
CONJURING—MARXISM

“The time is out of joint” the formula speaks of time, it also says the time, but it refers singularly to this time, to an “in these times, the time of these times, the time of this world which was for Hamlet an “our time, only a “this world, this age and no other. This predicate says something of time and says it in the present of the verb to be (“The time is out of joint”), but if it says it then, in that other time, in the past perfect, one time in the past, how would it be valid for all times? In other words, how can it come back and present itself again, anew, as the new? How can it be there, again, when its time is no longer there? How can it be valid for all the times in which one attempts to say “our time”? In a predicative proposition that refers to time, and more precisely to the present-form of time, the grammatical present of the verb to be, in the third person indicative, seems to offer a predestined hospitality to the return of any and all spirits, a word that one needs merely to write in the plural in order to extend a welcome there to specters. To be, and especially when one infers from the infinitive “to be

present,” is not a mot d’esprit but le mot de l’esprit, the word of the spirit, it is its first verbal body.

A time of the world, today, in these times, a new “world order” seeks to stabilize a new, necessarily new disturbance [dérèglement] by installing an unprecedented form of hegemony. It is a matter, then, but as always, of a novel form of war. It at least resembles a great “conjunction” against Marxism, a “conjurement” of Marxism: once again, another attempt, a new, always new mobilization to struggle against it, against that which and those whom it represents and will continue to represent (the idea of a new International), and to combat an International by exorcising it.

Very novel and so ancient, the conjunction appears both powerful and, as always, worried, fragile, anxious. The enemy to be conjured away, for those sworn to the conjunction, is, to be sure, called Marxism. But people are now afraid that they will no longer recognize it. They quake at the hypothesis that, by virtue of one of those metamorphoses that Marx talked about so much (“metamorphosis” was one of his favorite words throughout his life), a new “Marxism” will no longer have the face by which one was accustomed to identify it and put it down. Perhaps people are no longer afraid of Marxists, but they are still afraid of certain non-Marxists who have not renounced Marx’s inheritance, crypto-Marxists, pseudo- or para-“Marxists” who would be standing by to change the guard, but behind features or quotation marks that the anxious experts of anti-communism are not trained to unmask.

Besides the reasons just given, we will privilege this figure of conjunction for still other reasons. They have already begun to make their appearance. In its two concepts (conjunction and conjurement, *Verschwörung* and *Beschwörung*), we must take into account another essential meaning: the act that consists in swearing, taking an oath, therefore promising, deciding, taking a responsibility, in short, committing oneself in a performative

fashion—as well as in a more or less secret fashion, and thus more or less public, there where this frontier between the public and the private is constantly being displaced, remaining less assured than ever, as the limit that would permit one to identify the political. And if this important frontier is being displaced, it is because the medium in which it is instituted, namely, the medium of the media themselves (news, the press, telecommunications, techno-tele-discursivity, techno-tele- iconicity, that which in general assures and determines the spacing of public space, the very possibility of the *res publica* and the phenomenality of the political), this element itself is neither living nor dead, present nor absent: it spectralizes. It does not belong to ontology, to the discourse on the Being of beings, or to the essence of life or death. It requires, then, what we call, to save time and space rather than just to make up a word, *hauntology*. We will take this category to be irreducible, and first of all to everything it makes possible: ontology, theology, positive or negative onto-theology.

This dimension of performative interpretation, that is, of an interpretation that transforms the very thing it interprets, will play an indispensable role in what I would like to say this evening. “An interpretation that transforms what it interprets” is a definition of the performative as unorthodox with regard to speech act theory as it is with regard to the 11th Thesis on Feuerbach (“The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it [*Die Philosophen haben die Welt nur verschieden interpretiert; es kömmt aber drauf an, sie zu verändern*]”).

If I take the floor at the opening of such an impressive, ambitious, necessary or risky, others might say historic colloquium; if, after hesitating for a long time and despite the obvious limits of my competence, I nevertheless accepted the invitation with which Bernd Magnus has honored me, it is not in the first place in order to propose a scholarly, philosophical

discourse. It is first of all so as not to flee from a responsibility. More precisely, it is in order to submit for your discussion several hypotheses on the nature of such a responsibility. What is ours? In what way is it historical? And what does it have to do with so many specters?

No one, it seems to me, can contest the fact that a dogmatics is attempting to install its worldwide hegemony in paradoxical and suspect conditions. There is today in the world a dominant discourse, or rather one that is on the way to becoming dominant, on the subject of Marx's work and thought, on the subject of Marxism (which is perhaps not the same thing), on the subject of the socialist International and the universal revolution, on the subject of the more or less slow destruction of the revolutionary model in its Marxist inspiration, on the subject of the rapid, precipitous, recent collapse of societies that attempted to put it into effect at least in what we will call for the moment, citing once again the *Manifesto*, “old Europe, and so forth. This dominating discourse often has the manic, jubilatory, and incantatory form that Freud assigned to the so-called triumphant phase of mourning work. The incantation repeats and ritualizes itself, it holds forth and holds to formulas, like any animistic magic. To the rhythm of a cadenced march, it proclaims: Marx is dead, communism is dead, very dead, and along with it its hopes, its discourse, its theories, and its practices. It says: long live capitalism, long live the market, here's to the survival of economic and political liberalism!

If this hegemony is attempting to install its dogmatic orchestration in suspect and paradoxical conditions, it is first of all because this triumphant conjuration is striving in truth to disavow, and therefore to hide from, the fact that never, never in history, has the horizon of the thing whose survival is being celebrated (namely, all the old models of the capitalist and liberal world) been as dark, threatening, and threatened. And never more “historic,” by which we mean inscribed in an absolutely

novel moment of a process that is nonetheless subject to a law of iterability.

What are we doing by speaking, with these first words, of a dominant discourse and of an incontestable self-evidence regarding it?

At least two things. We are obviously having recourse to received concepts:

(1) that of hegemony ("dominant discourse") and (2) that of testimony ("incontestable self-evidence"). We will have to account for these and justify them.

