

Thoughts and Sayings

Aphorisms of Panagiotis Kondylis

© Translated from the German: „Gedanken und Sprüche. Aphorismen von Panajotis Kondylis“, in Horst Falk (Hg), *Panajotis Kondylis. Aufklärer ohne Mission. Aufsätze und Essays*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin, 2007, S. 185-189, by C. F.. The translator also consulted the incomplete Greek translation: Κονδύλης Παναγιώτης, «Στοχασμοί και αποφθέγματα», μετάφραση: Λάμπρος Λαρέλης, *Νέα Έστία*, τ. 1717.

*Contributions to the theory of communication and of love for
one's neighbour*

Precisely the most witty and profound conversations full of intellect and spirit prove the impossibility of consensus: they prove that for every argument there is a counter-argument.

Conversations amongst those who think differently are impossible, and amongst like-minded persons superfluous.

A conversation about friendship or love can mean the beginning or the end of a friendship or of a love.

The beginning of a distinct and especial familiarity: to gossip in private with a third party about mutual friends¹.

When we expect from others that they “understand” us, we demand in plain language from them that they share our self-understanding.

Friendship is the (tacit) agreement about the fact that one side shares the self-understanding of the other side.

In order to know everything that man does not know, one must already know very much [about all kinds of things].

Therefore, because there are few who know much, there are also so many who regard themselves as all-knowing or at least behave as such.

Arrogant people come across as unsympathetic because we do not have to expect from them any confirmation of our own self-love.

¹ This thought only appears in the Greek text, and not in the German.

The constant lament and complaint of fools is that the intelligent are immodest and presumptuous.

In success one feels elevated above the human measure; in failure, one thinks of the common human lot.

Great vainness in contrast to a little vainness, which lives on the yield and proceeds of the feverish daily business at the Vanity Fair, is largely independent of praise and applause; because of that, she seems like modesty, humility.

Politeness and civility often offer the most agile opportunism; only polite and civil people manage to keep all doors always and simultaneously open.

One ought not talk about himself: this fundamental principle of tactful dealings with others stems in reality from very practical considerations. Whoever speaks of himself hands others weapons – and worse, he gives

them the possibility and opportunity, in fact the right, to verify the correspondence and consistency of his words with his deeds.

Additional comments in relation to optics

Blinkers provide secure, assured orientation.

Because the boundaries of dreams are fluid, the boundaries of the real are made or become fluid too; because the real is seen from the standpoint of the dream.

Hope and angst (fear) obstruct insight into human affairs; yet hope can be overcome with much greater difficulty than angst (fear).

Man can believe anything possible in order to convince himself and others that his acts are in agreement with his beliefs.

We are interested less in that which we are than that what others believe about us.

Conscience is the display and shop window, the showcase, of consciousness.

The oases and havens of the intellect and spirit lie in the deserts and wastelands of the intellect and spirit.

No matter how large our Cosmos is. The main thing is that we stand and are at the centre (of attention). Extensions of the circle, which push the centre occupied by us into the periphery, are undesirable.

The horizon moves with us.

Pious thoughts

After the death of God, everything is permitted – goes the lament; as long as God lived, He himself permitted everything – goes the ascertainment.

If death has no meaning, then life also has none; that has always been the strongest and most cunning – argument of the earthly governors of the Hereafter.

The Devil is an outstanding theologian; theologians are mediocre devils.

“Mankind” or “Humankind” is the collective God of the New Times (Modern Era).

Sociology of morals and morals of dominance

Why petty bourgeois are never cynics: belief in the existence and practicability of generally accepted moral rules gives them a sense of additional security and safety.

Plutocratic democracy: inequality in food and eating, equality in dessert.

The sleep of the well-fed is deeper than the sleep of the righteous and just.

The present ruler urges Reason, the future ruler sings of freedom.

Ideas are the consolation and comfort of the weak and the pretext of the strong.

Since true valour and morals by definition are on our side, the foe's victory is put exclusively down to fraud, deception, deceit, cheating.

In praise of Philosophers

The lack of historical education is the inexhaustible fount of inspiration of philosophers.

The primary concern of the professional philosopher is to convince himself and the world that he does not earn his salary as a simple working man, like all other working men and women too, but as a benefactor of humankind.

Philosophical debates only become honest when they end in personal insults and abuse.

A comparison of the political analyses of Tocqueville and Hegel shows that the absolute Spirit was a provincial (country cousin type), after all.

If philosophers are the Salt of the Earth, then it is no wonder that this earth decays, goes bad, putrefies, rots.

From the notebook of an ethnographer

Germans possess the virtues of the pleb, i.e. industry, hard work, diligence and thrift, but they lack the virtues of the aristocrat, namely sovereignty, composure, calmness and the superior cunning and guile of the predator. After a number of superfluous adventures, they have in the meantime attained the status in the world corresponding to their virtues: they have become paragons and goody two-shoes in both camps.

The German of the master race (or overlord) was the ultimate tragedy of world history until now. The humane and peace-loving German is so far the ultimate comedy of world history.

The French invented morals and morality because they knew that Germans would believe in them.

Anglo-Saxon theoretical naivety, which passes itself off as humorous naturalness and impartiality.

On the care of one's health

Definitive argument in favour of smoking: pleasure is certain, peril is possible.

Matters of taste

I really like modest and unassuming, uneducated and uncultured people.

However, I prefer the vainness of the educated and cultured to the impudence of the half-educated and half-cultured.

It is good that my body cannot commit all the sins of my intellect and spirit.

The boundless desire to suck in the world – and the boundless tedium once you've done it².

Autumn is the most imaginative, inspired kitsch painter.

Marriage is equivalent to an attempt to replace all the books in the world with a single encyclopaedia.

*Summa summarum*³

No innocence is innocent, no guilt is guilty⁴.

² This thought only appears in the Greek text, and not in the German.

³ All in all; on the whole; in total.

⁴ This saying only appears in the Greek text, and not in the German.

Human is everything that humans do and have done.

Values are relative and man is mortal; thought through consistently, this elementary insight means: nihilism.

We are play-actors and directors in one person.

Manliness is the morality of nihilism⁵.

Atheism is minimal decency, decorum, manners and grace.

To not want anything, to want nothing, to not want: these are, in order, the possible upward gradations (escalations) of volition (the will)⁶.

The daemonic is no dark drive, urge or impulse, but the ultimate consequence of thought.

⁵ The Greek translation reads as: Manliness, the definitive, to wit, saying goodbye to every hope and fear, is the morality of nihilism.

⁶ This thought only appears in the Greek text (as the last of the sayings and thoughts), and not in the German.