32] Usually the term "crisis" is applied to periods of turbulence, to eruptions or irruptions of new ideas and phenomena; it is hardly, if ever, used to describe states of stagnation, or of conceptual decay. In the creative sphere — in the arts and in thought — ironically, it would be a "crisis" if there were no crisis. Paul Celan described his poetry collection *Die Niemandsrose* to Ingeborg Bachmann as "Das Dokument einer Krise, wenn Du willst — aber was wäre Dichtung, wenn sie nicht auch das wäre, und zwar radikal?" (The document of a crisis, you might say — but what would poetry be if it were not this as well, and, indeed, radically so?).[33]

There is, then, an obvious and recognized connection between crisis and creativity. This volume examines this connection in the specific and radical context of literary production after the Holocaust, as well as charting the ongoing consequences of the issues of this period for poetics. Drawing on historian Dan Diner's 1988 conception of the Third Reich as a "Zivilisationsbruch"[34] (rupture in civilization), the following articles demonstrate how and if this rupture is reflected in poetics, approaching the subject in very different ways.

In his 1989 book *Modernity and the Holocaust,* Zygmunt Bauman posited the thesis that the Holocaust was no accident in, but rather an expression of modernity and its culture of Enlightenment. He affirms:

> The Holocaust was conceived and realised in the midst of modern rational society, in a highly developed civilisation and in the context of extraordinary cultural performances: it must therefore be considered a problem of this same society, civilisation and culture.[35]

Bauman goes on to deduce from this that the Holocaust is not an exclusively German problem or phenomenon, but a problem of modernity in general. Consequently, more fundamental changes are clearly necessary if we are to prevent other such catastrophes, which by now presumably have the potential to destroy the world completely. It is not simply a question of political structures, then; a way of thinking in general seems to be the issue.

The fact that Bauman's thesis received so much attention some forty years after the *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (Dialectics of Enlightenment)[36] had already said much the same thing, demonstrates how little of Adorno's and Max Horkheimer's criticism of what they called the "Kulturindustrie" (cultural industry) had actually filtered through, and shows how strong resistance to this idea has always been. The problem of an enlightened modernity compromised by National Socialism and the Holocaust, and the devastating implications for the German rational mind as such, remain unresolved. Poetics, however, has the potential to show the way forward here, offering new ways of dealing with this past, paths that lead out of the aporia of instrumental reason.

Adorno's dictum — infamous by the late 1950s though it was thoroughly analyzed only from the 1990s on — casts a dark shadow over postwar German literature, and expresses *in nuce* the arguably unique difficulties facing any act of artistic creation in Germany after the catastrophe of the Third Reich, but with implications that stretch far beyond the borders of this country of perpetrators. In the afterword to his semi-fictional novella *Der Vater eines Mörders* (The Father of a Murderer), Alfred Andersch questions the idea of humanity to which the humanist tradition subscribed. He discusses the fact that Heinrich Himmler's father taught Latin and Greek at a Humanist Grammar School (the school in Munich that Andersch himself attended), asking: "Schützt Humanismus denn vor gar nichts? Die Frage ist geeignet, einen in Verzweiflung zu stürzen"[37] (Does this mean that humanism offers no protection whatsoever? The question may well plunge one into despair).[38] The question is disturbing, even devastating, because it suggests that, far from offering resistance, there is, in fact, a connection or continuum between humanist ideals and education, on the one hand, and the ruthless murders perpetrated by the SS on the other. In short, the afterword offers us the thesis of *Dialectics of Enlightenment* personified, in the human form of the (father of the) man responsible for the Holocaust. Humanism now takes on a Janus-faced aspect, the noble aim of perfecting humankind being coupled here to its technical manipulation. Humanism, at the latter, obscene end of its development, opens the door, then, to a way of thinking that considers human beings in terms of bio-political strategies. This flaw still haunts humanist ideals today.