1. We have implicitly referred (particularly so as to speak of what no one, I presume, would dream of contesting) to that which everywhere organizes and commands public manifestation or testimony in the public space. In question here is a set constituted by three indissociable places or apparatuses of our culture:

a. There is first of all the culture called more or less properly political (the official discourses of parties and politicians in power in the world, virtually everywhere Western models prevail, the speech or the rhetoric of what in France is called the "classe politique").

b. There is also what is rather confusedly qualified as mass-media culture: "communications" and interpretations, selective and hierarchized production of "information" through channels whose power has grown in an absolutely unheard-of fashion at a rhythm that coincides precisely, no doubt not fortuitously, with that of the fall of regimes on the Marxist model, a fall to which it contributed mightily but—and this is not the least important point—in forms and modes of appropriation, and at a speed that also affect in an essential fashion the very concept of public space in so-called liberal democracies; and at the center of this colloquium the question of media tele-technology, economy, and power, in their irreducibly spectral dimension, should cut across all our discussions. What can one do with the Marxist schemas in order to deal with this today—theoretically and practically—and

thus in order to change it? To put it in a word that would sum up the position I am going to defend (and what I am putting forward here, pardon me for saying this again, corresponds more to a position-taking than to the work such a position calls for, presupposes, or prefigures), these schemas appear both indispensable and insufficient in their present form. Marx is one of the rare thinkers of the past to have taken seriously, at least in its principle, the originary indissociability of technics and language, and thus of tele-technics (for every language is a tele-technics). But it is not at all to denigrate him, it is even to speak in what we will still dare to call the spirit of Marx, it is almost to quote word for word his own predictions, it is to register [prendre acte] and to confirm to say: as regards tele-technics, and thus also as regards science, he could not accede to the experience and to the anticipations on this subject that are ours today.

c. There is finally scholarly or academic culture, notably that of historians, sociologists and politologists, theoreticians of literature, anthropologists, philosophers, in particular political philosophers, whose discourse is itself relayed by the academic and commercial press, but also by the media in general. For no one will have failed to notice that the three places, forms, and powers of culture that I have just identified (the expressly political discourse of the "political class, media discourse, and intellectual, scholarly, or academic discourse) are more than ever welded together by the same apparatuses or by ones that are indissociable from them. These apparatuses are doubtless complex, differential, conflictual, and overdetermined. But whatever may be the conflicts, inequalities, or overdeterminations among them, they communicate and cooperate at every moment toward producing the greatest force with which to assure the hegemony or the imperialism in question. They do so thanks to the mediation of what is called precisely the media in the broadest, most mobile, and, considering the acceleration of technical advances, most technologically invasive sense of this term. As it has never

done before, either to such a degree or in these forms, the politico-economic hegemony, like the intellectual or discursive domination, passes by way of techno-mediatic power—that is, by a power that at the same time, in a differentiated and contradictory fashion, conditions and endangers any democracy. Now, this power, this differentiated set of powers cannot be analyzed or potentially combatted, supported here, attacked there, without taking into account so many spectral effects, the new speed of apparition (we understand this word in its ghostly sense) of the simulacrum, the synthetic or prosthetic image, and the virtual event, cyberspace and surveillance, the control, appropriations, and speculations that today deploy unheard-of powers. Have Marx and his heirs helped us to think and to treat this phenomenon? If we say that the answer to this question is at once *yes* and *no*, *yes* in one respect, *no* in another, and that one must filter, select, differentiate, restructure the questions, it is only in order to announce, in too preliminary a fashion, the tone and the general form of our conclusions: namely, that one must assume the inheritance of Marxism, assume its most “living” part, which is to say, paradoxically, that which continues to put back on the drawing board the question of life, spirit, or the spectral, of life-death beyond the opposition between life and death. This inheritance must be reaffirmed by transforming it as radically as will be necessary. Such a reaffirmation would be both faithful to something that resonates in Marx’s appeal—let us say once again in the spirit of his injunction—and in conformity with the concept of inheritance in general. Inheritance is never a *given*, it is always a task. It remains before us just as unquestionably as we are heirs of Marxism, even before wanting or refusing to be, and, like all inheritors, we are in mourning. In mourning in particular for what is called Marxism. *To be*, this word in which we earlier saw the word of the spirit, means, for the same reason, to inherit. All the questions on the subject of being or of what is to be (or not to be) are questions of inheritance. There is no

backward-looking fervor in this reminder, no traditionalist flavor. Reaction, reactionary, or reactive are but interpretations of the structure of inheritance. That we are heirs does not mean that we have or that we receive this or that, some inheritance that enriches us one day with this or that, but that the being of what we are is first of all inheritance, whether we like it or know it or not. And that, as Hölderlin said so well, we can only bear witness to it. To bear witness would be to bear witness to what we are insofar as we inherit, and that—here is the circle, here is the chance, or the finitude—we inherit the very thing that allows us to bear witness to it. As for Hölderlin, he calls this language, “the most dangerous of goods, given to man “so that he bears witness to having inherited/what he is [damit er zeuge, was er seigerbt zu haben].”¹

2. When we advance at least the hypothesis that the dogma on the subject of the end of Marxism and of Marxist societies is today, tendentially, a “dominant discourse, we are still speaking, of course, in the Marxist code. We must not deny or dissimulate the problematic character of this gesture. Those who would accuse it of being circular or begging the question would not be altogether wrong. At least provisionally, we are placing our trust, in fact, in this form of critical analysis we have inherited from Marxism: In a given situation, provided that it is determinable and determined as being that of a socio-political antagonism, a hegemonic force always seems to be represented by a dominant rhetoric and ideology, whatever may be the conflicts between forces, the principal contradiction or the secondary contradictions, the over-determinations and the relays that may later complicate this schema—and therefore lead us to be suspicious of the simple opposition of dominant and dominated, or even of the final determination of the forces in conflict, or even, more radically, of the idea that force is always stronger than weakness (Nietzsche and Benjamin have encouraged us to have doubts on this score, each in his own way, and especially

the latter when he associated “historical materialism” with the inheritance, precisely, of some “weak messianic force”²). Critical inheritance: one may thus, for example, speak of a dominant discourse or of dominant representations and ideas, and refer in this way to a hierarchized and conflictual field without necessarily subscribing to the concept of social class by means of which Marx so often determined, particularly in *The German Ideology*, the forces that are fighting for control of the hegemony. And even quite simply of the State. When, for example, in evoking the history of ideas, the *Manifesto* declares that the “ruling ideas [die herrschenden Ideen] of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class [der herrschenden Klasse]” (p. 26), it is not out of the question for a selective critique to filter the inheritance of this utterance so as to keep this rather than that. One may continue to speak of domination in a field of forces not only while suspending the reference to this ultimate support that would be the identity and the self-identity of a social class, but even while suspending the credit extended to what Marx calls the idea, the determination of the superstructure as idea, ideal or ideological representation, indeed even the discursive form of this representation. All the more so since the concept of idea implies this irreducible genesis of the spectral that we are planning to re-examine here.

