

postmodern era. I argue that the Second World War was "the" event to do so for the similar reason that French Revolution "inaugurated" modernity; the Cold War was but part of the gestation, of the transition from modernity to postmodernity. The basic reasons for this argument are the increased technological innovation, the resulting economic and thus socio-cultural complexities that yield quickly mutating ideologies. In other words, the ever increasing modification and redefinition of the social and personal identity, of the individual, is postmodernity. World War II wrought it, the Cold War defined and made it grow. The result, to echo Coker's view along with my own, is the expanding reign of perspectivalism. So, coming to my next objection, I argue that all bets are off—we are freedom, history has lost its meaning because its context is free-floating. Nietzsche, Heidegger, Marcuse, Derrida, Baudrillard, Barthes, Quines, Rorty, and Lyotard powerfully argue-elucidate why and how.

Mr. Coker describes postmodernity as "an era in which the past is receding." To which I say, Yes! History, that tyrant of linear time and thought, is long overdue in its dying. It chokes possibilities—we can be our own, and we can be authentic. Mr. Coker also states that postmodernity is an era "in which the future is struggling to be born." To which I must ask-reply Why the struggle? And by whom—by everyone? Does man need an overarching ideology or "world order"? Can not social and cultural "relativism (heterodoxy and heteroproxy) be glorious in themselves? Must we conclude with, "come out" of postmodernity? The article's tone clearly answers Yes, we must. I, on the other hand, say Perhaps all we need is undistorted communication. And I think that our tarrying with destruction here in the West that were the world wars and economic collapses argue against this wishing "to conclude," for having danced with annihilation, we gazed deeply into the eyes of death and saw ourselves, our self-hatred and denial, saw that belief and complacency makes grotesque. That

life and creation demand death, physical and otherwise, we know, but the Holocaust taught, "Make death an art. Kill with love not hatred!" Nietzsche was vindicated, the Nazis destroyed. A new world was born, ours.

The power of creation is in our hands. Destruction gave us that. And we shall not lose that power but only make it grow: the postmodern is the age of the over-person, of the creator. The only alternative is conformity and thus spiritual and rational suicide.

As a whole, Mr. Coker's article is invigorating and indeed in most respects enthralling, but its trajectory I

disapprove of. Instead I propose the one above, one which I think takes nothing away from what he stated only what he implied.

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[ERRATUM]

The article "Food and Beer in an Immigrant Society" by Jules Zanger (*Society*, July/August 1996) originally appeared in *Deutschland*, 1995—publication of the Press and Information Office of the Federal Government, Bonn, Germany.

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