As we have seen, Adorno's provocative verdict on the possibility of post-Holocaust poetry has also given rise to multifarious poetic and theoretical endeavors that attempt to transform the prevailing sense of negativism into artistic and literary acts of resistance against history.[39] A certain historical distance allows new questions to be asked, such as whether it is possible to talk about postwar poetics in terms of creativity rather than merely in terms of the destruction of traditions? And if so, how does or did this crisis generate new potential? If we consider, with Jean-Luc Nancy, "representation" as the "birthmark" of Western civilization, then the "entire fevered history" of what he calls "the gigantomachies of *mimesis*, of the image, of perception, of the object and the scientific law, of the spectacle, of art, of political representation" (Nancy 37) has fallen victim to the Holocaust. A "fissure of absence," of absolute violence has opened up; the gap of those who have been lost or silenced and annihilated, of people and their works, ideas and thoughts, shatters the integrity of our Western historical self-image. The challenge is to develop new and alternative literary and artistic approaches that convert the violent exclusions of this image into an absence *within* the image, readmitting, in a way, those who are absent, their extinguished lives and acts of expression, allowing them a sort of presence in their own right, albeit, perhaps only at the very margins of our awareness, and never to be re-presented completely.

Such attempts range from Peter Weiss's *Poetik des Widerstands*[40] (Poetics of Resistance) and Blanchot's *L'Écriture du désastre*[41] (The Writing of the Disaster) to more recent theories in which certain kinds of literature are seen as acts of *témoignage* (testimony) (for instance, Emmanuel Lévinas[42]) and processes of survival (Giorgio Agamben[43]), to mention just a few.

The first part of this volume deals with major acts of literary reflection on the immediate postwar period, such as those of Nelly Sachs, Paul Celan, Ingeborg Bachmann, Ilse Aichinger, Rose Ausländer, and Gottfried Benn. The second part examines examples of what followed on from this phase of poeticized thought, moving from Concrete Poetry, through Charlotte Beradt's dream protocols, to the re-appropriations of Thomas Kling. Two contributions of this section concentrate on a single major representative of postwar poetics, analyzing Heiner Müller's take on the idea of a rupture in civilization. The final section deals with the central question as viewed from elsewhere in Europe, focusing on the cases of France and Yugoslavia. As editors we are conscious that it would have been desirable to extend this section to include other literatures such as that of Italy (and, indeed, literatures beyond Europe); there is, however, some justification for the primary emphasis on Germany in the light of the prompt and specifically Germanophone response to Adorno's dictum.

In the first section of the book, the focus is mainly on actual "survivors" of the period of National Socialist persecution, such as Nelly Sachs, Paul Celan, Ilse Aichinger, Rose Ausländer, and including Ingeborg Bachmann, who always emphasized how fascist rule in Austria, and her father's allegiance to the National Socialist regime, traumatized her in childhood. Elaine Martin's article examines the work of Nelly Sachs, revealing it to be emblematic of the crisis within artistic discourse in the wake of the Holocaust and Adorno's verdict against "poetry after Auschwitz." Martin argues that Adorno did not, in fact, want to negate the possibility of writing after Auschwitz, but to problematize the aestheticization of the Holocaust. Gisela Dischner's contribution discusses how Paul Celan, influenced by the Russian Akemeists and convinced of the failure of human dialogue in times of persecution, still pursues a poetic dialogue of the "message in a bottle" kind, which, although no recipient is specified or guaranteed, is not to be confused with Gottfried Benn's "monologic" poetry. Marton Marko points out how Ingeborg Bachmann's writing engages in a confrontation with the fascist backdrop of Austria and Germany by interrogating the violence of authoritarian symbolic systems. Annette Runte explores Rose Ausländer's mytho-poetic return to the "unthinkable," which, contrary to Paul Celan's approach, is based on a common trust in language and results in "a process of resignification without designification." Ausländer's approach remains, however, embedded in poetic features of "undecidability." In the case of Ilse Aichinger, Marko Pajević identifies a "privatistic" and privative attitude in her poetics, demonstrating her texts' sophisticated "inaccessibility," where any pragmatic or common use of language is disavowed and any easy communication refused, instead provoking and promoting an upheaval of thought — a literary practice that claims to resist the "cultural industry." In the last article of this section Hans-Walter Schmidt-Hannisa looks at Charlotte Beradt's collection of dreams gathered from people living in Nazi Germany and recorded between 1933 and 1939. They are interpreted in this chapter as products of the unconscious, which not only reflect terror, persecution, and propaganda but form part of a system of pressure that penetrates even the privacy of sleep.

