“Verein von Egoisten” — I’ve chosen to translate this as “association of egoists” in my translation of Der Einzige und Sein Eigentum (The Unique and Its Own). But aware egoists, that is willful self-creators, associate not by forming permanent groups, but through an ongoing interweaving of activities, a ceaseless coming together and separating, each participating as suits her own project of self-creation. So to clarify this idea, I will here call the association of egoists the coming together of willful self-creators.1

Many have the misconception that all egoists are loners (and that loners avoid relating). As if only those willing to submit themselves to a group actually relate or interact. I would argue the very opposite. When I submit to the group, I — as myself — relate to no flesh and blood individual. I submerge myself into the group identity and “relate” as such to other abstract identities. Only by

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1 I love using the word “egoist.” It provokes people, and I love to do that. But I also want to make it clear that an aware egoist willfully creates himself in each moment and this self-creation (and self-devouring/enjoying) forms what I call her egoism.
separating myself out from all groups do I become capable of relating to others as my actual, ever-changing self. Even if I were a loner (and at times I am), I would be creating my interactions with others as I choose, because I can only exist as myself in relation to my properties, that is, in relation to the world I perceive and conceive, in relation to the others from whom I choose to distinguish and distance myself. These relations, these interactions I make with others would be how I create myself as a loner.

But most of the time I enjoy creating myself, my life, my world, together with others. I want to come together with them, to interweave my life and my world with theirs. I see this as my actual wealth, as my property, as essential to my willful self-creation and self-enjoyment. So I never submit myself to any group. Rather I seek out those who, like me, are out to create, devour and enjoy themselves with intention, and I look for the ways I can enhance my self-creative project by weaving it for awhile into theirs, by coming together with them for a time so as to increase each one’s strength and each one’s wealth.

In the worlds you and I share, the inter-individual worlds where your and my experiences correspond, each of us encounters a lot that stands in the way of our willful self-creation and self-enjoyment, that acts to suppress self-activity and to impose roles, identities, and static relationships on us, to make us parts of some group or another. In particular, you and I confront individuals playing the institutionalized roles that form the standardized relations of the fictions known as the state and the economy, and the industrial and post-industrial technological structures that form human beings into a mass.\(^2\) Even though the activities of individuals

\(^2\) Despite “personal” computers, laptops, etc., that you can carry with you, this is as true of cybernetic technology as of the factory. In fact, the internet creates a global human mass in which individuals are reduced to the same basic activity — the taking in and giving out of “information” — thus, being kept in formation. This technology has also effectively destroyed privacy, an essential aspect of free (or better, own) association.