But let us retain provisionally, for this very preliminary moment of our introduction, the schema of the dominant discourse. If such a discourse tends today to be getting the upper hand on the new stage of geopolitics (in the rhetoric of the politician, in the consensus of the media, over the most visible and resonant part of intellectual or academic space), it is the one that diagnoses, in all sorts of tones and with an unshakeable assurance, not only the end of societies constructed on the Marxist model but the end of the whole Marxist tradition, even of the reference to the works of Marx, not to say the end of history, period. All of this would have finally come to term in the euphoria of liberal democracy and of the market economy. This triumphant

discourse seems relatively homogeneous, most often dogmatic, sometimes politically equivocal and, like dogmatisms, like all conjurations, secretly worried and manifestly worrisome. The protocol of our conference evokes the example of the book by Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*.³ Is not what we have here a new gospel, the noisiest, the most mediatized [médiatique], the most "successful" one on the subject of the death of Marxism as the end of history? This work frequently resembles, it is true, the disconcerting and tardy by-product of a "footnote": *nota bene* for a certain Kojève who deserved better. Yet the book is not as bad or as naive as one might be led to think by the frenzied exploitation that exhibits it as the finest ideo-logical showcase of victorious capitalism in a liberal democracy which has finally arrived at the plenitude of its ideal, if not of its reality. In fact, although it remains essentially, in the tradition of Leo Strauss relayed by Allan Bloom, the grammar school exercise of a young, industrious, but come-lately reader of Kojève (and a few others), one must recognize that here or there this book goes beyond nuance and is sometimes suspensive to the point of indecision. To the questions elaborated in its own fashion, it on occasion ingeniously adds, so as to cover all the bases, what it calls "two broad responses, from the Left and the Right, respectively" (p. xxii). It would thus merit a very close analysis. This evening we will have to limit ourselves to what concerns the general structure of a thesis indispensable, precisely in the very structure of its logic, in the formulation of its formula, to the anti-Marxist conjuration.

It is by design, of course, that we called it a moment ago a "gospel."

Why a gospel? Why would the formula here be neo-testamentary? This book claims to bring a "positive response" to a question whose formation and formulation are never interrogated in themselves. It is the question of whether a "coherent and directional History of mankind" will eventually lead "the greater part of humanity," as Fukuyama calmly, enigmatically,

and in a fashion at once modest and impudent calls it, toward "liberal democracy" (p. xii). Of course, while answering "yes" to this question in this form, Fukuyama admits, on the same page, to an awareness of everything that allows one to have one's doubts: the two world wars, the horrors of totalitarianism—Nazi, fascist, Stalinist—the massacres of Pol Pot, and so forth. One can assume that he would have agreed to extend this disastrous list. He does not do so, one wonders why and whether this limitation is contingent or insignificant. But according to a schema that organizes the argumentation of this strange plea from one end to the other, all these cataclysms (terror, oppression, repression, extermination, genocide, and so on), these "events" or these "facts" would belong to empiricity, to the "empirical flow of events in the second half of the century" (p. 70), they would remain "empirical" phenomena accredited by "empirical evidence" (p. xx). Their accumulation would in no way refute the ideal orientation of the greater part of humanity toward liberal democracy. As such, as *telos* of a progress, this orientation would have the form of an ideal finality. Everything that appears to contradict it would belong to historical empiricity, however massive and catastrophic and global and multiple and recurrent it might be. Even if one admitted the simplicity of this summary distinction between empirical reality and ideal finality, one would still not know how this absolute orientation, this anhistoric *telos* of history gives rise, very precisely in our day, in these days, in our time, to an event which Fukuyama speaks of as "good news" and that he dates very explicitly from "The most remarkable evolution of the last quarter of the twentieth century" (p. xiii). To be sure, he recognizes that what he describes as the collapse of the worldwide dictatorships of the right or the left has not always "given way to stable liberal democracies" (*ibid.*). But he believes he can assert that, as of this date, and this is the good news, a dated news, "liberal democracy remains the only coherent political aspiration that spans different regions

and cultures around the globe. This "move toward political freedom around the globe, according to Fukuyama, would have been everywhere accompanied, "sometimes followed, sometimes preceded," he writes, by "a liberal revolution in economic thought." The alliance of liberal democracy and of the "free market," there's the "good news" of this last quarter century. This evangelistic figure is remarkably insistent. Since it prevails or claims to prevail on a geopolitical scale, it deserves to be at least underscored.

(We are thus going to underscore it, as well as the figure of the Promised Land, which is at once close to it and dissociated from it for two reasons that we can only indicate here in parentheses. On the one hand, these biblical figures play a role that seems to exceed the simple rhetorical cliché they appear to be. On the other hand, they demand attention all the more so in that, in a fashion that is not fortuitous, the greatest symptomatic or metonymic concentration of what remains irreducible in the worldwide conjuncture in which the question of "whither Marxism" is inscribed today has its place, its figure, or the figure of its place in the Middle East: three other messianic eschatologies mobilize there all the forces of the world and the whole "world order" in the ruthless war they are waging against each other, directly or indirectly; they mobilize simultaneously, in order to put them to work or to the test, the old concepts of State and nation-State, of international law, of tele-techno-medio-economic and scientifico-military forces, in other words, the most archaic and the most modern spectral forces. One would have to analyze, in the limitless breadth of their worldwide historical stakes, since the end of the Second World War, in particular since the founding of the State of Israel, the violence that preceded, constituted, accompanied, and followed it on every side, at the same time in conformity with and in disregard of an international law that therefore appears today to be at the same time more contradictory, imperfect, and thus more perfectible

and necessary than ever. Such an analysis can no longer avoid granting a determining role to this war of messianic eschatologies in what we will sum up with an ellipsis in the expression "appropriation of Jerusalem." The war for the "appropriation of Jerusalem" is today the world war. It is happening everywhere, it is the world, it is today the singular figure of its being "out of joint." Now, still in too elliptical a fashion, let us say that in order to determine in its radical premises Middle-Eastern violence as an unleashing of messianic eschatologies and as infinite combinatory possibilities of holy alliances [a word that must be put in the plural to account for what makes the triangle of the three religions said to be religions of the Book turn in these alliances], Marxism remains at once indispensable and structurally insufficient: it is still necessary but provided it be transformed and adapted to new conditions and to a new thinking of the ideological, provided it be made to analyze the new articulation of techno-economic causalities and of religious ghosts, the dependent condition of the juridical at the service of socio-economic powers or States that are themselves never totally independent with regard to capital [but there is no longer, there never was just capital, nor capitalism in the singular, but capitalisms plural—whether State or private, real or symbolic, always linked to spectral forces—or rather capitalizations whose antagonisms are irreducible].