In the second section of the book, which deals with the wider discourse on postwar poetics, going beyond the realm of those who are driven by the ethos of the witness, the first two articles deal with Gottfried Benn, whose poems and poetology had a profound impact on German poetry in the second half of the twentieth century. Rüdiger Görner's contribution pays tribute to Benn's influence on contemporary poetic praxis. He notes that, inspired by Benn, a "poetics of thought" emerged in post-1945 German poetry, following a "hermeneutical paradigm" that gained particular prominence in the immediate postwar period and still remains of genuine significance for current discourses on poetry. Stefan Hajduk diagnoses Benn's entire oeuvre as "suffering" from a "theoretical unrest," showing that Benn understands "mental existence" as lifelong crisis conjoined with an obsessive drive to creativity. Benn's theory seems to exist in a state of tension, caught between the traditional idealist focus on creative subjectivity and his own linguistic materialism. Chris Bezzel's essay investigates the phenomenon of Concrete Poetry, seeing it as a form of avant-garde literary production, and not only as the poetic innovation of a younger generation, but also as a radical reaction to the postwar crisis in society and culture. Aniela Knoblich takes a similar position in her analysis of Thomas Kling's poetics and poetry. Casting himself actively as a postwar writer, Kling shows particular interest in the "rupturing" potential of poetry since 1945. Knoblich's examination looks at the ways in which his poetry seeks to realize this potential.

The two articles of this section on Heiner Müller address discontinuity in his poetics from different viewpoints. Renata Plaice pursues traces of an anti-dialectical historical and poetological train of thought in Müller's texts that heralds the new by way of the destruction of history's utopian *telos*. Literature loses here its ability to create a (utopian) "realm of aesthetic appearance," and persists only in acts of transgression, as a fragment of a deconstructed reality. Barry Murnane, on the other hand, highlights traces of poetological and historical continuity in Müller's writings that employ the figure of the specter or revenant as a "poetological and historical trope." Referring to Derrida's theory of spectrality, and drawing on theories of the carnivalesque, he shows how intertextuality and repetition thus become productive poetological models in Müller's writing.

The final part of the collection contains comparative explorations of post-1945 poetics in the European context. Manuel Bragança analyses Jean Paul Sartre's trilogy *Les Chemins de la liberté* (The Roads to Freedom) in order to unveil the intertwining of his philosophical development with his literary style in his postwar shift from "the quest for individual freedom to the necessity of authenticity." Peter Tame compares André Malraux and Oswald Spengler in terms of the "poetics of metamorphosis," and looks at the idea of a repeated, but metamorphosed, "rupture of civilization" after the First and Second World Wars. Finally, Tatjana Petzer discusses the poetics of the Yugoslavian author Danilo Kiš, analyzing the techniques he uses to retrace the catastrophic trauma and violence of the Holocaust in the narrative text. Petzer connects this to Viktor Šklovskij's concept of *ostranenie* (defamiliarization) and Arthur Koestler's principle of "bisociation," demonstrating how human creation in a biological sense, when activated by a catastrophic event, can be transformed into the act of literary creation.

The last study of the collection takes the volume into the sphere of intermediality. Gert Hofmann approaches Claude Lanzmann's monumental film *Shoah* from the perspective of the *Ästhetik der Ohnmacht* (aesthetics of non-power), where the moment of annihilation, of death, is articulated by leaping over it, producing elliptical figures of absence, elision, caesura, and reduplication.

Notes

[1] Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, 6th ed. (Munich: C. H. Beck 2007), 51.

[2] Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1997).

[3] Slogan from a fund-raising poster for Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation, cited in Oren Baruch Stier, *Committed to Memory: Cultural Mediations of the Holocaust* (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 2003), 68.

[4] Another formulation of this idea would be Blanchot's "Concentration camps, annihilation camps, figures where the invisible is forever made visible. All the features of a civilization are revealed or laid bare." Maurice Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster*, trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1995), 81.

[5] "The philosophy of the Enlightenment . . . does not understand its task as an act of destruction but as an act of reconstruction. In its very boldest revolutions, the enlightenment aims only at 'restitution to the whole' (restitutio in integrum)." Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz Koelln and James Pettegrove (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1951), 234. Cassirer, of course, saw this dynamic in the positive sense of a return to the eternal rights of man.

