Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

TCLC 157

ISSN 0276-8178

Volume 157

Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

Criticism of the Works of Novelists, Poets, Playwrights, Short Story Writers, and Other Creative Writers Who Lived between 1900 and 1999, from the First Published Critical Appraisals to Current Evaluations

Linda Pavlovski
Project Editor

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOG CARD NUMBER 76-46132

ISBN 0-7876-8911-4
ISSN 0276-8178

Printed in the United States of America
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Preface

Since its inception more than fifteen years ago, *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* (*TCLC*) has been purchased and used by nearly 10,000 school, public, and college or university libraries. *TCLC* has covered more than 500 authors, representing 58 nationalities and over 25,000 titles. No other reference source has surveyed the critical response to twentieth-century authors and literature as thoroughly as *TCLC*. In the words of one reviewer, "there is nothing comparable available." *TCLC* "is a gold mine of information—dates, pseudonyms, biographical information, and criticism from books and periodicals—which many librarians would have difficulty assembling on their own."

Scope of the Series

TCLC is designed to serve as an introduction to authors who died between 1900 and 1999 and to the most significant interpretations of these author's works. Volumes published from 1978 through 1999 included authors who died between 1900 and 1960. The great poets, novelists, short story writers, playwrights, and philosophers of the period are frequently studied in high school and college literature courses. In organizing and reprinting the vast amount of critical material written on these authors, *TCLC* helps students develop valuable insight into literary history, promotes a better understanding of the texts, and sparks ideas for papers and assignments. Each entry in *TCLC*presents a comprehensive survey on an author's career or an individual work of literature and provides the user with a multiplicity of interpretations and assessments. Such variety allows students to pursue their own interests; furthermore, it fosters an awareness that literature is dynamic and responsive to many different opinions.

Every fourth volume of *TCLC* is devoted to literary topics. These topics widen the focus of the series from the individual authors to such broader subjects as literary movements, prominent themes in twentieth-century literature, literary reaction to political and historical events, significant eras in literary history, prominent literary anniversaries, and the literatures of cultures that are often overlooked by English-speaking readers.

TCLC is designed as a companion series to Thomson Gale's *Contemporary Literary Criticism,* (*CLC*) which reprints commentary on authors who died after 1999. Because of the different time periods under consideration, there is no duplication of material between *CLC* and *TCLC*.

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- A **Portrait of the Author** is included when available.

- The **Introduction** contains background information that introduces the reader to the author, work, or topic that is the subject of the entry.

- The list of **Principal Works** is ordered chronologically by date of first publication and lists the most important works by the author. The genre and publication date of each work is given. In the case of foreign authors whose

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- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book precedes each piece of criticism. Source citations in the Literary Criticism Series follow University of Chicago Press style, as outlined in *The Chicago Manual of Style,* 14th ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993).

- Critical essays are prefaced by brief **Annotations** explicating each piece.

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A **Cumulative Nationality Index** lists all authors featured in *TCLC* by nationality, followed by the number of the *TCLC* volume in which their entry appears.

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An alphabetical **Title Index** accompanies each volume of *TCLC.* Listings of titles by authors covered in the given volume are followed by the author's name and the corresponding page numbers where the titles are discussed. English translations of foreign titles and variations of titles are cross-referenced to the title under which a work was originally published. Titles of novels, dramas, nonfiction books, and poetry, short story, or essay collections are printed in italics, while individual poems, short stories, and essays are printed in roman type within quotation marks.

In response to numerous suggestions from librarians, Thomson Gale also produces a paperbound edition of the *TCLC* cumulative title index. This annual cumulation, which alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in the series, is available to all customers. Additional copies of this index are available upon request. Librarians and patrons will welcome this separate index; it saves shelf space, is easy to use, and is recyclable upon receipt of the next edition.

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Contents

Elias Canetti
1905-1994

Bulgarian-born Swiss novelist, aphorist, autobiographer, and nonfiction writer.

The following entry provides criticism on Canetti's works from 1962 through 2001. For criticism prior to 1962, see *CLC,* Volumes 3, 14, 25, 75; and for an obituary entry on Canetti, see *CLC,* Volume 86.