This transformation and this opening up of Marxism are in conformity with what we were calling a moment ago the spirit of Marxism. If analysis of the Marxist type remains, then, indispensable, it appears to be radically insufficient there where the Marxist ontology grounding the project of Marxist science or critique also itself carries with it and must carry with it, necessarily, despite so many modern or post-modern denials, a messianic eschatology. On this score at least, paradoxically and despite the fact that it necessarily participates in them, it cannot be simply classified among the ideologems or theologems whose critique or

demystification it calls for. In saying that, we will not claim that this messianic eschatology common both to the religions it criticizes and to the Marxist critique must be simply deconstructed. While it is common to both of them, with the exception of the content [but none of them can accept, of course, this *epokhē* of the content, whereas we hold it here to be essential to the messianic in general, as thinking of the other and of the event to come], is also the case that its formal structure of promise exceeds them or precedes them. Well, what remains irreducible to any deconstruction, what remains as undeconstructible as the possibility itself of deconstruction is, perhaps, a certain experience of the emancipatory promise; it is perhaps even the formality of a structural messianism, a messianism without religion, even a messianic without messianism, an idea of justice—which we distinguish from law or right and even from human rights—and an idea of democracy—which we distinguish from its current concept and from its determined predicates today [permit me to refer here to “Force of Law” and *The Other Heading*]. But this is perhaps what must now be thought and thought otherwise in order to ask oneself where Marxism is going, which is also to say, where Marxism is leading and where is it to be led [*où conduire le Marxisme*]: where to lead it by interpreting it, which cannot happen without transformation, and not where can it lead us such as it is or such as it will have been.

We return to the *neo-evangelistic* rhetoric of Fukuyama: “we have become so accustomed by now to expect that the future will contain bad news with respect to the health and security of decent, democratic political practices that we have problems recognizing *good news* when it comes. And yet, the *good news* has come” [p.xv]. The *neo-evangelistic* insistence is significant for more reasons than one. A little further on, this Christian figure crosses the Jewish prefiguration of the Promised Land. But in order to take its distance from it right away. If the development of modern physics is not for nothing in the advent of the good

news, notably, Fukuyama tells us, inasmuch as it is linked to a technology that permits “the limitless accumulation of wealth” and “an increasing homogenization of all human societies,” it is “in the first place” because this “technology confers decisive military advantages on those countries that possess it” [p. xiv]. Now, although it is essential and indispensable to the advent or the “good news” proclaimed by Fukuyama, this physico-techno-military given only leads us as far, he says, as the gates of this “Promised Land”: “But while modern natural science guides us to the gates of the Promised Land of liberal democracy, it does not deliver us to the Promised Land itself, for there is no economically necessary reason why advanced industrialization should produce political liberty” [p. xv].

We must be careful not to overinterpret, but let us take seriously the insistence of this rhetoric. What does it seem to be saying to us? That the language of the Promised Land, and thus of the land promised but refused [to Moses] is, at least by itself, better fitted to the materialism of physics and economism. If one takes into account the fact that Fukuyama associates a certain Jewish discourse of the Promised Land with the powerlessness of economist materialism or of the rationalism of natural science; and if one takes into account that elsewhere he treats as an almost negligible exception the fact that what he with equanimity calls “the Islamic world” does not enter into the “general consensus” that, he says, seems to be taking shape around “liberal democracy” [p. 211], one can form at least an hypothesis about which angle Fukuyama chooses to privilege in the eschatological triangle. The model of the liberal State to which he explicitly lays claim is not only that of Hegel, the Hegel of the struggle for recognition, it is that of a Hegel who privileges the “Christian vision.” If “the existence of the State is the coming of God into the world, as one reads in *The Philosophy of Right* invoked by Fukuyama, this coming has the sense of a Christian event. The French Revolution would have been “the event that took the

Christian vision of a free and equal society, and implanted it here on earth" [p. 199 and *passim*]. This end of History is essentially a Christian eschatology. It is consonant with the current discourse of the Pope on the European community: destined to become a Christian State or super-State, this community would still belong therefore to some Holy Alliance. It is thus not unconnected with the alliance spoken of explicitly in the *Manifesto* which also named the Pope at that point. After having distinguished between the Anglo-Saxon model of the liberal State [Hobbes, Locke] and Hegelian "liberalism" that pursues first of all "rational recognition," Fukuyama distinguishes between two gestures by Kojève. When the latter describes the perfection of the universal and homogeneous State, he is depending too much on Locke and on an Anglo-Saxon model criticized by Hegel. On the other hand, he is right to affirm that postwar America or the European Community constitutes "the embodiment of Hegel's state of universal recognition" [p. 203].

In other words, consequently and in all good logic, a Christian State. A Holy Alliance.

We will not oppose some vulgarly "empirical" evidence to these predictive and predictable predications. We will come upon the problem of empiricity again later. If one considers, today, in Europe, the date of these declarations, those of Kojève and those of Fukuyama, one has difficulty pleading attenuating circumstances for a book published and widely translated in 1992. And let us specify once again that it is in the name of a Christian interpretation of the struggle for recognition [p. 199], and thus of the exemplary European Community, that the author of *The End of History and the Last Man* [Christian man] criticizes Marx and proposes to correct his materialist economism, to "complete it": the latter would be lacking that Hegelian-Christian "pillar" of recognition or that "thymotic" element of the soul. The universal and homogeneous State, the State of the end of History, should rest on "the twin pillars of economics and recognition"

[p. 204]. As at the time of the *Manifesto*, a European alliance is formed which is haunted by what it excludes, combats, or represses. End of this parenthesis. The import—past or future—of this neo-evangelism will be spelled out later.)

The economist materialism or the materialism of modern physics should then, in this logic, yield the stage to the spiritualist language of the "good news." Fukuyama thus deems it necessary to have recourse to what he calls "Hegel's non-materialist account of History, based on the 'struggle for recognition'" In truth, the whole book is inscribed in the unexamined axiomatics of this simplified—and highly Christianized—outline of the master-slave dialectic in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The dialectic of desire and of consciousness is nevertheless presented, with an imperturbable confidence, as the continuation of a Platonic theory of thymos, relayed all the way up to Hegel, and beyond him, by a tradition that would pass by way of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, and so on, despite so many differences and disagreements among all these political thinkers. The Anglo-Saxon conception of modern liberalism would also be exemplary in this regard. It would in fact have sought to exclude all this megalothymia (characteristic of Stalin, Hitler, and Saddam Hussein [p. 190]), even if "the desire for recognition remains all around us in the form of isothymia. Any contradiction would be cancelled once a State has succeeded in conjugating what Fukuyama calls the "twin pillars, that of economic rationality and that of the thymos or the desire for recognition. This would be the case, and the thing would have already happened, according to Kojève at least as he is interpreted—and seconded—by Fukuyama. The latter credits Kojève with having "identified an important truth when he asserted that postwar America or the members of the European Community constituted the embodiment of Hegel's state of universal recognition" (p. 203).

Let us underscore the words "important truth. They give a

pretty good translation of the sophisticated naïveté or the crude sophism that impels the movement of such a book and sets its tone. They also deprive it of any credibility. For Fukuyama wants to find grist for the mill of his argument everywhere: in the "good news" as empirical and supposedly observable event (this is the "important truth" of the "embodiment of Hegel's state of universal recognition") and/or in the "good news" as simple sign of an as yet inaccessible regulating ideal that cannot be measured against any historical event and especially against any so-called "empirical" failure.