[6] Most influential are: *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution,"* ed. Saul Friedlander (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1992); Dominick

LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996); Berel Lang most rigidly emphasizes the representational problematic and refers in this context explicitly to Adorno in *Holocaust Representations: Art within the Limits of History and Ethics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2000): "Adorno's assertion of the barbarism — not the impossibility, but the barbarism — of writing lyric poetry after Auschwitz . . . is an instance of the application of this representational limit and one that at least in its premises ought to be taken seriously in any judgment or imaginative writing about the 'Final Solution'" (70). In German: Sven Kramer, *Auschwitz im Widerstreit: zur Darstellung der Shoah in Film, Philosophie und Literatur* (Auschwitz in Conflict: On the Representation of the Shoah in Film, Philosophy, and Literature; Wiesbaden: Deutscher Universitätsverlag, 1999); Stefan Krankenhagen, *Auschwitz darstellen: ästhetische Positionen zwischen Adorno, Spielberg und Walser* (Representing Auschwitz: Aesthetic Positions between Adorno, Spielberg, and Walser; Köln: Böhlau, 2001).

[7] *Shoah. Formen der Erinnerung: Geschichte, Philosophie, Literatur, Kunst* (The Shoah. Forms of Remembrance: History, Philosophy, Literature, Art), ed. Nicolas Berg, Jess Jochimsen, Bernd Stiegler (München: Fink, 1996); Ulrich Baer, "*Niemand zeugt für den Zeugen*"*: Erinnerungskultur und historische Verantwortung nach der Shoah* ("No One Bears Witness for the Witnesses": The Culture of Memory and Historical Responsibility after the Shoah) (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000); Eva Hoffman, *After Such Knowledge: Memory, History, and the Legacy of the Holocaust* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

[8] In the post-Adorno phase of the discourse, influenced by the poststructuralist renewal of psychoanalytical thought, the discussion about the trauma characteristic of the Holocaust experience gains particular significance. See, for example, Cathy Caruth, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1995) and *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996); Jeffrey C. Alexander, *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2004); Michael Elm, *Zeugenschaft des Holocaust: zwischen Trauma, Tradierung und Ermittlung* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2007).

[9] See Geoffrey Hartman, "The Book of the Destruction," in *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution"*: "My first thought . . . is that even in the case of the Shoah there are no limits of representation, only limits of conceptualization. Though our technical capacity for depicting the extremest event is in place, it has outstripped the possibility of thinking conceptually . . . about those representations, despite the growth of a literary and cultural criticism that wishes to overcome the intelligibility gap" (320). Subsequent references to this text are quoted using *Hartman* and page numbers.

[10] Theodor W. Adorno, "Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft," in *Gesammelte Schriften in zwanzig Bänden*, vol. 10, bk. 1, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Suhrkamp: Frankfurt am Main, 1977), 30. See also *Lyrik nach Auschwitz? Adorno und die Dichter*, ed. Petra Kiedaisch (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1995), 49. Subsequent references to this work will be quoted in the text using "Kulturkritik" and page numbers.

[11] Theodor W. Adorno, "Cultural Criticism and Society," in *The Adorno Reader*, ed. Brian O'Connor (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 210. Subsequent references to this work will be quoted in the text using "Cultural Criticism" and page numbers.

[12] *Soziologische Forschungen in unserer Zeit: Ein Sammelwerk. Leopold Wiese zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. Karl-Gustav Specht (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1951), 228–41.

[13] Howard Caygill gives a very insightful account of the development of Adorno's thought about poetry "after Auschwitz" in his "Lyric Poetry before Auschwitz," in *Adorno and Literature*, ed. David Cunningham and Nigel Mapp (London, New York: Continuum, 2006), 69–83. See also the editor's introduction in *Lyrik nach Auschwitz? Adorno und die Dichter*, 9–25, which additionally comments on the literary debate that unfolded in Germany in response to Adorno's remarks. Subsequent references to Caygill's essay will be given in the text using Caygill and page numbers.

[14] Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialektik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1966), cited here from *Gesammelte Schriften in zwanzig Bänden*, vol. 6, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1973), 361. Subsequent references to this work will be quoted in the text using *Negative Dialektik* and page numbers; also in *Lyrik nach Auschwitz?*, 61–62.