INTRODUCTION

The recipient of the 1981 Nobel Prize for literature, Canetti is best known for his novel *Die Blendung* (1935-36; *Auto-da-Fé*) and his treatise on mass behavior, *Masse und Macht* (1960; *Crowds and Power*). Both of these works probe the ways in which individuals are affected by participation in a group. More recent critical attention has focused on Canetti's plays and his three-volume autobiography. While often criticized for the unscientific methods and subjective conclusions presented in his writings, Canetti is recognized for his insightful analysis of crowd psychology and vivid depictions of crowd phenomena as well as for his portrait, in his autobiography, of twentieth-century European intellectual life.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Canetti was born on July 25, 1905, in Rutschuk (now Ruse), Bulgaria, to parents who were descendants of the Sephardic Jews of Spain. Because of this heritage, he was exposed to numerous languages early in his life, namely Bulgarian, Hebrew, and Ladino, a fifteenth-century patois of Spanish and Hebrew spoken in his family's home and in the Sephardic community. Canetti's parents were ardent students of German literature and spoke to each other in German when they did not want their children to understand their conversations; remembering his fascination with the air of mystery that he perceived in these discussions, Canetti later adopted German as the language of his intellectual and literary pursuits. In 1911 the Canetti family moved to London. When his father died suddenly in 1912, his mother moved the family first to Vienna and then to other cities in the German-speaking countries of Europe. Fearing that he would become "soft" without the guidance of a father, Canetti's mother taught him German and pressured him to study chemistry, deriding his growing interest in literature and writing. During the 1920s he immersed himself in the cultural life of Berlin and Vienna, where he met such figures as satirist Karl Kraus, artist George Grosz, and novelists Robert Musil, Hermann Broch, and Thomas Mann. In 1922 Canetti joined a demonstration in reaction to the murder of the German-Jewish industrialist Walter Rathenau, and in 1927 he was part of a crowd that burned down the Vienna Palace of Justice while protesting the acquittal of men indicted for killing workers in the Austrian province of Burgenland. These events confirmed in him the desire to make a life's work of the study of mass psychology. After receiving his doctorate in chemistry from the University of Vienna in 1929, Canetti produced his first and only novel, *Auto-da-Fé.* During the 1930s he translated the writings of Upton Sinclair into German and completed one play, *Die Hochzeit* (1965; *The Wedding*), before fleeing to England after the annexation of Austria by Germany and the anti-Semitic violence of Krystallnacht. Canetti continued to write in German during his wartime exile in England, devoting his time to works such as *Crowds and Power.* In ensuing decades, Canetti divided his time between Hampstead, England, and Zurich, and published essays, aphorisms, and three volumes of autobiography. When he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, Bulgaria, England, and Austria all claimed him as their own. Canetti died in Zurich on August 14, 1994, and is buried there next to the grave of Irish modernist novelist James Joyce.

MAJOR WORKS

Canetti's only novel, which he intended to be the first installment of an eight-volume novel series entitled "The Human Comedy of Madmen," *Auto-da-Fé* details the ruination of Peter Kien, a world-renowned sinologist whose life revolves around his 25,000-volume library. Kien is obsessed with his books, which he regards as companions. The other major characters in the novel also exhibit obsessions that dominate their lives: Kien's housekeeper, Therese Krumbholz, is preoccupied with satisfying her appetites for money and sex; Benedikt Pfaff, the manager of Kien's apartment house, with seizing money and power; and the dwarf Fischerle with becoming a wealthy and famous chess champion. *Auto-da-Fé* satirizes the greed, cruelty, and intolerance of each of these individuals, who all readily join in the persecution of one another and at the same time are themselves victimized.

Crowds and Power, which Canetti worked on for thirty years, draws on the resources of his erudition in numerous fields, including literature, anthropology, and science, in an attempt to explain the origins, behavior, and significance of crowds as forces in society. Organized as a large volume of brief, aphoristic essays explaining various aspects and examples of mass psychology, the book scrutinizes crowds and crowd phenomena found in nature, mythology, and history. In an effort to take a fresh look at his subject, Canetti created his own terminology for discussing mass phenomena, disregarded modern scientific study of crowds, and ignored important contemporary examples of crowd behavior and manipulators, most notably nazism and Adolf Hitler. However, because Canetti avoided scientific techniques and language, his study is highly original in its approach and accessible to most readers.

