Moderating Modernity NYC, 4.28.2018

My title contains a play on words, such as the ones which French people too readily indulge in. I hope that you will excuse it. Yet, the pun is deeper than it looks at first sight, for it relies on the very etymology of both words. Our word "moderate" stems from the Latin *modus*, "measure," and refers accordingly the person who doesn't overdo things, doesn't yield to any kind of *hubris*, but observes the right measure in his or her doings. Modern stems from *modo*, an adverb that originally had the broader meaning of "in a measured way," and finally came to mean "recently."

This gives us a hint to the relation of modernity with time, furthermore, with the measurement of time. In my title, "Moderating Modernity," one of the basic ideas of this talk is intimated: time is measured. Let me develop this.

The paradoxical character of the word "modern"

Modernity is the name, a flattering one, that a certain period in history had the cheek to give itself. The word is paradoxical, for the following reason. I will have to spend some minutes in explaining why. Modernity is a substantive that most obviously stems from the adjective "modern." Now, "modern" as an adjective already existed in the Latin language. In European languages, English being no exception, "modern" has been in the vocabulary for centuries. It designates what is taking place, or obtains, or is done, etc., *right now*, in the present time, in contradistinction to what used to be the case in former times.

Now, present and past, together with future, are fluid dimensions of time which have no precise content. What takes place now is my talk. But what will take place afterwards we will still call "now," although the content will be different: I will keep still and try to get rid of the rotten tomato stains on my suit, people will wake up, etc. What will be will be past. Tomorrow, today will have become yesterday. The future of the future is the past. What is now will be past, and even constantly glides into the past. Some philosophers call such a notion, together with some other ones, "shifters."

As a consequence, we are today more modern than we were yesterday, and less modern that what we will be tomorrow. Classical Greece was more "modern" than Archaic Greece, the Roman Empire was more "modern" than the Roman Republic, etc. Because of this—if I may say so—shiftiness of the present, we find uses of *modernus* far earlier than the period of time which we call by the name of "modern." For instance, *devotio moderna* was the named given the new school of spirituality that arose in the Netherlands in the 14th century and that gave us Thomas a Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*.

Now, it so happened that a certain period decided to call itself by the name of "modern." From now on, what will happen will be forever "modern," or even, to quote a phrase that is logically preposterous, "more and more modern." What came before this watershed was supposed to have been from the outset, and be doomed to remain forever, "pre-modern." This decision is highly paradoxical in nature. It consists of introducing a standstill in the flow of time, in building a dam of sorts on this river in which, if we are to trust Heraclitus, one can't bathe twice.

And this decision kind of won out, since we commonly accept this strange phrase and call what came after a certain era "Modern Times." Hence the necessity of a backdrop on which modernity can become visible as such, and even of a foil against which it can assert its greater worth. This is why one needed the so-called "Middle Ages" as a scarecrow, and why we so badly want to have people's blood run cold about an ever-menacing falling-back into them. Hence some rather ridiculous phrases that recur in the media, on some horrors of the present time that are said "to bring us back to the Middle Ages."

When I taught an introductory course on medieval thought at the Sorbonne, I would print for my

students a chronological handout for them to learn by rote the important dates having to do with medieval intellectual history. Yet the last two dates were quite recent: the Ukrainian Holodomor in 1932–1933 and the Conference of Wannsee in January 1942, which organized the so-called "final solution of the Jewish question." I wanted thereby to reverse the common habit of calling "medieval" some unpleasant events of contemporary history. I even often said with my tongue in my cheek: "One is surprised to hear that in the Middle Ages some slaughters were perpetrated that would have been perfectly worthy of the dark 20th century," or words to that effect.