[15] Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1973), 366–67. Subsequent references to this work will be quoted in the text using *Negative Dialectics* and page numbers.

[16] "Ideologiekritik" is the basic method of Frankfurt School's "critical theory." It aims to explore, and overcome, the limitations of human (cultural) awareness due to the societal and economic conditions of life. It operates as dialectic response to the deterministic approach of bourgeois cultural critique.

[17] Theodor W. Adorno, "Engagement," in *Gesammelte Schriften in zwanzig Bänden*, vol. 11: *Noten zur Literatur*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1974), 422. Subsequently quoted in the text using "Engagement" and page numbers.

[18] Theodor W. Adorno, "Commitment," in *Notes to Literature*, vol. 2, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (New York: Columbia UP, 1992), 88. Subsequently quoted in the text using "Commitment" and page numbers.

[19] "Coldness" is according to Adorno the "Grundprinzip der bürgerlichen Subjektivität, ohne das Auschwitz nicht möglich gewesen wäre" (*Negative Dialektik* 356; basic principle of bourgeois subjectivity, without there would have been no Auschwitz, *Negative Dialectics* 363).

[20] The phrase originates from Geoffrey Hartman (326), but it fits well in the Adorno debate about post-Holocaust culture.

[21] Theodor W. Adorno, "Jene zwanziger Jahre," in *Lyrik nach Auschwitz?*, 50. Subsequently quoted in the text using "Zwanziger Jahre" and page numbers.

[22] Howard Caygill has analyzed this mutuality of conditions of possibility and impossibility of poetry after Auschwitz as follows: "According to Adorno, works of art are by definition objects that exist in breach of their conditions of possibility — their peculiar form of possibility is that they exceed their conditions of possibility. The impossibility of poetry after Auschwitz is its condition of possibility; yet it must establish a form of existence that affirms this impossibility, otherwise art will affirm the very conditions of possibility of a repetition of Auschwitz, transgressing the categorical imperative" (71).

[23] History appears as synthesis of fact and narrative, of *res gestas* and *historia rerum gestarum*. See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Philosophie der Geschichte*, chapter III.b.

[24] Howard Caygill, however, claims that Adorno still follows a strictly dialectic logic, applying "Hegelian concepts of reflection" (Caygill 73).

[25] "Der moderne Begriff der reinen, autonomen Kultur bezeugt den ins Unversöhnliche angewachsenen Antagonismus durch Kompromißlosigkeit gegenüber dem für anderes Seienden sowohl wie durch die Hybris der Ideologie, die sich als an sich Seiendes inthronisiert" ("Kulturkritik" 21; The modern notion of a pure, autonomous culture indicates that the antagonism has become irreconcilable. This is the result both of an uncompromising opposition to being-for-something-else, and of an ideology which in its hubris enthrones itself as being-in-itself, "Cultural Criticism" 203).

[26] See note 8.

[27] "Die Schuld des Lebens, das als pures Faktum bereits anderem Leben den Atem raubt, . . . ist mit dem Leben nicht mehr zu versöhnen" (*Negative Dialektik* 357; The guilt of a life which purely as a fact will strangle other life . . . is irreconcilable with living, *Negative Dialectics* 364)

[28] Sue Vice, *Holocaust Fiction*, New York: Routledge, 2000), 7.

[29] Sarah Kofman, *Smothered Words: Holocaust Studies* (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1998), 7.

[30] Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Ground of the Image* (New York: Fordham UP, 2005), 34. Subsequent references to this work will be quoted in the text using Nancy and page numbers.

[31] Henri Meschonnic, *Les États de la poétique* (Paris: PUF, 1985), 95.

[32] "Krise ist immer," in *Die Zeit*, 23 Sept. 1994.

[33] *Herzzeit: Ingeborg Bachmann — Paul Celan. Der Briefwechsel. Mit den Briefwechseln zwischen Paul Celan und Max Frisch sowie zwischen Ingeborg Bachmann und Gisèle Celan-Lestrange*, ed. B. Badiou, H. Höller, A. Stoll, B. Wiedemann, letter from 21 September 1963 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2008), 240.

[34] *Zivilisationsbruch: Denken nach Auschwitz*, ed. Dan Diner (Fischer: Frankfurt am Main, 1988).