Although Canetti's plays are generally considered difficult, if not impossible, to produce on stage, they have begun to receive more critical attention in recent years. Throughout his career, Canetti considered himself first and foremost a dramatist. In his plays—*The Wedding, Die Befristeten* (1956; *The Numbered*), and *Die Komödie der Eitelkeit* (1965; *The Comedy of Vanity*)—Canetti extended his interest in character type to types of social life. This connected his plays with his anthropological pursuits. But whereas in *Crowds and Power* he had intended an inventory of the human condition, in his dramas he was engaged in the exploration of unrealized possibilities of human existence.

Collections of Canetti's essays, sketches, and aphorisms, as well as his autobiographical trilogy, have garnered more significant attention of late, particularly his connections to and observations of Friedrich Nietzsche and Franz Kafka.

CRITICAL RECEPTION

Critics have by turns praised and scorned Canetti's examination of the psychology of crowds because its scholarship is unscientific and it draws conclusions without the support of arguments or empirical proof. Furthermore, some contend that *Auto-da-Fé* is little more than a biting satire of dementia. Nevertheless, many commentators praise the book for its treatment of the dual nature of human beings as both individuals and members of a group. Critical examination of Canetti's works also focuses on the question of Canetti's interpretation of such figures as the anti-Semitic, misogynist Otto Weininger, Nietzsche, and Kafka.

PRINCIPAL WORKS

Die Blendung [*Auto-da-Fé*] (novel) 1935-36
Fritz Wotruba (criticism) 1955
Die Befristeten [*The Numbered*] (play) 1956; also published as *Life-Terms,* 1983
Masse und Macht [*Crowds and Power*] (nonfiction) 1960
Dramen (plays) 1964
Aufzeichnungen 1942-1948 (aphorisms) 1965
Die Hochzeit [*The Wedding*] (play) 1965
Die Komödie der Eitelkeit [*The Comedy of Vanity*] (play) 1965
Die Stimmen von Marrakesch: Aufzeichnungen nach einer Reise [*The Voices of Marrakesh: A Record of a Visit*] (travel essay) 1967
Der andere Prozeß: Kafkas Briefe an Felice [*Kafka's Other Trial: The Letters to Felice*] (criticism) 1969
Alle vergeudete Verebrung: Aufzeichnungen 1949-1960 (aphorisms) 1970
Die gespaltene Zukunft: Aufsätze und Gespräche (essays) 1972
Macht und Überleben: Drei Essays (essays) 1972
Die Provinz des Menschen: Aufzeichnungen 1942-1972 [*The Human Province*] (aphorisms) 1973
Der Ohrenzeuge: Fünfzig: Charaktere [*Earwitness: Fifty Characters*] (sketches) 1974
Das Gewissen der Worte [*The Conscience of Words*] (essays) 1975
Die gerettete Zunge: Geschichte einer Jugend [*The Tongue Set Free: Remembrance of a European Childhood*] (autobiography) 1977
Die Fackel im Ohr: Lebensgeschichte 1921-1931 [*The Torch in My Ear*] (autobiography) 1980
Das Augenspiel: Lebensgeschichte 1931-1937 [*The Play of the Eyes*] (autobiography) 1985
Das Geheimherz der Uhr: Aufzeichnungen 1973-1985 [*The Secret Heart of the Clock: Notes, Aphorisms, Fragments 1973-1985*] (aphorisms) 1987
Die Fliegenpein [*The Agony of Flies*] (sketches, notes, and aphorisms) 1992
Nachtage aus Hampstead: Aus den Aufzeichnungen, 1954-1971 [*Notes from Hampstead: The Writer's Notes*] (notebook) 1994
Aufzeichnungen 1992-1993 (aphorisms) 1996
The Memoirs of Elias Canetti (memoirs) 1999

CRITICISM

Theodor Adorno and Elias Canetti (interview date 1962)

SOURCE: Adorno, Theodor, and Elias Canetti. "Elias Canetti: Discussion with Theodor W. Adorno." *Thesis Eleven,* no. 45 (1996): 1-15.

