

ENDNOTE:

Glimpses of a Vision for Twenty-First-Century Scholarship

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Keynote: Can one speak of scholarship from within scholarship but without using the language of scholarship?

Scholarship is a Cyclops with its eye located at the back of its head. Maintaining like the giant, as it walks, a view of what lies behind, scholarship provides a perfect rearguard for humanity in its course through time, ensuring that no sudden attack from the past will disturb the present. If one sees every present as the conscious part of humanity and the past as its unconscious, then it becomes apparent that we need a guardian for the threshold separating them. Indeed, a vital part of every present is taken up with establishing (or manipulating) its past. Contrary to the current view, scholarship serves a fundamental psychological need: a rationalized past is always less dangerous.

Funding provides the energy required for the realization of any project. That a great part of scholarship's funding comes from non-academic sources makes it susceptible to extraneous, usually sectarian, influences. It has to be ensured that twenty-first-century scholarship will be fuelled by an unadulterated energy-source.

If Universities employ and teach people from any country, base their curricula and research on world civilization rather than on a national one, and receive funding from international sources, then why should they belong to any particular country? The only institution under whose jurisdiction a University should remain is the UN. And unless its campuses are declared 'free-zones', Universities will not fulfil their true role ('university' and 'universality' are manifestations of the same concept). If scholarship is something more than a profession, then why should the title of Doctor of Philosophy be considered a mere professional qualification? A PhD should also confirm that its bearer is less susceptible than most to prejudice and sectarianism, thereby becoming a kind of passport.

In anticipation of improvements in general education and employment we must be prepared to adjust scholarship to new conditions. A great deal of scholarship's effort will be passed on to computers, while the role of scholars will be to provide guidelines for inquiry rather than fixed interpretations. The exclusive distinction between the valid and the non-valid cannot hold anymore. We need a clever scholarship, equally at home in both objective and subjective investigation, connecting the past with the present and projecting it into the future, able to understand that books are not the exclusive source of knowledge.

Is a good scholar a clever one as well? It is not enough to have acquired a sophisticated methodological apparatus; scholars must themselves become living methods: the scholar *is* the method.