[35] Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989).

[36] Written already during the Second World War and published in 1947.

[37] Alfred Andersch, *Nachwort für Leser*, in *Der Vater eines Mörders — Erzählung* (Zürich: Diogenes, 1982 [1980]), 136.

[38] Translation from Alfred Andersch, *The Father of a Murderer*, trans. Leila Vennewitz (New York: New Directions, 1994), 92.

[39] Selected literary texts in reply to Adorno can be found in *Lyrik nach Auschwitz? Adorno und die Dichter*, ed. Petra Kiedaisch (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1995).

[40] Peter Weiss, *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1975–81).

[41] Maurice Blanchot, *L'Écriture du désastre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1980).

[42] See, for instance, Emmanuel Lévinas, *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence* (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 1974).

[43] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (1995; repr. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998); and *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive* (1998; repr. New York: Zone books, 2000).

Part I: Poetics after Auschwitz

1: The Poetics of Silence: Nelly Sachs

Elaine Martin

> *Hinter den Lippen / Unsagbares wartet.*
>
> [Behind lips / the unsayable awaits]
>
> — Nelly Sachs, "Behind Lips"

> *Unsere Zeit, so schlimm sie ist, muß [. . .] in der Kunst ihren Ausdruck finden, es muß mit allen neuen Mitteln gewagt werden, denn die alten reichen nicht mehr aus.*
>
> [Our epoch, as terrible as it is, must find expression in art. We must dare to express it using all possible new means because the old methods no longer suffice.]
>
> — Nelly Sachs, letter to Gudrun Dänhert, 1948

> *Das Übermaß an realem Leiden duldet kein Vergessen; [. . .] jenes Leiden [. . .] erheischt [. . .] die Fortdauer von Kunst, die es verbietet; kaum wo anders findet das Leiden noch seine eigene Stimme.*
>
> [Extreme suffering tolerates no forgetting. This suffering demands the continued existence of the very art it forbids. It scarcely finds a voice anywhere else.]
>
> — Theodor W. Adorno, *Notes to Literature*

TWO CLEAR DIRECTIVES from two highly significant figures in the field of post-Shoah art: both Nelly Sachs and Theodor W. Adorno recognized the formidable task confronting writers attempting to find new literary tools to express the horror of the Shoah in artistic form. Both were acutely aware of the dilemma facing the post-Shoah artist: the absolute necessity of giving voice to the suffering and the impossibility of doing so adequately. Both recognized the irreparable fissure that the Shoah had left in its wake; art's new task was to find means of presenting the reality of this fissure. In much of her poetry Nelly Sachs engages with this post-Auschwitz dilemma. Sachs questions the medium at her disposal; she mediates on the perils and dilemmas of Holocaust representation, attempting all the while, alongside this meta-poetic discourse, to represent. Before an attempt is made to evaluate the representative value of a selection of Sachs's Holocaust poems, a re-examination of the debate surrounding Adorno's so-called "dictum" regarding "the barbarity of poetry after Auschwitz" provides a productive framework for that evaluation, since the debate raises many of the pivotal concerns that permeate Sachs's work. These include Adorno's deliberations on the dangers involved in attempting to represent the Holocaust in aesthetic form, the inherent profanity of any attempt to "make sense" of Auschwitz, the difficulties that the anonymity of death in the camps poses for the post-Shoah writer, the question of survivor's guilt, and his emphasis on the significance of self-referential writing.