On the one hand, the gospel of politico-economic liberalism needs the event of the good news that consists in what has putatively actually happened (what has happened in this last quarter of the century, in particular, the supposed death of Marxism and the supposed realization of the State of liberal democracy). It cannot do without the recourse to the event; however since, on the other hand, actual history and so many other realities that have an empirical appearance contradict this advent of the perfect liberal democracy, one must at the same time pose this perfection as simply a regulating and trans-historical ideal. Depending on how it works to his advantage and serves his thesis, Fukuyama defines liberal democracy here as an actual reality and there as a simple ideal. The event is now the realization, now the heralding of the realization. Even as we take seriously the idea that a heralding sign or a promise constitutes an irreducible event, we must nevertheless guard against confusing these two types of event. A thinking of the event is no doubt what is most lacking from such a discourse.

If we have been insisting so much since the beginning on the logic of the ghost, it is because it points toward a thinking of the event that necessarily exceeds a binary or dialectical logic, the logic that distinguishes or opposes effectivity or actuality (either present, empirical, living—or not) and ideality (regulating or absolute non-presence). This logic of effectivity or actuality

seems to be of a limited pertinence. The limit, to be sure, is not new; it has always been leaving its mark on anti-Marxist idealism as well as on "dialectical materialism." But it seems to be demonstrated today better than ever by the fantastic, ghostly, "synthetic," "prosthetic," virtual happenings in the scientific domain and therefore the domain of the techno-media and therefore the public or political domain. It is also made more manifest by what inscribes the speed of a virtuality irreducible to the opposition of the act and the potential in the space of the event, in the event-ness of the event.

Having neglected to re-elaborate a thinking of the event, Fukuyama oscillates confusedly between two irreconcilable discourses. Even though he believes in its effective realization (that is the "important truth"), Fukuyama does not hesitate all the same to oppose the ideality of this liberal democratic ideal to all the evidence that bears massive witness to the fact that neither the United States nor the European Community has attained the perfection of the universal State or of liberal democracy, nor have they even come close. (And how can one overlook, moreover, the economic war that is raging today both between these two blocs and within the European Community? How can one minimize the conflicts of the GATT treaty and all that it represents, which the complex strategies of protectionism recall every day, not to mention the economic war with Japan and all the contradictions at work within the trade between the wealthy countries and the rest of the world, the phenomena of pauperization and the ferocity of the "foreign debt," the effects of what the *Manifesto* also called "the epidemic of overproduction" and the "state of momentary barbarism" [p. 13] it can induce in so-called civilized societies, and so forth? In order to analyze these wars and the logic of these antagonisms, a problematics coming from the Marxian tradition will be indispensable for a long time yet. For a long time and why not forever? We indeed say a problematics from the Marxian tradition, in its opening and the

constant transformation that should have and will have to characterize it, and not from the Marxist dogmatics linked to the apparatuses of orthodoxy.)

Since he cannot deny, without inviting ridicule, all the violence, all the injustices, all the tyrannical and dictatorial manifestations of what he calls "megalothymia" (excess or asymmetry in the desire for recognition), since he must concede that they are raging in the capitalist world of a very imperfect liberal democracy, since these "facts" contradict the "identification" that he had nevertheless qualified as "an important truth, Fukuyama does not hesitate to slip one discourse in under the other. For the announcement of the *de facto* "good news, for its effective, phenomenal, historical, and empirically observable event, he substitutes the announcement of an *ideal* good news, the teleo-eschatological good news, which is inadequate to any empiricity. Once obliged to de-historicize it in this way, he recognizes in this good news the language of a "Nature" (this is his word and one of the major concepts of the book) and identifies it according to "criteria" which he qualifies as "trans-historical." In the face of so many disasters, in the face of all the *de facto* failures to establish liberal democracy, Fukuyama reminds us that he is speaking only on the "level of principles." He would limit himself, he says, to defining only the *ideal* of liberal democracy. Recalling his first article from 1989, "The End of History?" he writes in fact: "While some present-day countries might fail to achieve stable liberal democracy, and others might lapse back into other, more primitive forms of rule like theocracy or military dictatorship, the *ideal* of liberal democracy could not be improved on" (p. xi; the italics are Fukuyama's). It would be too easy to show that, measured by the failure to establish liberal democracy, the gap between fact and ideal essence does not show up only in these so-called primitive forms of government, theocracy, and military dictatorship (supposing even, *concesso non dato*, that all theocracy is foreign to the

ideal State of liberal democracy, or heterogeneous to its very concept). But this failure and this gap also characterize, *a priori* and by definition, all democracies, including the oldest and most stable of so-called Western democracies. At stake here is the very concept of democracy as concept of a promise that can only arise in such a *diastema* (failure, inadequation, disjunction, disadjustment, being "out of joint"). That is why we always propose to speak of a democracy to come, not of a future democracy in the future present, not even of a regulating idea, in the Kantian sense, or of a utopia—at least to the extent that their inaccessibility would still retain the temporal form of a *future present*, of a *future modality of the living present*.

[Even beyond the regulating idea in its classic form, the idea, if that is still what it is, of democracy to come, its "idea" as event of a pledged injunction that orders one to summon the very thing that will never present itself in the form of full presence, is the opening of this gap between an infinite promise (always untenable at least for the reason that it calls for the infinite respect of the singularity and infinite alterity of the other as much as for the respect of the countable, calculable, subjectal equality between anonymous singularities) and the determined, necessary, but also necessarily inadequate forms of what has to be measured against this promise. To this extent, the effectivity or actuality of the democratic promise, like that of the communist promise, will always keep within it, and it must do so, this absolutely undetermined mesianic hope at its heart, this eschatological relation to the to-come of an event and of a singularity, of an alterity that cannot be anticipated. Awaiting without horizon of the wait, awaiting what one does not expect yet or any longer, hospitality without reserve, welcoming salutation accorded in advance to the absolute surprise of the *arrivant*⁴ from whom or from which one will not ask anything in return and who or which will not be asked to commit to the domestic contracts of any

welcoming power (family, State, nation, territory, native soil or blood, language, culture in general, even humanity), just opening which renounces any right to property, any right in general, messianic opening to what is coming, that is, to the event that cannot be awaited as such, or recognized in advance therefore, to the event as the foreigner itself, to her or to him for whom one must leave an empty place, always, in memory of the hope—and this is the very place of spectrality. It would be easy, too easy, to show that such a hospitality without reserve, which is nevertheless the condition of the event and thus of history (nothing and no one would arrive otherwise, a hypothesis that one can never exclude, of course), is the impossible itself, and that this condition of possibility of the event is also its condition of impossibility, like this strange concept of messianism without content, of the messianic without messianism, that guides us here like the blind. But it would be just as easy to show that without this experience of the impossible, one might as well give up on both justice and the event. That would be still more just or more honest. One might as well give up also on whatever good conscience one still claims to preserve. One might as well confess the economic calculation and declare all the checkpoints that ethics, hospitality, or the various messianisms would still install at the borders of the event in order to screen the arrivant.]