Progress

This bout of a rather dark humor was motivated by the ingrained habit among our contemporaries, including ourselves, of linking together modernity with the idea of progress. What is new must somehow be better than what is older. This is undoubtedly true in the case of technology. A more recent model of car is better that the foregoing, for otherwise nobody would pay for the upgrade. But can we generalize? Can we say, for instance, that the moral level of humankind has risen? It may be the case that its global moral awareness is more refined than it used to be. But as for its concrete moral behavior, I would be less sanguine.

Now, it is the case that the man in the Clapham omnibus keeps an implicit belief in progress. How has this become possible? In order to answer this question, I will have to give a bit of thought to the relationship between time and modernity. My hunch is that a certain kind of time underlies the modern project. Not time as a physical and/or philosophical concept, but time as experienced—or, rather, as imagined. On the nature of this representation of time, let me tell you what I feel in my bones.

But let me first remind you of an idea that is already trite among historians of ideas. They know full well that modernity brought about, or was brought about by, a revolution in chronology. Historians of ideas commonly insist on the foundering of the biblical conception of the past: history is older than the six thousand odd years of the biblical reckoning. This began with China, whose history was believed to stretch further into the past than biblical records. The idea got a larger and more scientific foothold with geology. Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1830–1833) became a bestseller. The enlargement of chronology to what we now call "geological times" made thinkable the idea of the evolution of species, which requires very long spells of time for species to arise from each other. Darwin himself acknowledged the crucial importance of this new view of time.

But time has another dimension, future. Now, with modernity, another revolution took place. Pre-modern periods lived under the threat of the end of time, the apocalypse. In the ancient world, we find traces of such a view. The ancient Egyptians feared that the sun would stop rising and setting. Plato and Aristotle had a conception of history according to which huge tidal waves or heavenly fire periodically destroyed mankind, with the exception of some brutish shepherds, so that civilization had to resume almost from scratch. The Roman poet Lucretius teaches that the dissolution of the cosmic order into its atoms can happen at any time, so that the reader will perhaps experience it.[1] In the Middle Ages, the apocalypse depicted by the Gospels and still more by the Book of Revelation was a common reference.[2] In the early 16th century, the German reformer Martin Luther still believed himself to be living shortly before the end of the world.[3] What underlies this *Stimmung* was the Christian core representation of this world below as essentially short-lived, a representation which is expressed in the very word *sæculum*, the very etymology of the Romance words for "century": s*iècle*, *secolo*, *siglo*.

The German historian Johannes Fried came up some years ago with a bold thesis on the origin of modern science. According to him, it began not with the peaceful contemplation of the eternal nature of the heavens, such as classical ancient thinkers like Aristotle conceived of it, but on the contrary with the anxious effort to spot the signs of the End, on the basis of a representation of time as something finite.[4]

Modernity is the period that begins with the assuaging of apocalyptic fear. The last important thinker who took the possibility of the end of the world as a datable event might have been Isaac Newton. The idea of an end of the present state of affairs receded off the stage. The basic impression was: There's plenty of time. We "have time," a revealing phrase that views time as something that can be possessed. Hence, progress had free rein. The French scientist, Enlightenment thinker, and revolutionary Condorcet writes, "nature has put no term to our hopes" (*la nature n'a mis aucun terme à nos espérance*s).[5] Since time is measureless, our projects know no measure. This modernity is essentially immoderate.

The very indefinite development of this futurity becomes the criterion or even the judge of good and evil, under the name of "posterity." The German playwright Friedrich Schiller captured this in a deep, but hardly translatable pun: *Weltgeschichte ist Weltgericht*, "World-history is the Last Judgment." This supposes that there will be a posterity. The question is raised and remains unsolved in the very interesting correspondence between Diderot and the sculptor Falconet.[6] The sculptor objects that posterity is very nice, were it not that mankind very well could disappear because of some natural catastrophe, in which case the judgment of posterity would be null and void. Diderot answers with outbursts of sensibility and ignores the objection.