Adorno's statement has exerted a profound influence on the course of postwar literary discourse pertaining to the Shoah, accompanying almost every critical contribution to the debate surrounding its "representability" like an uneasy shadow. The exceptional range of interpretations it has solicited — and indeed continues to solicit — is simply astounding. These have ranged from references to Adorno's "injunction against poetry," to the "nihilism of his prohibition against poetry,"[1] to his "silencing of poetry,"[2] to his supposed pronouncement of the "impossibility of poetry."[3] Others have made reference to Adorno's "bitter and final word of resignation,"[4] to his "desperate rhetorical flourish,"[5] to his "hyperbolic dictum"[6] and, most recently, to his "famous axiom" demanding a "vow of silence."[7] It is somewhat of an anomaly, however, not least considering Adorno's explicit directive above in respect of art's obligation to give voice to the suffering, that the name Theodor Adorno has come to be automatically associated with a general interdiction against post-Shoah art. The ambiguity that characterizes Adorno's original proposition has almost certainly contributed to its frequent misinterpretation. "In spite of its forthrightness," as Howard Caygill points out, "it remained unclear whether it was a judgment of poetry written after Auschwitz, a *Darstellungsverbot* [ban on representation] on poems about Auschwitz, or a condemnation addressed to postwar art and culture in general."[8] This considered, however, it is nonetheless perplexing that the so-called dictum in question — constituting a mere *sub-clause* of the original German paragraph, this paragraph in turn constituting but a minuscule element of Adorno's extensive reflections on the problems of artistic production in a post-Auschwitz world — is quoted time and time again as epitomizing Adorno's stance in relation to Holocaust art. What is especially bewildering is not only its repeated citation without reference to the broader framework of Adorno's thought, but also the fact that it is habitually quite literally extracted from its immediate textual context. When examined within its context, however, and within the general framework of Adorno's extensive deliberations on post-Shoah art, the aporetic tension that Adorno was attempting to communicate comes, unmistakably, to the fore:

> Je totaler die Gesellschaft, um so verdinglichter auch der Geist und um so paradoxer sein Beginnen, der Verdinglichung aus Eigenem sich zu entwinden. Noch das äußerste Bewußtsein vom Verhängnis droht zum Geschwätz zu entarten. Kulturkritik findet sich der letzten Stufe der Dialektik von Kultur und Barbarei gegenüber: nach Auschwitz ein Gedicht zu schreiben, ist barbarisch, und das frißt auch die Erkenntnis an, die ausspricht, warum es unmöglich ward, heute Gedichte zu schreiben.[9]
>
> [The more total society becomes, the greater the reification of the mind and the more paradoxical its attempt to escape reification on its own. Even the most extreme consciousness of doom threatens to degenerate into idle chatter. Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism: to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric, and this even corrodes the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today.]

For Adorno, the barbarity of post-Auschwitz poetry lies in the fact that the poet is prevented from recognizing poetry's inadmissibility by the process of reification, which, having reached such an extreme in the Nazi death camps, is irreversible in the post-Auschwitz world. The artist, that is, fails to recognize the entrenchment of a reification process of which he too forms part. Adorno considers the concept of subjectivity an illusion in the aftermath of Auschwitz, since in the death camps the very concept of individuality — the core of critical consciousness and the condition for self-reflective thought — was rendered void. This in turn renders the notion of artistic subjectivity intrinsically problematic, since figurative discourse, by its very nature subjective, cannot be reconciled with the reality of this reification process. In the Nazi death camps, where "life" had become a kind of death, the process of reification had been reduced to an absolute extreme:

> In den Konzentrationslagern des Faschismus wurde die Demarkationslinie zwischen Leben und Tod getilgt. Sie schufen einen Zwischenzustand, lebende Skelette und Verwesende, Opfer, denen der Selbstmord missrät.[10]
>
> [In the concentration camps the line of demarcation between life and death was erased. The Nazis created an in-between state; living skeletons, decomposing wretches for whom even suicide would go wrong.]

The concrete manifestation of this process was to be seen in the figure of the so-called *Müselmann*, the wretched victim of gradual liquidation. This figure has been most terrifyingly described by Primo Levi: "Their life is short, but their number is endless; they, the *Müselmänner*, the drowned, form the backbone of the camp, an anonymous mass, continually renewed and always identical, of non-men."[11] The obliteration of the very concept of the individual in the death camps and the resulting death of death itself effected, in Adorno's view, immense repercussions for both the survivor and the post-Shoah writer. For the survivor, death can never mean death in the traditional sense of the word, after a hell has been created in which specimens and not human individuals die, where "life" means walking corpses, where the line between life and death has become blurred and where the central aspect of a dignified death — individuality — has itself been obliterated:

> Mit dem Mord an Millionen durch Verwaltung ist der Tod zu etwas geworden, was so noch nie zu fürchten war. . . . Daß in den Lagern nicht mehr das Individuum starb, sondern das Exemplar, muß das Sterben auch derer affizieren, die der Maßnahme entgingen. (*Negative Dialektik* 355)
>
> [With the murder of millions as an administrative measure, death has become something never before feared in this manner. The fact that the specimen, not the individual, died in the death camps, must of necessity also affect the dying of those who escaped the administrative measure.]

