

F.W.J. Schelling

Translated, with an Introduction, by  
Jason M. Wirth

# The Ages of the World

SUNY series in  
Contemporary Continental Philosophy

Dennis J. Schmidt, Editor

# THE AGES OF THE WORLD

*(Fragment)*

from the handwritten remains

Third Version (c. 1815)

by

FRIEDRICH WILHELM JOSEPH SCHELLING

*Translated, with an Introduction, by*

JASON M. WIRTH

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## TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

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### I

An entry in Schelling's diary, dated September 15, 1810, reads: "*Die 3 Weltalter* in d. Nacht [*The 3 Ages of the World* in the night]."¹ And so on that night Schelling embarked on what was perhaps his most ambitious philosophical project. Another entry, dated from the end of that year (December 27), and following shortly after lightening and thunder storms and a "violent hurricane in the night," proclaims that *The 3 Ages of the World* was "begun in earnest" (SP, 216). Schelling was to work on this *magnum opus* over the next two decades of his life, announcing its pending publication several times, but never submitting a completed version.

Schelling's failure to complete this book does not seem to have stemmed from a lack of effort on his part. Schelling composed multitudinous versions of *Die Weltalter*, including numerous versions of the first book (*The Past*). In 1939 Horst Fuhrmans discovered in the cellar of the Library of the University of Munich a large chest, filled with a disorganized mass of many thousands of folio pages, each crammed with writing in Schelling's own hand. Among the sheets were not only the lectures for his late philosophy (*The Philosophy of Mythology and Revelation*, etc.), but also two corrected versions, set but not printed, of the first book of *Die Weltalter*, as well as more than twelve quite different handwritten versions of the first book. Fuhrmans first discussed this material in his 1940 book *Schellings letzte Philosophie: Die negative und positive Philosophie im Einsatz des Spätidealismus*. Unfortunately, however, these manuscripts were all lost in July 1944 when the library burned after three consecutive days of Allied bombing.<sup>2</sup>

However, the 1811 and 1813 versions had been saved from the trunk and were published by Manfred Schröter in 1946. Schelling's son, Karl Friedrich



August, had published a later and much longer version, dating from around 1815, in the eighth volume of *Schellings Sämtliche Werke* in 1861, claiming that it was “the most complete” of the versions found among his father’s literary remains. Although all three versions are quite extraordinary in their own ways, I have chosen to translate the third and longest version. It is, in my judgment, the most sustained and developed of the three versions. The second or 1813 version has recently appeared in a good translation by Judith Norman with a thoughtful essay by Slavoj Žižek, in which he argues that it is the strongest of the three versions.<sup>3</sup> I myself do not think that it would be appropriate here to argue for the superiority of one version over another. They all merit a careful reading. The first version is the most dramatic in tone and it is my hope that it too will soon appear in translation.

Frederick de Wolfe Bolman Jr, first translated the third or 1815 version into English in 1942.<sup>4</sup> This edition is not without its virtues and it might be of some benefit to consult it alongside the present translation. *Die Weltalter* is a very difficult text and I have tried to ameliorate these difficulties wherever possible. I have followed Bolman’s practice of inserting the page numbers of the original German edition (using the standard pagination) to greater facilitate the possibility of using the German alongside my translation.<sup>5</sup> Not wanting to make the reader an utter prisoner of my reading of Schelling—and all translations are readings—I have attempted to make my translation choices as transparent as possible. I have included an extensive German/English and English/German lexicon at the conclusion of the translation, in part to aid in alerting the curious reader as much as possible as to my plan of reading. As to the further details of my own reading of Schelling, I shall have to defer to a future book. *Die Weltalter* is Schelling’s work and, in respecting that, I do not want to co-opt it entirely to my own purposes. I will resist the temptation to pontificate at length as to why I believe that this is a text fully present to the concerns of contemporary philosophical debates<sup>6</sup> and as to why I think that Schelling was unduly overshadowed by his former roommate Hegel. (This text is, after all, in part Schelling’s first attempt at a response to Hegel’s monumental 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit*.) I will attempt to refrain from such *hubris* for the time being.

Such restraint was not typical either of Schelling’s early career or, as we have seen, of the numerous reworkings of *Die Weltalter*. In the winter semester of 1827, Schelling, who had not offered a lecture course for two decades, offered a course entitled *Das System der Weltalter*, a course he repeated in the summer semester of 1833. Yet, with the exception of a minor work defending himself from a hasty and virulent attack by F. H. Jacobi published in January of 1812, Schelling did not publish anything of significance after the May 1809 publication of his most famous work, *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit/Philosophical Investigations of the Being of Human Freedom*.

