



Looking Back on the End of the World

Jean Baudrillard, Gunter Gebauer, Dietmar Kamper, Dieter Lenzen, Edgar Morin, Gerburg Treusch-Dieter, Paul Virilio, Christoph Wulf

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First published in 1989, Looking Back on the End of the World raises provocative questions about the possibilities of critical knowledge in social systems that seem to have "surpassed history." Unlike recent works that make history end with the consumer, or project the conflict between the capitalist and the oppressed into the future, the writers in these essays perform a much more basic task: they argue that we can now think through the "end of the world." The idea of a "unified world," they claim, has given way to new sensibilities about history. The essays evaluate current negative obsessions such as apocalypse and the elimination of difference, and offer positive approaches to the "gamble of thinking" required in a society without traditional subjects and institutions. Capitalism, the book argues, has changed all the rules of the game, and any nostalgia for "starting" from the familiar in terms of intellectual critique is doomed. Collectively, the authors sketch the unfamiliarity of the new, those moments when our categories dissolve in the face of connections and relations that announce all sorts of "ends." And other things besides.



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