For the post-Shoah writer the repercussions were similarly grave: in the death camps the victims had been wholly robbed of freedom and individual choice, and this reality posed an immense practical problem for the writer attempting to portray the Shoah: "Die Undarstellbarkeit des Faschismus . . . rührt daher, daß es in ihm [keine] . . . Freiheit des Subjekts mehr gibt. Vollendete Unfreiheit läßt sich . . . nicht darstellen" (The impossibility of portraying fascism stems from the fact that in it subjective freedom does not exist. Absolute lack of freedom cannot be represented).[12] Failure to reflect this changed reality would result in a breach between the artwork and the subject of representation. Reinhart Baumgart has taken a resolute stance in this regard. Not just people, but individuality, humanity itself, was exterminated in Auschwitz, and as a result: "Wo Massenmord ihr Gegenstand wird, kann sie [die Literatur] sich den Luxus solcher Individuation nicht mehr leisten. Es wird ästhetisch zur Lüge, moralisch zur Heuchelei" (Where mass murder is its subject, literature can no longer afford the luxury of individuation. If it does it becomes an aesthetic lie and morally hypocritical).[13]

Adorno's dictum must be examined within the overall framework of his thoughts on culture in the aftermath of the Shoah. Upon his return to Germany he was astounded by the cultural euphoria among the postwar populace in its desperate attempt to glide over the recent past and reconnect to the supposed "true" soul of pre-National Socialist Germany.

Adorno emphasized instead the need to examine culture's complicity.[14] The fact that the egregious crimes had been committed by one of the world's supposedly most "civilized" nations is a dilemma that haunts Adorno's postwar writings. Max Frisch provides a disturbing description of this anomaly:

> Die blosse dumpfe Bestie, die nichts anderes kann und kennt, ist nicht das Ungeheuerliche; denn sie ist leicht zu erkennen. Ungeheuerlich scheint mir die Bestie mit dem Geist . . . Ungeheuerlich ist das Janusköpfige, die Schizophrenie, wie sie sich . . . innerhalb des deutschen Volkes, . . . offenbart hat. Nicht wenige von uns hielten sich lange an den tröstlichen Irrtum, es handle sich um zweierlei Menschen dieses Volkes, solche, die Mozart spielen, und solche, die Menschen verbrennen. Zu erfahren, daß sich beide in der gleichen Person befinden können, das war die eigentliche Erschütterung.[15]
>
> [The mere hollow beast that knows no better is not what's terrible, since it is easily recognized. To me what's terrible is the beast endowed with intellect . . . the Janus-headed one, the schizophrenia that revealed itself among the German people. For a long time many of us held on to the comforting notion that this nation was made up of two categories of people: those who play Mozart and those who burn people. To discover that both types could be found in the one person — that was the real shock.]

For Adorno the Shoah was not simply a blemish on an otherwise pristine cultural tradition, since this very tradition had proven far from impervious to the murderous National Socialist ideology. Germany's cultural tradition, as demonstrated by the fact of Auschwitz, had manifestly failed, and this fact had grave repercussions for the production of cultural products in a post-Auschwitz world. After all, poems written before Auschwitz, as Caygill comments, did not prevent it, so how could those written in its aftermath be called upon to prevent its repetition? (Caygill 81) The fact that the Holocaust had taken place in the midst of the great German philosophical and artistic traditions had the effect of reducing these traditions, in Adorno's view, to the status of rubbish (*Negative Dialektik* 360). Within this context the original dictum assumes yet another level of meaning; after all, given culture's complete failure, what status could culture — and art, as part and parcel of that same culture — possibly have after Auschwitz? To simply resume pre-Auschwitz artistic forms was seen by Adorno as overlooking the complicity of culture itself: "Den überlieferten ästhetischen Formen, der traditionellen Sprache . . . wohnt keine rechte Kraft mehr inne. Sie alle werden Lügen gestraft von der Katastrophe jener Gesellschaft, aus der sie hervorgingen" (Those aesthetic forms that have been handed