[*In the following interview, originally conducted in 1962, Canetti and Adorno discuss psychoanalysis and crowd psychology.*]

[*Adorno*]: *I know that in many respects you differ strongly from Freud and are very critical toward him. In one methodological respect, however, you are surely in agreement with what he often emphasized, above all when psychoanalysis was still in its formative stage and had not yet become something completely reified, that he had no intention of rejecting or disputing the results of other established sciences but wanted to add what they had neglected. This neglect and its causes he considered extremely essential, since it possesses a crucial character for human life together, just as is the case for you. You could, I believe, elucidate this best through the central importance that the question of death plays in your work, as it does also for many, in the widest sense, anthropological works today. Precisely in relation to this death complex—if I can speak in such a pompous way of this most elementary fact—you could give our listeners an idea, a model of what this neglected dimension actually is, and what aspects in the experience of death for instance have special value for you, so that we can gain insight into the fruitfulness of your method and recognize that it is not only a question of things which are scarcely reflected but of the dangers of their self-evident acceptance, which you want to bring to consciousness and defuse in the spirit of enlightenment.*

[Canetti]: It is, I think, completely correct that the consideration of death plays a major role in my investigation. If I am to give an example of what you referred to, then it would be the question of survival, which in my opinion has been far too little considered. The moment in which a human being survives another is a *concrete* moment, and I believe that the experience of this moment has very grave consequences. I think that this experience is covered up by convention, by what one *should* be feeling when the death of another human being is experienced, but behind this a certain feeling of satisfaction lies hidden and from this feeling of satisfaction, which can even be triumph—as in the case of a combat—something very dangerous can come, if it occurs more frequently and accumulates. This dangerously accumulated experience of the death of another human being is, I believe, a very essential germ of power. I give this example only abruptly and without going into it more closely. As you speak of Freud—I am the first to admit that the innovative way in which Freud approached things, without allowing himself to be distracted or frightened, made a deep impression on me in my formative period. It is certainly the case that I am now no longer convinced of some of his results and must oppose some of his special theories. But for the way he tackled things, I still have the deepest respect.

Precisely at this point which you just raised, I would like to register that there is a very strong contact between us. In the Dialectic of Enlightenment *Horkheimer and I analyzed the problem of self-preservation, of self-preserving reason and discovered in the process that this principle of self-preservation which finds its first classic formulation in the philosophy of Spinoza, and which you call in your terminology the moment of survival, that is, the situation of survival in the exact sense that this motif of self-preservation, when it becomes as it were "wild", when it loses any relation to others, is transformed into a destructive force. You did not know our work and we did not know yours. I believe that our agreement here is not by chance but points to what has become acute in the crisis of the contemporary situation, which is after all the very crisis of a wild self-preservation, a wild survival.*

I am pleased to hear that your own thinking has led to similar results and that the fact of our independence adds to their cogency.

I think so too. On the other hand, however, there is a methodological problem which is important for our intention of determining the place of your thinking. For a thinker like myself, whether he calls himself a philosopher or a sociologist, what strikes me first of all about your book, and what is—if I may say so openly—something of a scandal, is what I would call the subjectivity of your approach. By subjectivity I do not mean the subjectivity of thought, the subjectivity of the author—on the contrary: precisely the freedom of a subjectivity, which does not tie thinking in advance to the approved rules of the sciences and does not respect the boundaries imposed by the division of labour, is enormously sympathetic to me—but I mean by subjectivity the point of departure from the subjects under investigation, put more sharply, the point of departure from forms of representation (Vorstellungsweisen). I am very conscious that you derive, moreover, not so very differently from Freud, the basic concepts you employ—crowds and power—ultimately from real conditions, just as I would, that is, from real crowds and real powers, from experiences of the real. Nevertheless, the reader cannot quite shake off the feeling that in the development of your book the imagination—the representation of these concepts or facts, the two go together—is in fact of a greater significance than they are themselves: for instance, the concept of invisible crowds, which plays a major role for you, points to this. And I would like to put the really simple question to you to give our listeners a clearer idea of what is actually involved—how do [you] evaluate the real significance of crowds and of power or the bearers of power in relation to the inner representation, in relation to the images, analysis would say, the imagines *of the crowd and power, with which you are concerned?*