One-way ratchet

On this indefinite open space of time, things can go on indefinitely improving. They even must go on. Progress is supposed to be irreversible. One knows what a one-way ratchet is, this contraption that enables a wheel to rotate in one direction, while impeding it from rolling backwards. The modern outlook conceives of itself as being some sort of one-way ratchet. This is especially conspicuous in the case of legal decisions.

Many regulations decided by the parliament and/or the administration can be reversed. This is the case, for instance, more often than not in the realm of economy. In this case, by the way, this is a perfectly sensible move, since background conditions often change for the better or for the worse. In some cases, on the other hand, decisions taken at one point in time are never supposed to be withdrawn. Today, lawyers suppose that some laws are irreversible, for instance those that allegedly grant new rights.[7] This idea is now rampant, especially in the field of bioethics: no politician dare let people think that he or she could undo laws about same-sex marriage, abortion, etc., even if he or she personally disapproves of them.

To the best of my knowledge, the first example of such an attempt is an event that took place in my country, France, almost a century and a half ago, more precisely, in 1884.[8] This date has now swept out of the ken of the common run of French citizens. Nevertheless, it was kind of a watershed in our political history.

Let me remind you of the chronological framework in which it was located, in which it made sense and has to be understood. For centuries, France had been a kingdom, very much like its European neighbors, and, as a matter of fact, like next to the totality of the inhabited world. There were scanty exceptions, some rather "in the sticks," like the Swiss cantons or Iceland, some more central, like the commercial aristocracy of Venice. Ancient democracies, like the Athenian one, would scarcely meet our standards, and had anyway a life span that never extended over two centuries. Athens was vanquished by the Macedonian kingdom, succeeded by the heirs of Alexander the Great, the so-called Hellenistic monarchs, then by the Roman Republic, which soon turned into an Empire.

As for France, the long tradition of monarchical power had come to an end with the Revolution of 1789. In the century that followed, France experienced a host of political regimes: first the dictatorship of the Committee of Public Safety, which wielded far more power than any absolute king ever had, then oligarchies of the so-called Directoire, then a triumvirate of consuls, then Napoleon's empire, then again kings, but checked by the Charta (some sort of a bill of rights), the first two legitimate heirs to the beheaded

Louis XVI, the third one the son of the latter's cousin (who had voted for the king's execution), then a Second Republic, then a Second Empire under one of Napoleon's nephews. After the defeat of the army of Napoleon III before the Prussians in 1871, the situation was floating. The Third Republic had been proclaimed. There were supporters of the three or four types of regime that France had known during the century. Some—a small group—wanted a regency on behalf of the heir of the late Emperor; there were royalists of the two kinds; there were republicans.

In 1879, a legal document mentioned the "President of the Republic," but this formula was interpreted in a broad sense, and meant to leave open the question of whether this "chairman of the commonwealth" was a hereditary king or a supreme civil servant, elected for a determinate spell. Only in 1884 was the decisive step in favor of a republic taken. The key formula was the following one: "the republican form of government can't be the object of a proposal of revision" (*la forme républicaine du gouvernement ne peut faire l'objet d'une proposition de révision*).[9]

This decision presents us with a paradox. There was, on the one hand, a human decision, taken by a parliament made of human beings. To be sure, one can ask: of what else could it have consisted? A "parliament of fowls" existed only under the pen of Geoffrey Chaucer. Yet the human character of this assembly was not taken for granted; it had to be positively asserted. It was the will of many MPs to be totally secular, not to appeal to "foreign aid," to allude to Hamilton's well-known, albeit historically dubious, quip. This external, non-human element might have been God's will, or Nature, or the Tradition of past centuries, etc. All this was put out of court.

Now, this utterly human and exclusively human entity made an important decision about the political regime of France. It ruled first that this regime was republican in nature. This was the taking a question as settled, even though the fact was still hotly debated. This already required some nerve. Still more cheeky was the second step taken. The republican regime was not only de facto what obtained in France; it would remain eternally so. France would be forever a republic. One shifted from the photograph of a situation to the foresight of what was to happen—or rather, to be the case—till Doomsday.