Let us return to Fukuyama. What is more original than indisputable in his logic is the fact that this ideal is not posed as an infinite regulating ideal and the pole of an endless task or approximation, although often, and this is yet another incoherency, he declares that this “current trend toward liberalism, despite its tendency to “recede, “promises to be victorious in the long run” (p. 212; emphasis added). Fukuyama considers this ideal also as an event. Because it would have already happened, because the ideal would have presented itself in its form as ideal, this event would have already marked the end of a finite history.

This ideal is at once infinite and finite: infinite, since it is distinguished from any determined empirical reality or remains a tendency “in the long run, it is nevertheless finite since it has happened, already, as ideal, and therefore history is over. That is why this book also defines itself as Hegelian and Marxist, like a kind of exercise in the discipline of these two masters of the end of history, Hegel and Marx. After having called to the witness stand and heard the testimony of the two masters in his own fashion (which, it must be said, is rather hurried), Fukuyama has made his choice. He writes:

Both Hegel and Marx believed that the evolution of human societies was not open-ended, but would end when mankind had achieved a form of society that satisfied its deepest and most fundamental longings. Both thinkers thus posited an “end of history”: for Hegel this was the liberal state, while for Marx it was a communist society. (P.xii)

So the disciple has chosen between the two masters and he chooses the thinker of the liberal State. In a Christian tradition, as we have already seen,⁵ but also, whether or not it seems consistent with this essential Christianity, in a naturalist tradition.

Here one would have to analyze minutely this or that page, but we must be satisfied with just referring to them, not, however, without having quoted at least a few sentences. For example these:

In the end, it would appear impossible to talk about “history,” much less a “Universal History,” without reference to a permanent, trans-historical standard, i.e., without reference to nature. For “history” is not a given, not merely a catalogue of everything that happened in the past, but a deliberate effort of abstraction in which we separate out important from unimportant events. (P. 138)

Solid and durable tradition of a logic according to which naturalism and teleologism are founded one upon the other. Fukuyama rejects what he serenely considers to be "the 'empirical' evidence presented to us by the contemporary world."⁶ "We must instead, he continues, "raise directly and explicitly the nature of the trans-historical standards by which we evaluate the goodness or badness of any regime or social system" (p. 139). The measure of all things has a single name: the trans-historical and natural criterion against which Fukuyama ultimately proposes to measure everything is called "man as man." It is a little as if he had never come across any worrisome question about such a Man, or read either a certain Marx or the Stirner whom the latter goes after in *The German Ideology* regarding the properly ghostly abstraction of such a concept of man, not to mention Nietzsche (constantly caricatured and reduced to a few miserable stereotypes: for example, the "relativist"! and not the thinker of a "last man" whom he so often named as such), not to mention Freud (evoked only once as having put "human dignity" in doubt by reducing man to "deeply hidden sexual urges" [p. 297]), not to mention Husserl—simply passed over in silence—or Heidegger (who would be but the "follower" of the relativist Nietzsche [p. 333]), not to mention a few thinkers who are even closer to us, and first of all, and especially, not to mention a certain Hegel, about whom the least one can say is that he is not a philosopher of natural and trans-historical man. If the reference to Hegel dominates this book, that reference is never bothered by this obvious fact. To define this supposedly natural entity, this man as Man whom he talks about so blithely, Fukuyama claims to come back to what he calls "the first man," that is, to "natural man. On the concept of nature, on the genealogy of this concept, Fukuyama moreover seems unforthcoming (almost as much as Marx, one must add, even if the critical treatment to which the latter subjects the abstract concepts of Nature and Man as man remains a rich and fertile one). And when, so as to speak of this

"natural man," Fukuyama claims to have recourse to an "entirely non-materialist" dialectic issued by what he calls "a new, synthetic philosopher named Hegel-Kojève," the artifact he proposes to us seems so inconsistent and insubstantial that we will give up devoting too much time to it this evening. Beyond its philosophical naïveté, it must no doubt be treated precisely as an artifact, a symptomatic montage that responds to a demand, in order to reassure it; one could almost say it responds on demand. It doubtless owes its success to this soothing confusion and to this opportunist logic of the "good news" which the confusion opportunely smuggles in as contraband.

In spite of all that, it would be, it seems, neither just nor even interesting to accuse Fukuyama of the fate reserved for his book. One would do better to ask oneself why this book, with the "good news" it claims to bring, has become such a media gadget, and why it is all the rage in the ideological supermarkets of a worried West where it is bought up just as, at the first rumors of war, people buy sugar and oil, when there is any left.⁷ Why this amplification by the media? And how is it that a discourse of this type is sought out by those who celebrate the triumph of liberal capitalism and its predestined alliance with liberal democracy only in order to hide, and first of all from themselves, the fact that this triumph has never been so critical, fragile, threatened, even in certain regards catastrophic, and in sum bereaved? Bereaved by what the specter of Marx represents still today and which it would be a matter of conjuring away one more time in a jubilatory and manic fashion (a necessary phase of unsuccessful mourning work, according to Freud), but also virtually bereaved for itself. By hiding from themselves all these failures and all these threats, people would like to hide from the potential—force and virtuality—of what we will call the principle and even, still in the figure of irony, the spirit of the Marxist critique. We would be tempted to distinguish this spirit of the Marxist critique, which seems to be more indispensable

than ever today, at once from Marxism as ontology, philosophical or metaphysical system, as "dialectical materialism,"⁸ from Marxism as historical materialism or method, and from Marxism incorporated in the apparatuses of party, State, or workers' International. But we will also distinguish it from what could be called, to go quickly, a deconstruction, there where the latter is no longer simply a critique and where the questions it poses to any critique and even to any question have never been in a position either to identify with or especially to oppose symmetrically something like Marxism, the Marxist ontology, or the Marxist critique.

If a discourse of the Fukuyama type plays to good effect the role of channel-jamming and doubly bereaved disavowal expected of it, it is because, cleverly for some, crudely for others, it performs a sleight-of-hand trick: with the one hand, it accredits a logic of the empirical event which it needs whenever it is a question of certifying the finally final defeat of the so-called Marxist States and of everything that bars access to the Promised Land of economic and political liberalisms; but with the other hand, in the name of the trans-historic and natural ideal, it discredits this same logic of the so-called empirical event, it has to suspend it to avoid chalking up to the account of this ideal and its concept precisely whatever contradicts them in such a cruel fashion: in a word, all the evil, all that is not going well in the capitalist States and in liberalism, in a world dominated by other forces whose hegemony is linked to this supposedly trans-historical or natural (let us say rather naturalized) ideal. We will say a few words later about the major outlines of what is going so badly in the world today. As for the sleight-of-hand trick between history and nature, between historical empiricity and teleological transcendentality, between the supposed empirical reality of the event and the absolute ideality of the liberal telos, it can only be undone on the basis of a new thinking or a new experience of the event, and of another logic of its relation to the phantomatic. We will

approach this later. The logic of this novelty is not necessarily opposed to the most ancient ancientness.