I would like to take some time to answer this question. You refer to my concept of invisible crowds. Here I would like to say that invisible crowds only appear in the short chapter 14 of my book, which is preceded by 13 other chapters, in which I deal with the real crowd

very intensively. The concept of the book is, I believe, as real as it can be. I begin with what I call the fear of being touched. I think that the individual human being feels threatened by others and has for this reason an anxiety about being touched by something unknown, and that he seeks to protect himself by all means from being touched by the unknown by creating distances around himself, by striving not to come into too close contact with other human beings. All human beings have experienced this, that you try not to jostle against others, that you do not like being jostled by others. In spite of all preventative measures human beings never lose completely their fear of being touched. What is remarkable is that this fear disappears completely in the crowd. It is a really important paradox. Human beings only lose their fear of being touched when they stand closely packed together in a crowd, when they are surrounded on all sides by other human beings, so that they no longer know who is pressing against them. At this moment the individual no longer fears contact with others. His fear of being touched reverses into the opposite; I believe that one of the reasons why people like to become a crowd, like to become part of the crowd, is the relief they feel at this reversal of the fear of being touched. I think this is a very concrete approach; it starts from a concrete experience which everybody knows from the crowd. Now, in the following chapters I examine other aspects of the real crowd. I speak of open and closed crowds. I stress that crowds always want to grow, that this compulsion to grow is decisive for them. I talk about the feeling of equality within the crowd and many other things which I do not want to mention now. Then in chapter 14 I come to the concept of invisible crowds, about which I would perhaps like to say something briefly: for anyone who has occupied himself with religions, and especially with primitive religions, it is very striking the extent to which these religions are peopled by crowds, which human beings cannot actually see. We need only think of the spirits which play such a role in primitive religions. There are countless examples of the human belief that the whole air is filled by these spirits, that these spirits occur in massed forms—this carries over into our universal religion. We know the role that the idea of the devil, of angels played in Christendom. There are very many testimonies in the Middle Ages. Devils are thought to occur in endless crowds. A medieval Cistercian abbot, Richelin, stated that when he closed his eyes he sensed devils around him as thick as dust. These invisible crowds play a major role in religions and in the conceptions of believers. I would not for this reason regard them as unreal, since these people do in fact believe in these crowds, for them they are something wholly real. In order to understand this fully, we need only recall that in the modern world we also know such invisible crowds. They are no longer devils, but they are perhaps just as dangerous and aggressive and are feared by us just as much. After all we all believe in the existence of bacilli. Only very few people have looked in a microscope and actually seen them but we all assume that we are threatened by millions of bacilli, which are always there, which can be everywhere, and our representation of them plays an important role.

These would be invisible crowds, which in a certain sense I would call real; I believe that you would concede that we can speak here of a kind of reality of these invisible crowds.

Please excuse the pedantry of an epistemologist in my reply. First of all, there is a difference between primitive consciousness, which does not yet distinguish so strictly between reality and representation, and the developed Western consciousness which rests in fact on this separation. The fact that in archaic thinking, in primitive thinking no distinction is yet made between the imagination of such djinns, or whatever spirits it may be, and their real existence does not mean that they have become objectively real. We cannot jump over our own shadow, which tells us in God's name that the world is not peopled by spirits. And for that reason I would say, according to what you have said so far, that a certain primacy of the imaginative, of the transposition into the world of representation is dominant with you in relation to drastic unmediated reality, since I do not believe—this is perhaps not unimportant for clarifying your intentions—I do not believe that you espouse the position represented by Klages on the one hand and by Oskar Goldberg at the other extreme, namely that these images, these imagines *possess as collective entities a direct reality, comparable for example with the reality of the masses in modern mass society.*

No, I certainly would not say that. Nevertheless, I have arrived at the establishment of a concept, which seems important to me: the concept of crowd symbols. By crowd symbols I understand collective units, which admittedly do not consist of human beings but which are nevertheless felt as crowds. To these units belong representations like fire, the ocean, the forest, wheat, the treasure, heaps of many kinds,—for example, heaps of the harvested. Now these are surely units which actually exist; they are used in the mind of the individual as crowd symbols. It is necessary to explore these individual symbols and show why they have this function and what significance they acquire in this function. In order to give a practical example, I would say that these crowd symbols had decisive importance for the formation of national consciousness.