The paradox is that a decision that had been necessarily taken at a definite point of time could be binding for the remotest future, nay, for eternity, without any reversal.

The basic antinomy

Now, irreversibility is a well-attested phenomenon. But it is definitely not a characteristic of human things. On the contrary, the theme of the vicissitudes of our world below, of the Wheel of Fortune that brings one to the pinnacle then hurls one to the dungeon, has been trite for ages.[10] Moreover, not only novels, but everyday experience confirms this insight.

On the other hand, irreversibility is a phenomenon that is to be observed among *natural* processes. It is even a basic characteristic of such processes: it is given evidence to by many aspects, at different levels: aging in individual living beings, growth and decay in plants and animals, evolution of species, thermodynamics, and even, as far as we can surmise, the expansion of the universe.

Furthermore, something more fundamental underlies all these examples, something essentially irreversible. I mean this utterly mysterious yet all-powerful reality which we call "time." To be sure, its content is reversible—we can undo what we did, we can repent or recant, we can get back to an earlier state of affairs—but we can't make it so that what happened once never happened. If we break our leg, we can have it set straight again, but it can't be the case that it never was broken. This is even the only thing that Greek gods could not do, according to a line quoted by Aristotle.[11]

Now, what happens when we ascribe irreversibility to that which depends on human decisions? This boils down to applying to human things what is a basic characteristic of non-human nature—hence this implies that we somehow naturalize human things.

Progress was supposed to wring human doings from the bondage of Nature. It did so, in ancient style, by the moral progress (*prokopē*) admitted by some Stoic philosophers; it did so, in the modern style introduced by Francis Bacon and René Descartes, by conquering nature by gaining technical mastery over her. Now, progress, as a one-way ratchet, brings nature back to power through the back door.

This state of affairs pervades the whole of modern thought. Let us have a look at some of its aspects. On the level of the individual: we are the proud owner of our own selves; our psychic life is our interiority, our inner castle; but our bodies are the product of impersonal forces, the interplay of which is the motor of evolution. We are the autonomous subject of our doings, into which no other entity is allowed to interfere; but our psychological life is the plaything of a great deal of factors. For instance, unconscious nursery remembrances (Freud), the ideology of our social class (Marx)—these are features that shape us without our being able to know them fully, let alone to thwart them. Science allows us to know the truth; but among the truths that science is supposed to tell us is that what we call "true" is merely what adaptation decided that we should hold as true because it better ensured our survival as individuals and as species. Thus, we get circular reasoning.

Marxism is a textbook case of such a stance: there is in history a driving force which we can't resist; yet we have some sort of moral duty to help it towards its goal, and woe to the one who dare resist progress. He or she will undergo the fate of the innocent flower under the wheels of the cart of History, such as Hegel described it,[12] a fate to which his alleged intellectual heirs were eager to give a concrete form. Some did that by liquidating classes that were doomed to disappear, like Lenin and his successors; some other ones by liquidating races that put spikes in the wheels of progress. This was the case with Hitler who, let me remind you, was a staunch supporter of progress, and explains in his *Mein Kampf* that Jews have to be done away with because they resist progress.[13]

History as a travelator

History is commonly considered to be some sort of travellator or moving walkway leading us to ever better things. On it, we may, if the fancy takes us, walk against the direction for some time, but it will bring us anyway, even against our will, to the place to which it normally leads. All this is a remnant of the Christian notion of Providence, but in disguise, and even perverted. As for the medieval image of the *rota fortunae*, it is interestingly "recycled" (if I may say so in such a context) in the image of the Wheel of History. But it is given a new twist: for the medieval man, the wheel can't be brought to a standstill.[14] For the moderns, this wheel has a ratchet, so that it can't be turned backwards; according to Karl Marx, only hidebound reactionaries and social classes that the evolution of economy condemn can dream of such an unfeasible feat.[15]