But once again one should not be unfair to this book. Although such works remain fascinating, their very incoherence and sometimes their distressing primitivity play the role of symptomatic signal which one must account for as well as possible. Arousing our attention to a geopolitics of the ideological stakes of the moment, deploying them on the scale of the worldwide cultural market, works like these have the value of reminding us of a complication to which I alluded a moment ago. Let's be specific. If all these themes of the end (end of history, end of man, figure of the "last man," entry into a certain post-Marxism, and so forth) were, already at the beginning of the '60s, part of the elementary culture of the philosophers of my generation, we are not stuck today in their simple and static repetition. For it is also true that from this fundamental event it was not possible to deduce, and still less to date, this other event, this other series of events in progress and still unanalyzed which came about, three decades later, at a rhythm that no one in the world could calculate in advance, not even a few months before. (In 1981, while I was imprisoned in Prague by those then in power, I said to myself with a naive sense of near certainty: "This barbarism could last for centuries") It is this latter event-ness that one must think, but that best resists what is called the concept, if not thinking. And it will not be thought as long as one relies on the simple (ideal, mechanical, or dialectical) opposition of the real presence of the real present or the living present to its ghostly simulacrum, the opposition of the effective or actual (*wirklich*) to the non-effective, inactual, which is also to say, as long as one relies on a general temporality or an historical temporality made up of the successive linking of presents identical to themselves and contemporary with themselves.

This neo-liberal rhetoric, both jubilant and worried, manic and bereaved, often obscene in its euphoria, obliges us, then, to

interrogate an event-ness inscribed in the gap between the moment in which the ineluctable of a certain end was heralded and the actual collapse of those totalitarian States or societies that gave themselves the figure of Marxism. This latency period, which no one managed to represent to themselves much less to calculate in advance, is not just a temporal medium. No objective and homogeneous chronology can measure it. A set of transformations of all sorts (in particular, techno-scientifico-economico-media) exceeds both the traditional givens of the Marxist discourse and those of the liberal discourse opposed to it. Even if we have inherited some essential resources for projecting their analysis, we must first recognize that these mutations perturb the onto-theological schemas or the philosophies of technics as such. They disturb political philosophies and the common concepts of democracy, they oblige us to reconsider all relations between State and nation, man and citizen, the private and the public, and so forth.

This is where another thinking of historicity calls us beyond the metaphysical concept of history and the end of history, whether it be derived from Hegel or from Marx. This is where one could put to work in a more demanding fashion the two moments of the Kojevian postscript on post-history and post-historical animals. It would be necessary, of course, to take into account Kojève's sometimes genial, often naively joking baroquism. Fukuyama does not do so enough, even if the irony of certain provocations does not entirely escape him. But it would also have been necessary to analyze with all possible rigor the numerous chronological and logical articulations of that long and famous footnote. As he tells us in the postscript to his Note, Kojève went to Japan in 1959. (There is a French tradition, a kind of "French specialty" of peremptory diagnoses upon returning from a quick trip to a faraway land whose language one does not even speak and about which one knows next to nothing. Charles Péguy already made fun of this vice in 1913

when Gustave Lanson dared to claim expertise after a trip of a few weeks to the United States.) Upon returning from this visit which he made as an important public official of the European Community, Kojève concluded that "post-historical" Japanese civilization had set out on a path diametrically opposed to the "American path, and this because of what he then names, in that profoundly offhand, nutty, and pataphysician manner which is, to be sure, his genius but which is also his entire responsibility, "the Snobism in the pure state" of the cultural formalism of Japanese society. But he nevertheless maintains what is most important in his view, namely his previous diagnosis concerning properly American post-history. It's just that he will have had to revise something in an incredible and indecent tableau: the United States as the "final stage of Marxist 'communism' " The only thing Kojève now puts in question is the idea that this American end represents, if one may say so, the ultimate figure of the ultimate, namely of "the Hegelian-Marxist end of History" as present and not as future. Revising and contesting his first hypothesis, Kojève comes around to thinking that there is an even more final end of history, an even more eschatological end than the American (and even Californian, as he says somewhere) "happy end, and it is the more than extreme Japanese extremity (in the competition between the two capitalisms whose war will have inaugurated, let us not forget, the era of nuclear destruction!). According to Kojève, the final stage of communism in the postwar United States does indeed, as it must, reduce man to animality. But there is something even more chic, "snobbier," there is a *nec plus ultra* in the end of history and that is Japanese post-historicity. The latter succeeds, thanks to the "snobism" of its culture, in saving post-historical man from his return to animal naturality. Nevertheless, and one must emphasize this, despite the regret that caused him to think, after his 1959 trip, that Japan had gone further, so to speak, in its race after the end of history, Kojève does not put in question again his description

of man's return to animality in the postwar United States. An extravagant description, not because it compares man to animals, but in the first place because it puts an imperturbable and arrogant ignorance to work in the service of doubtful effects; and it is on this point that it would be appropriate to compare Kojève's impudence to the incantation of those who, like Fukuyama, sing (as for Kojève, he is not singing) "the universalization of Western liberal democracy as endpoint of human government" and the victory of capitalism that would have "successfully resolved" the "class problem, and so forth."⁹ Why and how was Kojève able to think that the United States had already reached the "final stage" of "Marxist 'communism' "? What did he think he perceived there, what did he want to perceive there? Answer: the appropriation, in abundance, of everything that can respond to need or desire, the cancelation of the gap between desire and need suspends any excess, any disadjustment, in particular in work. It is not at all surprising that this end of the disadjustment (of the being "out of joint") "prefigures [an] eternal present." But what about the gap between this prefiguration and what it represents before its presence itself?

Practically [this "practically" is the grotesque signature of this sententious verdict], all the members of a "classless society" can appropriate there as of now [1946] whatever they like, without having for all that to work any more than they wish to.

Several comparative trips (between 1948 and 1958) to the United States and the USSR have left me with the impression that if Americans appear to be Sino-Soviets who have gotten rich, it is because the Russians and the Chinese are still but impoverished Americans, moreover on a rapid road toward wealth. I was led to conclude that the *American way of life* [in English in the original] was the kind of life proper to the post-historical period and that the presence today of the United States in the World prefigures the future "eternal present" of all

of humanity. Thus Man's return to animality seemed no longer a possibility still to come, but an already present certainty.