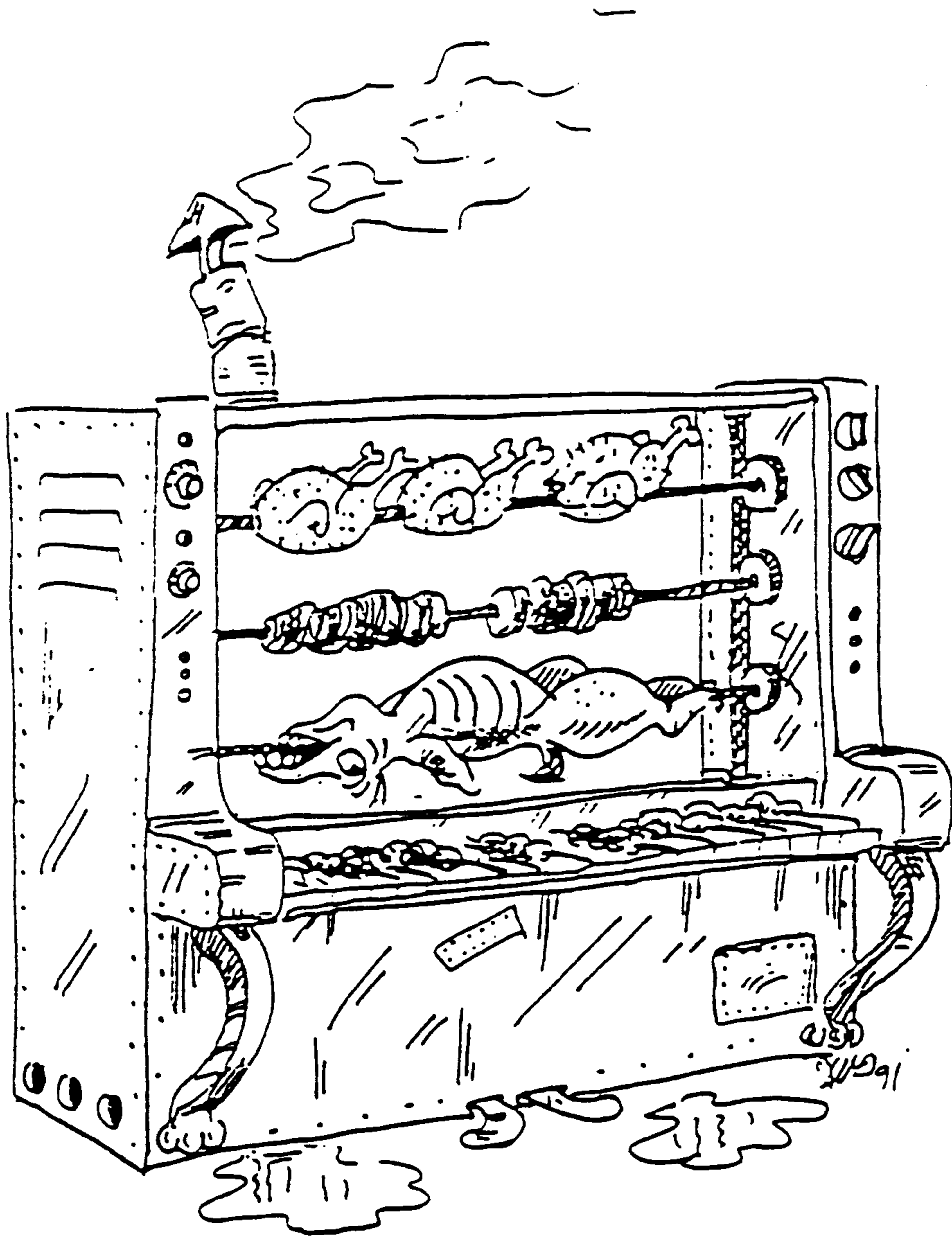
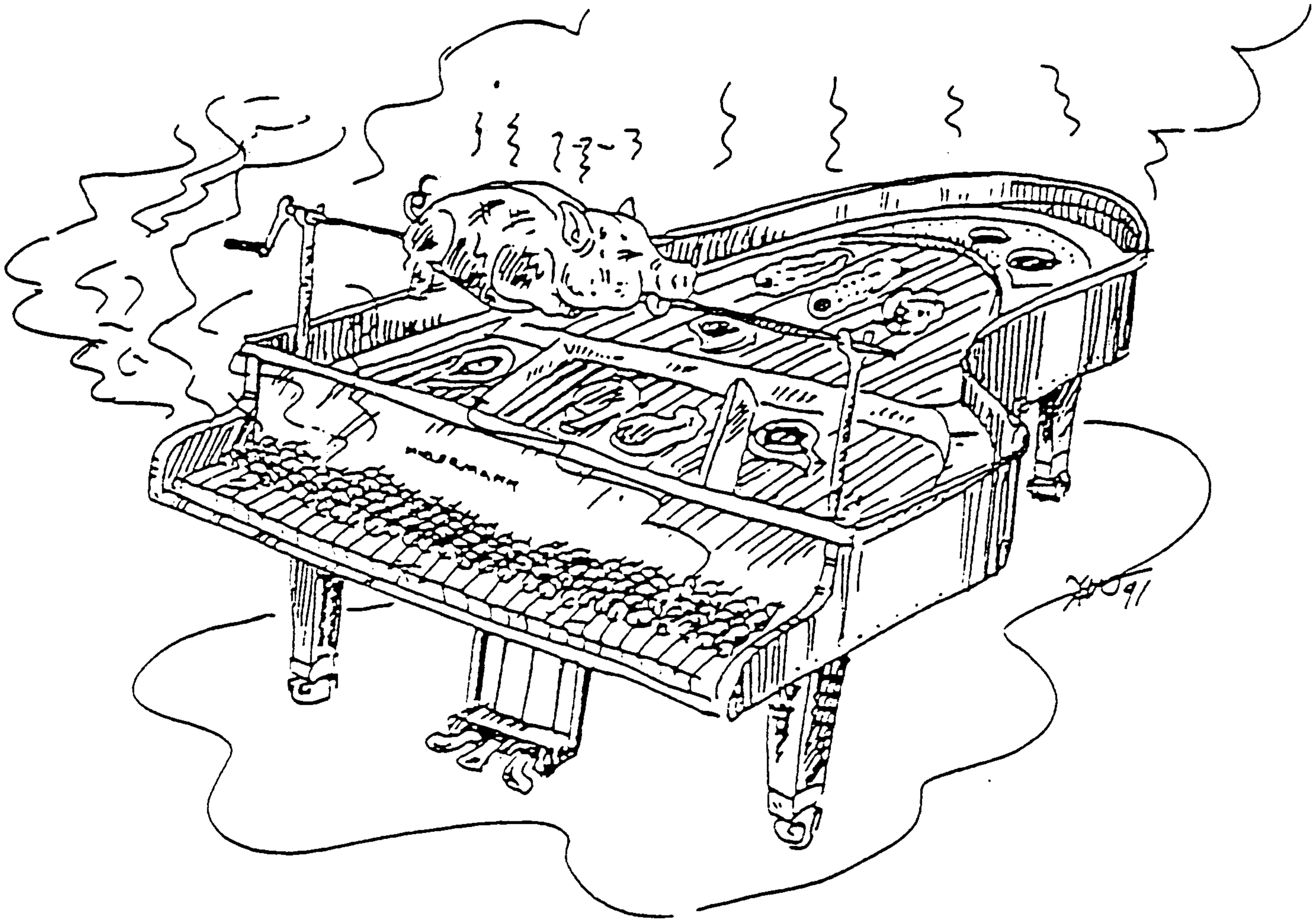
The dynamic emergence of ecology in recent decades seems not to have affected our historical discourses, since they remain disappointingly anthropocentric, still separating human and natural history. For example, historical accounts are still awaited of the influence of birdsong on our (human) music (from ancient India to Messiaen) and of the power of natural resources (such as electricity, with its revolutionizing effect on musical sound in the twentieth century) to shape our musical culture.