I mentioned above the idea according to which some rights, once granted, can't be withdrawn. Now, if somebody has a right to get something, this means that somebody else has the duty to grant them what they have a right to. Hence, new rights for the individual mean that there is some entity that has the duty to grant these rights and to give what people have a right to. Now, which entity? In some cases, the absurdity is glaring, for instance, when we speak of a "right to happiness." Whose duty is that? Who is in charge of making us happy? Nature, God, Fate, "Society"? For less preposterous cases, like the right to non-discrimination, the best possible solution is a crushing social pressure, and laws enforced by an all-powerful State.

Modern times understood themselves as a process of liberation. Historiography, or at least the so-called "Whig conception of history," told us the story of the Renaissance as emancipation from the shackles of the feudal system and/or of the Church. In fact, modern times never kept their word. Their promises remained unfulfilled, or, to be precise, every advance in freedom was compensated by a step forward in control.

A deep antinomy underlies all that: on the one

hand, human beings are supposed, and expected, to take their destinies into their hands and to act for exclusively human motives; on the other hand, they are driven by forces that are supposed to be, and even expected to be, able to rule out any human decision, so that "there is no alternative," no way out. The program of liberation brings us back to jail. The one-way ratchet turns into a lobster pot.

Late modernity

Those ideas are typical of early modern times. This lasted for a matter of two centuries among the intellectual elite. Now, the life span of ideas depends very much on the educational level of people. Poorly educated people may live on ideas that are, for deeper thinkers, totally overcome or even ridiculous. In our time, whereas low-brow people kept believing in indefinite progress for a long time, and are still firmly convinced that things will improve or, at least, are surprised and even shocked when they don't, great minds have an ever clearer consciousness of the finite character of the present state of affairs. This might bring them, and hopefully us, into the bargain, to more moderation.

Early modernity, to repeat, began with a shift in the representation of time. Late modernity set in with another shift which brought earlier ideas back to the fore. One could describe Early modernity, i.e., the time of Enlightenment and Progress, as the time-window during which Time was believed to be indefinitely open. This time window, by the way, was relatively narrow, ensconced between two beliefs in the finite character of temporal realities, two assumptions that are miles apart from each other, as I will explain presently.

The return to the idea of a finite time span was a consequence of the basic irreversibility of natural processes which I alluded to earlier. An important step was the idea of a "heat death" of the universe, the consequence of the second law of thermodynamics, rigorously conceived by William Thomson (Lord Kelvin) in an article of 1852, and summarized and popularized by the same ten years later.[16] Yet, the duration of time involved was so huge that it could hardly impinge on popular consciousness.

From the 1860s, however, the life span, not of the universe, but of industrial civilization, was felt to be radically shortened. The thought of the depletion of nature's resources started to haunt minds: industrial revolutions were made possible by fossil fuels, the first one by coal, the second one by petroleum. Now, those resources are not inexhaustible. Since the 1960s, ecological consciousness arose and drew the attention towards the price to be paid for industrial achievements.

What we call post-modernity may be linked up with a further step in the consciousness of the limitation of time available for human enterprises. The key date may have been 1945, the first explosion of a nuclear bomb. I said at the beginning of my historical sketch that the medieval world lived under the threat of the end of the world. Now, with nuclear warfare, apocalypse enjoyed a comeback. The extinction of mankind became a real possibility. The end is again at hand, but not as it used to be, i.e., as God's intervention in the course of history, but as the possible outcome of processes immanent to the human realm. The end is at hand, it is even at the tip of one finger, the one which presses the button. "The end is at hand" means at present: the end is in our hands.