It was after a recent trip to Japan (1959) that I radically changed my opinion on this point.¹⁰

Who could deny that the neo-Marxist and para-Heideggerian reading of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* by Kojève is interesting? It played a formative and not negligible role, from many standpoints, for a certain generation of French intellectuals, just before or just after the war. Things are not as simple in this regard as people generally maintain, but that is not our point here. On the other hand, if one wants to read with some seriousness that which is not altogether serious, namely Kojève's note and postscript on post-Marxism as post-history of humanity, then one must still underscore at least a few points. First of all, the last and also most enigmatic sentence of this note, which we are going to quote, remains a prescriptive utterance. Who has ever read it? It is perhaps the most irresistible opening in this "Postscript." It defines a task and a duty [devoir] for the future of post-historical man, once what Kojève calls the "Japanization" of the West (including the Russians) will have been realized. "Post-historical man doit . . .," writes Kojève. "Doit" what? Is "doit" to be translated here as "must" or "should"? *Whatever may be the case concerning the modality or the content of this "devoir,"* whatever may be the necessity of this prescription, even if it calls for eternities of interpretation, there is an "it is necessary" for the future. Whatever may be its indetermination, be it that of "it is necessary [that there be] the future" ["il faut l'avenir"], there is some future and some history, there is perhaps even the beginning of historicity for post-historical Man, beyond man and beyond history such as they have been represented up until now. We must insist on this specific point precisely because it points to an essential lack of specificity, an indetermination that remains the ultimate mark of the future: *whatever may be the case concerning the modality or the*

content of this duty, this necessity, this prescription or this injunction, this pledge, this task, also therefore this promise, this necessary promise, this "it is necessary" is necessary, and that is the law. This indifference to the content here is not an indifference, it is not an attitude of indifference, on the contrary. Marking any opening to the event and to the future as such, it therefore conditions the interest in and not the indifference to anything whatsoever, to all content in general. Without it, there would be neither intention, nor need, nor desire, and so on. The concept of this singular indifference (difference itself) is not projected by our reading onto Kojève's text. The latter speaks of it. It characterizes in his view a future that would carry beyond what has up until now been called history. Apparently "formalist, this indifference to the content has perhaps the value of giving one to think the necessarily pure and purely necessary form of the future as such, in its being-necessarily-promised, prescribed, assigned, enjoined, in the necessarily formal necessity of its possibility—in short, in its law. It is this law that dislodges any present out of its contemporaneity with itself. Whether the promise promises this or that, whether it be fulfilled or not, or whether it be unfulfillable, there is necessarily some promise and therefore some historicity as future-to-come. It is what we are nicknaming the messianic without messianism. For lack of time, let us do no more than read this sentence to which, in another context and at another rhythm, it would have been necessary to devote all the meditative attention it demands:

Which means that even while he speaks from now on in an *adequate* fashion of all that he has been given, post-historical Man *must/should* [doit] [we underscore this *doit* that doubtless takes us back to the common condition of possibility of the two forms of the necessary, *must* and *should*] continue to *detach* [underscored by Kojève] "forms" from their "contents," doing this not in order to trans-form the latter actively, but in order to

oppose himself [underlined by Kojève] as a pure "form" to himself and to others, taken as whatever sorts of "contents." (P. 437)

Is it possible to reread this text of Kojève's otherwise? Is it possible to rescue it from the crude manipulation it has received in the hands not so much of Fukuyama himself (who, moreover, is not interested in this enigmatic conclusion), but of those who exploit him? Read with some sense of the actor's ploy, the one demanded by Kojève, and therefore with more philosophical, political, or "ideological" vigilance, this text resists. It survives perhaps those who waste no time translating it and putting it on display as a weapon of philosophical propaganda or an object of prime-time media consumption. The "logic" of the proposition just quoted might indeed correspond to a law, the law of the law. This law would signify the following to us: in the same place, on the same limit, where history is finished, there where a certain determined concept of history comes to an end, precisely there the historicity of history begins, there finally it has the chance of heralding itself—of promising itself. There where man, a certain determined concept of man, is finished, there the pure humanity of man, of the *other man* and of man as *other* begins or has finally the chance of heralding itself—of promising itself. In an apparently inhuman or else a-human fashion. Even if these propositions still call for critical or deconstructive questions, they are not reducible to the vulgate of the capitalist paradise as end of history.

(Permit me to recall very briefly that a certain deconstructive procedure, at least the one in which I thought I had to engage, consisted from the outset in putting into question the onto-theo-but also archeo-teleological concept of history—in Hegel, Marx, or even in the epochal thinking of Heidegger. Not in order to oppose it with an end of history or an anhistoricity, but, on the contrary, in order to show that this onto-theo-archeo-teleology locks up, neutralizes, and finally cancels historicity. It

was then a matter of thinking another historicity—not a new history or still less a “new historicism,” but another opening of event-ness as historicity that permitted one not to renounce, but on the contrary to open up access to an affirmative thinking of the messianic and emancipatory promise as promise: as promise and not as onto-theological or teleo-eschatological program or design. Not only must one not renounce the emancipatory desire, it is necessary to insist on it more than ever, it seems, and insist on it, moreover, as the very indestructibility of the “it is necessary.” This is the condition of a re-politicization, perhaps of another concept of the political.

But at a certain point promise and decision, which is to say responsibility, owe their possibility to the ordeal of undecidability which will always remain their condition. And all the grave stakes we have just named in a few words would come down to the question of what one understands, with Marx and after Marx, by effectivity, effect, operativity, work, labor [*Wirklichkeit, Wirkung, work, operation*], living work in their supposed opposition to the spectral logic that also governs the effects of virtuality, of simulacrum, of “mourning work, of ghost, *revenant*, and so forth. And of the justice that is their due. To put it in a few words, deconstructive thinking of the trace, of iterability, of prosthetic synthesis, of supplementarity, and so forth, goes beyond this opposition, beyond the ontology it presumes. Inscribing the possibility of the reference to the other, and thus of radical alterity and heterogeneity, of differance, of technicity, and of ideality in the very event of presence, in the presence of the present that it dis-joins *a priori* in order to make it possible [thus impossible in its identity or its contemporaneity with itself], it does not deprive itself of the means with which to take into account, or to render an account of, the effects of ghosts, of simulacra, of “synthetic images, or even, to put it in terms of the Marxist code, of ideologems, even if these take the novel forms to which modern technology will have given rise.

That is why such a deconstruction has never been Marxist, no more than it has ever been non-Marxist, although it has remained faithful to a certain spirit of Marxism, to at least one of its spirits for, and this can never be repeated too often, there is more than one of them and they are heterogeneous.)