Absolutely!

When human beings who identify themselves with a nation at an acute moment of national existence, let us say, define themselves as English or French or German

at the beginning of a war, then they think of a crowd or a crowd symbol as that to which they relate. And this has an extremely powerful effect in their minds and is of the greatest importance for their actions. You would, I think, perhaps go this far with me in seeing the undeniable effectivity of such crowd symbols, present in the individual.

Here I agree with you completely. I think that with your discovery of the forest, for example, as an imago, *as a crowd symbol you have hit on something really essential. I consider these things eminently fruitful. Compared with the somewhat bare archaic symbols we find in Freud and on the other hand the somewhat arbitrary archetypes of Jung, it seems to me that such categories represent a real advance. But may I also say: even after this explanation, in which the concept of the symbol is not by chance central, it still remains the case that your interest is directed to categories which have already been internalized, already transposed into the imagination. What I would like to ask you is something very simple and straightforward—a question also to be put analogously to psychoanalytically oriented social theory—namely whether you believe that these symbols are really crucial for the problematic of contemporary society, which is your primary concern no less than mine. Or are the real, the actual masses, that is, simply the enormous pressure exerted by the gigantic numbers of human beings (even though the organization of society simultaneously supports and hinders the preservation of life)—is not the pressure of these real masses on political decision-making more important for contemporary society than these imaginary, in a wider sense social-psychological, matters to which you refer? Let us not forget that it turned out that even movements, which were apparently extreme dictatorships without any democratic consideration for popular opinion, such as Fascism and National Socialism, always latently possessed what the sociologist Arkadi Gurland has called a compromise character, that is to say, even in these forms of domination and tyrannization of the masses consideration of the real interest of the masses and of their real existence always asserted itself, even if in a hidden way. What really concerns me—to which you could perhaps reply—is this: how do you actually evaluate, in your conception of society and the crowd, the weight, this real weight of the masses in relation to the whole realm of the symbolic?*

Yes, I would of course say that the value, the significance of the real masses is incomparably greater. I would not hesitate for a moment, I would in fact go as far as to say that the dictatorships we have experienced are made up entirely of crowds, that without the growth of crowds, which is especially important, and without the deliberate artificial excitation of ever larger crowds, the power of dictatorships would be completely unthinkable. This fact is the starting point of my whole investigation. A contemporary of the events of the last 50 years since the outbreak of World War One, who has experienced first wars, then revolutions, inflations and then fascist dictatorship, cannot help feeling the necessity under the pressure of these events of trying to come to terms with the question of crowds. I would be very disappointed if the fact, that in the course of a investigation over many years I had arrived at other aspects of the crowd, should lead anyone to think that the real meaning of crowds is not decisive and above all important for me.

This seems to me of fundamental importance for a proper understanding of your intention. If I may make a theoretical point, it would be that a kind of mediation, not in the sense of compromise but of the Hegelian concept of mediation, should be assumed: precisely the real pressure, as you quite rightly recognize, of the deeply entwined categories, crowds and power, has increased to such an extent that the resistance, the self-assertion of the individual has become infinitely difficult. The symbolic significance of these categories has thus also increased, such that human beings retreat as it were back into archaic phases of their psychic world, where these internalized categories acquire a bodily meaning and are completely identified with. It is presumably only through the growth of these two correlative categories that human beings have come to resign themselves to their own disempowerment, by giving them meaning as something numinous, perhaps even irrational and therefore holy. To this extent I think there exists a connection between the growing symbolic significance of these things and their reality. However, I would like to stress a nuance: and that is, what then returns under pressure, namely the symbolic and the irrational, is not directly what it once was, but is now, I would say, a kind of result, made up of the real situation of human beings and of the world of images, to which they recur or even regress. It seems to me that the fatal, deadly threatening colouring which concepts like leader or crowd so readily take on today, especially when they are short-circuited, comes from the fact that we are no longer dealing with the original circumstances in which they were effective; now they are invoked as it were, and what is invoked from a distant past no longer possesses any truth but is transformed into a kind of poison through its untruth in the present.