I already alluded to the Christian and medieval idea of the world as a sæculum, as the limited period of time which mankind has to put up with. One might contend, with some amount of irony, that this idea, too, is enjoying a comeback under the guise of a word that directly stems from the Latin sæculum, i.e., the so-called "secular age." I mean thereby the age of a fact and of an idea: the fact, alleged or real, of "secularization"; the idea that this process is something positive that has to be promoted, i.e., "secularism." I elsewhere pointed out the ironical character of these names: a secular attitude towards life implies, by the mechanism of its inner logic, that we can't set our sights higher than the duration of one century only, moreover, that we adopt behaviors that will limit human existence to this duration.[17]

The way out

This return of apocalyptic consciousness can be a chance for us, because it compels us urgently to give a bit of thought to the problems at stake and possibly to look for help. What can we do in order to get off the hook? On the level of concrete things to be done for us to avert the doom, there is a bevy of possible policies. They are technical in nature, and because of that I will leave them to more competent people.

Yet I should like to ask a preliminary question: why should we try to rescue humankind in the first place? Why should we go on with the human adventure? Is mankind worthwhile? Who can pass judgment on the global worth of the human adventure? Certainly not mankind itself, which is either desperately biased in its own favor or stained by an irresistible propensity to suicidal behaviors. In a former work, I tried to show our need for an external fulcrum, an Archimedean point, a transcendent referent, which, to take up Aquinas' idiom, everybody calls "God."[18] Only the Creator can pass a positive judgment on his creation and say that it was, before it was spoiled by the disorderly behavior of some of his creatures, angelic or human, "very good."

Many people today remain aware of the need for transcendence that we have. But the modern project aimed at a totally self-reliant humankind, more often than not under the noble name of "autonomy," and some people keep dreaming of this and are reluctant to give up the modern project. As a consequence, they suggest replacing what they call derogatorily a "vertical transcendence" with an alleged "horizontal transcendence."

This phrase might have been coined by the French writer Albert Camus. This happened in a short essay published in a 1945 collection. In the first footnote, he introduces a transcendence that he proposes to call horizontal, in contradistinction to the vertical transcendence of God or of the Platonic ideas (he says "essences").[19] (*Il s'agit bien entendu, dans toute cette remarque, d'une transcendance qu'on pourrait appeler horizontale par opposition à la transcendance verticale qui est celle de Dieu ou des Essences platoniciennes*).

What is meant thereby is various. In the works of the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, the transcendent is there as "the Other," i.e., the other human being, the neighbor, such as he or she is given to us through the experience of the face. This supposes that there are other human beings facing us when we enter the stage, i.e., that we were called into existence by the former generation. More commonly, however, and for less deep thinkers, the "horizontal transcendence" to which one appeals is the future, more precisely, the future generations of humankind.

Now, transcendence can't possibly be "horizontal," the future, progress. What is transcendent is that on which we depend. A transcendence that depends on us is a leprechaun. Now, the future, what will be, depends on us. This difficulty is all the greater that modernity doesn't rely only on a definite conception of the quantity of time, but on a definite conception of the nature of futurity. For it, it is basically *futurum*, "what will be," rather than what the French language calls *avenir*, literally *à venir*, what will come. What will be is not what will be granted by a higher power, like the heavenly Jerusalem that will come down from heaven according to the prophecy at the end of the Book of Revelation (21:2). On the contrary, it must arise from the present state of affairs, in which it is already there, but not yet actualized. Modern thought takes for granted that there will be a future. Now, we were taught by events that the existence of a future state of affairs depends on us, furthermore, that their dependence on us increases, thanks to advances in science and technology.

Now, why the heck should there be a future? To be sure, the Earth won't come to a standstill and will keep circling around the sun; galaxies won't stop receding from each other in an ever-expanding universe. But who will be there in order to reckon time? If we want, we will call into being the next generation. If we don't want it to be, there won't be any next generation. And we have no reason to want it, unless we admit that they are called by God to a blessed eternal communion with his own love and life.

