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Carl Schmitt's 'Hamlet oder Hekuba' and the question of a philosophy of history

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Propositions

1. The relation between art and history has been mediated in modern era by philosophy, namely, by philosophy of history.
2. Such a notion finds in Hegel its conceptual foundation, as art is collocated in a particular historical hierarchy in which its authenticity is evaluated spiritually.
3. However, a philosophical interpretation of this nature lacks the historical awareness that jurisprudence can provide.
4. *Hamlet oder Hekuba* displays such a level of awareness through a particular conception of philosophy of history, according to which a historical event depicted in a work of art can reach a mythical status.
5. The driving force of the tragedy of Hamlet is the asymmetry between a broken political order and the inoperativity of Prince Hamlet. This figure still has a powerful actuality today—thus offering a surface of recognition for societies and individuals.
6. Critical events have the role of historical apexes, against which we can understand our own reality.
7. Likewise, social crisis serves as the best material to create and perform art.
9. The tragical core of Hamlet is not his impotence nor the taboo of the queen mother, but the historical conditions that are reproduced time and again.
10. A jurisprudential interpretation of tragedy can reveal the philosophical substance of such a phenomenon, as it also can broaden the hermeneutical scope of analysis.

11. The social and personal uncertainty that surrounds both Hamlet environment and mind—ciphared in his archetypical “to be or not to be” monologue—display a philosophical spirit that oscillates between mourning and procrastination, and the stalwart consciousness of what needs to be done.

12. To live according such a spirit represents the psychological archetype of a socially unmerged life—but conversely, it also represents the ongoing expanding abyss between the biographical life of an individual and her or his historical role in modern society.