At present, the task of historians is to establish the connections between events that are most intelligible to us, that is, to incorporate them into the most likely scenario. How great can the distance really be between the construction of myths in traditional cultures and that of our historical discourses, once we understand that both activities spring from the same psychological need: to anchor ourselves in the past?

An event is an explosion within the space-time dimension, produced by those invisible threads we call causes. As such, it emits a certain amount of energy, which constitutes its impact. If we translate the conventional terminology of historiography into that of energy, we establish a common denominator between human and natural history, thereby producing a more inclusive and comprehensive historical account. (We must learn not to confuse fantasy with speculation, which is a perfectly legitimate scientific activity: it is the prospect of discovery that leads to the discovery itself.) What twenty-first-century historians will be preoccupied with are the broad lines of history. A shift from the 'middleground' to the 'background', or deep causal level, is inevitable. Nobody today can detect a direct connection between a certain musical performance in ancient Greece and another in the Renaissance because our historical discourses are based on 'locality', namely a set of neighbouring events in space-time. To what extent can we trust our historical accounts when we know that they are based on what could be described as the garbage of history, namely the documents? How much do documents reveal the past and how much do they obscure it? Our histories are constructed according to the records of the events and not according to the events themselves. Yet the causes are always present, and if we decide to open new eyes, a transcendental history will emerge.

If the slogans of twentieth-century scholarship have been 'analysis' and 'interpretation', those of the twenty-first will be 'synthesis' and 'application'. We owe a lot to musical analysis, as it revealed to us new dimensions of music, but it also owes *us* at least as much because of its exaggerations, advocating the idolatry of structure and legitimizing the monstrous aspects of twentieth-century music. It is now time for it to repudiate the arrogance of its youth and assume the place it deserves within musicology. What analysis has been for our century, the psychology of music will be for the next. The steady growth of music therapy, as well as the first conscious applications of psychological aspects of music in films and *muzak*, indicate that the next century will see a massive development in this field, breathing life back into the discussion of music's ethical properties.

It is symptomatic of our race's immaturity that even today one feels the need to apologize for having a vision, for we tend to neglect the fact that vision has shaped our history. The question remains: how visionary should scholarship be? □



'Piano-Barbecue.' Drawings by Christos Mitsakis (MMus, Boston University), based upon an idea by Ilias Chrissochoidis. Reprinted from *Mousikotropies*, 3/91, 12-14.