There is much that needs to be said here about the details, where I would correct you in terms of my position. But by and large I would agree with you. I would say perhaps that one of the essential points—a point which always recurs when we consider crowds today—are the archaic elements we find in them. I do not know whether you agree with me that one must pay special attention to these archaic elements as something particularly important. It is not possible to investigate the crowd only as it appears today, even though it appears

clearly enough and in multiple form. I believe it is also important to derive it from what has long been there and has often appeared in different forms.

I would of course agree with you. The archaism, which emerges in crowd formation, has been repeatedly recognized in the tradition of modern social psychology—first of all by Gustave Le Bon in his Psychology of Crowds, *where he described precisely these archaic, irrational modes of behaviour in crowds and then derived them from the somewhat problematic and vague category of suggestion, and then by Freud, who in his, in my opinion, very significant short work* Group Psychology and Analysis of the Ego *set out to underpin Le Bon's description of crowds with a genetic-psychological derivation. Since you stand in dispute with this after all very considerable tradition of social thought—to which the American sociologist McDougall also belongs—it would be good, in the interest of a topological determination of your thinking, if you could indicate the specific differences of your own theory to these authors.*

First of all I would like to go back to the question of the form which the crowd takes in primitive societies, as it is quite clear that primitive societies, which consist of only very few persons, cannot lead to the crowd formations which we know today.

I have been wanting to raise this very question: can we even speak of crowds in primitive societies, where there were precious few persons? I am glad that you brought this up.

Here, I think, we need to introduce a new concept. I speak of the pack, and by the pack I mean a small group of human beings in a special state of excitement, which is closely related to the state of excitement of our modern crowds but which is different in that it is limited as opposed to the unlimited growth of our crowds. Packs occur in societies which consist of small groups, some of only 10, 20, 30 human beings, who wander in search of food. The famous models in the ethnological literature for such small groups are the bands of the Australian aborigines. What is striking is that out of these bands, under certain conditions of life, small excited groups form, which have a powerful goal and seek this goal with great energy and in extreme excitement. One kind of these bands is for example the hunting pack. There is a very large animal which individuals cannot master; several must come together in order to hunt down this animal, or the appearance of a large number of animals is involved. They want to hunt down as many as possible, they do not want them to escape, they could disappear again or a time of drought could return and there would be very few animals. For this reason they come together and set out to hunt the one or many animals. The concept of the hunting pack is so evident that we do not need to say much about it. The second pack—which is also obvious—is the one directed against another pack, and this brings us to the war pack. Where there are two packs which threaten each other, then something emerges which we know now from war in sharply increased, indeed enormous dimensions. This situation, however, is already there in early societies: when one pack fights against another. The third form, which is not so evident, is what I have called, perhaps for the first time, a lamenting pack. When a small group loses a member, when a member is torn from them through death, then the group usually comes together to take cognizance in some way of this death. At first they try to hold back, to keep the dying person in the group; when he has died they will turn to some rite, which removes him from the group, which reconciles him with his fate, which prevents him from becoming a dangerous enemy of the group. There are innumerable very important ceremonies and there is scarcely a people on earth which does not know them. All these connected phenomena I term lamenting packs. Now we come to the fourth form of the pack, which is perhaps the most interesting for us: human beings, who existed in very small numbers, always wanted to be more. If they were more, they could hunt more. If they were more, they could maintain themselves better against another group attacking them. There are innumerable rites and ceremonies which serve increase. Increase does not only mean increase of human beings but also the increase of the animals and plants from which they live. Everything connected with this I term increase packs.

These four forms of the pack seem to me to be firmly established. I think they can be demonstrated in many ways, and it also seems to me that their effect reaches into our time, but it must be added that the first three have a kind of archaic effect. The hunting pack has become the lynch mob in our modern world. We know cases of lynchings, when people suddenly attack a person

a pogrom pack!

That naturally goes back to the early example of the hunting pack. We know war, it is all too familiar. We know lament, perhaps more from religions than from the very mild form which it now takes socially. It plays an enormous role in Christendom and in other religions. The increase pack, however, has transformed itself. It was of course completely dependent on changes in the relations of production, and when one speaks of the importance of the relations of production, then I believe we think above all of everything which relates to the increase pack. It is not only an archaic form but has undergone qualitative changes, to such an extent that we do not recognize it in our society, where it appears as production. I believe it is important—I do not know

how far you would agree—to distinguish sharply the forms of the pack, which have a purely archaic character, from those which have entered modern life and have become a really contemporary part of our life.