As a conclusion

It so happens that I entitled a book of mine, which is at present at the publisher's, *Curing Mad Truths*—a clear allusion to G.K. Chesterton's utterance that the modern world is full of Christian virtues gone mad. Now, at the beginning of this talk, I took my bearings from the etymology of the Latin words for "modern" and "moderate." Now, it is the case that the root that underlies both words, i.e., *mod-*, is itself related to another, neighboring one, the root med-, from which our word "medicine" stems. Modernity needs a moderating medicine.

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1. Lucretius, V, 95-96 and 104-106; Lucan, I, 72-81.
2. See Jean Fiori, *La Fin du monde au Moyen Âge* (Paris: J-P Gisserot, 2008).
3. Martin Luther, *Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, Tischreden,* vol. 2 (Weimar: Böhlau, 1913), 636-637. Originally published as Tischreden, n° 2756b [Konrad Cordatus, 28.9-23.11.1532].
4. Johannes Fried, *Aufstieg aus dem Untergang. Apokalyptisches Denken und die Entstehung der modernen Naturwissenschaft im Mittelalter* (Munich: Beck, 2001).
5. Nicolas de Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain,* ed. Alain Pons (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1988), 267.
6. Diderot, Letter to Falconet, IV, February 1766; or "Le Pour et le Contre," in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Hermann, 1986), t. XV, p. 33; see Carl L. Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press: 1932), 147.
7. Justice Brennan in Katzenbach v. Morgan, 384 U.S. 641, 653-56, 16 L. Ed. 2d 828, 86 S. Ct. 1717 (1966); rejected by the Supreme Court in City of Boerne v. Flores, 521 U.S. 507 (1997).
8. In what follows, I take advantage of an unpublished monograph by M. Henri de Montéty. I hope that it will find a publisher intelligent enough to see its worth.
9. Constitutional Law of August, 14th, 1884, art. 2.
10. See Herodotus, II, 207, 2; [Anonymous] *Fortune plango vulnera*, 3, 1, in Carmina Burana, *Lieder aus Benediktbeuren*, éd. M. Hackemann (Cologne: Anaconda, 2006), 44; "The Monk's Tale," in Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, v. 2395. For Tacitus, the image is already hackneyed, *Dialogus de oratoribus*, 23.
11. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, VI, 2, 1139b10-11. See Homer, *Iliad,* XXIV, 550-551; Plato, *Protagoras*, 324b3-4; *Laws*, XI, 934a6-7.
12. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Die Vernunft in der Geschichte: *Auf Grund des aufbehaltenen handschriftlichen Materials herausgegeben von G. Lasson* (Leipzig: Meiner, 1930), Einleitung, p. 63.
13. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, I, 11, p. 317 & 332.
14. See Boethius, *Consolatio Philosophiæ,* II, pr. 1, 59-60; ed. S.J. Tester (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 178.
15. Karl Marx, Manifest der *kommunistischen Partei,* 1, in *Die Frühschriften*, ed. Siedfried Landshut, 7th ed. (Stuttgart: Kröner, 2004), 605.
16. William Thomson, "On a Universal Tendency in Nature to the Dissipation of Mechanical Energy," *Philosophical Magazine*, October 1852, 256–260; "On the Age of the Sun's Heat," *Macmillan's Magazine*, 5:3 (1862): 288–293.
17. See my *Modérément moderne* (Paris: Flammarion, 2014), 138. In English: *Moderately Modern*, tr. Paul Seaton (Saint Augustine's Press: South Bend, Ind., forthcoming).
18. See my *Les Ancres dans le Ciel. L'infrastructure métaphysique de la vie humaine* (Paris: Seuil, 2011). In English: *Anchors in the Heavens: The Metaphysical Infrastructure of Human Life*, tr. Brian Lapsa (Saint Augustine's Press: South Bend, Ind., forthcoming).
19. Albert Camus, "Remarque sur la révolte," *Essais*, ed. Roger Quilliot (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), 1683. Originally appeared in *L'Existence* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), 10.