Let me try to express the core of what you said. There is something essential here: for you the concept of the crowd is not a purely quantitative concept, as is often the case today, but determined by a series of qualitative aspects because it is related to the model concept of the pack, such as hunting, war—which is a somewhat more rational, intensified and higher developed stage of hunting—lament and what you call increase. I think it is important to stress this, as it shows how superficial the current phrases about the age of the masses and so on are, as if it were only a matter of numbers. As Stefan George put it in a well known poem: your number is itself sacrilege, whereas the sacrilege does not lie in the number but in these qualitative aspects which you have emphasized. Of these categories of the pack the first three are very clear, although you would surely agree with me that they cannot be statically separated from each other so simply, but that there is an interdependence between them. Hunting pack and war pack merge with each other, even though the more organized war pack, compared with what we could call the spontaneous hunting pack, represents the negation of the latter's immediacy.

If I may interject, briefly: I am convinced that the war pack emerged originally from the hunting pack.

emerged, yes!

It was a question of exacting revenge on a person who had perhaps committed a murder, and so a group formed, set off in order to revenge this murder. If the group, to which the murderer belonged, defended itself, a second pack was formed and we already have the model of the war pack.

Exactly! This is, I think, the general opinion of ethnology on this point. To be honest, I have a certain difficulty with the concept of the increase pack, as the whole will to increase seems to me a bit problematic. We have to consider that the commandment to increase, which we have in the great religions, above all Judaism and Catholicism, that this commandment occurs precisely in those religions which are distinguished from the mythical or magical natural religions. One has to assume that in primitive stages of the development of humanity—I am thinking for instance of the construction of a stage of hetaerism—the question of human increase was given no value. I would rather be inclined to say that this commandment to increase is of historical origin and is tied to the category of property, of property which can be handed down. Only when there is something like property, that must be preserved, that is fetishized, inherited—only at this point can it become a commandment to create heirs, who will take over this property. As a result this urge to increase appears as secondary not as primary.

It would be interesting if you could first say something about this. I would then like to say something about what I see as very fruitful in this category of increase.

Of the great number of examples, which I have collected, I would like to present two: In the Shi-King, the classical songbook of the Chinese, there is a poem about locusts, which equates the number of descendants with the number of locusts as something to be wished. This poem is short. I would like to read it to you: The wings of the locusts say: join, join. O, may your sons and nephews follow in endless line. The wings of the locusts say: unite, unite. O, may your sons and nephews be for ever one. We have here the large number, the continuity of the descendents, unity, that is, three wishes for the descendents. That the locusts are used here as a symbol for the descendents is particularly remarkable, because locusts were of course feared. Nevertheless, the enormity of their number is exactly what one wishes for one's descendents.

But isn't this a very late stage of an already organized, institutionalized society, of a state and an organized religion as compared with natural conditions?

This could perhaps be said. The Shi-King is very old, but . . .

All the same, it presumes a highly developed and indeed developed hierarchical society.

That is perhaps true. And that is why I would like to give you another example. This is especially interesting because it concerns totemic myths, which were published only some 15 years ago. The younger Strehlow recorded them among the Aranda. I want to tell one of them. It is about the origin of the bandicoot totem and it says: the ancestor of the bandicoot totem, old Korora, is represented lying at the bottom of a pond in eternal sleep, he has been sleeping for an eternity. One day an enormous number of bandicoots come out of his navel and armpits and he is completely surrounded by them. But he is still asleep. The sun rises. He sits up, gets up, feels hungry, notices that he is surrounded by an enormous number of bandicoots, he grabs in all directions, seizes one of these bandicoots, cooks it in the fierce sun and eats it—eats, that is, one of the creatures which has originated from him. He lies down to sleep and that night a bull roarer falls from his armpit, changes shape and becomes a human being. It is his first son, who grows and is recognized by him as his son the following morning. In the following night more of these sons fall from his armpits. And so it continues every night.