This is all the more remarkable considering the meteoric rise of the young Schelling. A prodigy, five years the junior of his Tübinger Stift roommates Hölderlin and Hegel, Schelling was born in 1775 in Leonberg (in Württemberg) and entered the Stift at fifteen years of age. After some precocious writing at the Stift, including a 1794 essay on Plato’s *Timaeus*, Schelling published his first major work (*Über die Möglichkeit einer Form der Philosophie überhaupt/Concerning the Possibility of a Form of Philosophy in General*) when he was nineteen. In 1797, at twenty-two years of age, Schelling, who had already published several important works of philosophy, including *Vom Ich als Prinzip der Philosophie/On the I as Principle of Philosophy* (1795) and *Philosophische Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kritizismus/Philosophical Letters Concerning Dogmatism and Criticism* (1795), and *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur/Ideas toward a Philosophy of Nature* (1797), received the call to assume a professorial post at Jena. Upon assuming his new post, and profiting from the company of the Jena Circle (whose members included the Schlegel brothers and Novalis), Schelling accelerated his philosophical activity, publishing numerous works, including the appearance in 1800 of the *System des transzendentalen Idealismus/System of Transcendental Idealism*. Not long thereafter, Schelling delivered a remarkable series of lectures on the *Philosophy of Art*. In 1804, an essay appeared, *Philosophie und Religion*, in which Schelling first intimated that his negative or formal philosophy (the contemplation of the Real ascending towards the Ideal) would be complemented by a positive philosophy, or the descending history of the Ideal, or Freedom, among the Real. The latter project would occupy Schelling for the ensuing decades of his life (up until his death in 1854), and the *Freedom* essay, as well as *The Ages of the World*, are, in part, transitional works to the positive philosophy. After assuming Hegel’s post in 1841, ten years after Hegel’s death, Schelling’s Berlin lectures on the *Philosophy of Mythology and Revelation* were testimonials to the history of divine freedom announced in *The Ages of the World*.

Yet 1809 marked a turning point in Schelling’s zeal to publish. Already Schelling’s reputation had been injured by Hegel’s unwarranted dismissal of the intellectual intuition as the “night when all cows are black.” (In fact, this was a variation of a critique that Schelling himself had made about the misinterpretation of the intellectual intuition. Hegel admitted as much in a letter to Schelling.)<sup>7</sup> More seriously, however, Schelling’s wife, Caroline, had become very ill. It is hard to read the *Freedom* essay, published in May 1809, with its analogy between sickness and evil (sickness is to Being as evil is to human being), without thinking of Caroline. In the treatise, Schelling claimed that the “veil of melancholy [*Schwermut*] that is spread out over all of nature is the profound and indestructible melancholy of all life” (I/7, 399). Caroline died on September 7, 1809. Schelling was devastated. In a letter written less than a month after Caroline’s death, Schelling claimed that “I now need friends who

are not strangers to the real seriousness of pain and who feel that the single right and happy [*glücklich*] state of the soul is the divine mourning [*Traurigkeit*] in which all earthly pain is immersed.”<sup>8</sup> A year later, Schelling began work on *Die Weltalter*, a philosophical poem about the rotatory movement of natality and fatality, pain and joy, comedy and tragedy within God, that is, within the whole of Being, itself. “Pain is something universal and necessary in all life, the unavoidable transition point to freedom. We remember growing pains in the physical as well as the moral sense. We shall not shun presenting even that primordial being (the first possibility of God externally manifesting) in the state of suffering that comes from growth. Suffering is universal, not only with respect to humanity, but also with respect to the creator. It is the path to glory” (335).

## II

I would now like to turn to the question of what it might mean to read Schelling’s self-composing cosmic poem. In the second of his lectures *On University Studies* that Schelling began delivering in 1802, he commented on the need for live instruction. If learning were merely the mastery of the external details, then students could just as well be referred to any one of a number of textbooks written on a given topic. But to really learn something one has to move beyond the appropriation of a discovery’s superficial details and somehow acquire a “sure and living feeling” for them rather than live “within his science as though on another’s property.”<sup>9</sup> It requires the living, so to speak, to foster somehow a living feel for what animates a discovery. Furthermore, many discoveries can only be appreciated if one can somehow rediscover the *spirit*, as it were, of the original discovery. What is needed, then, is a kind of repetition that does not simply imitate the original, but which reproduces it in such a way that what remains otherwise hidden in the letter of the original discovery intimates itself. “Many” of these discoveries “are of a kind whose inner essence can be grasped only by a kindred genius through a rediscovery in the literal sense of the word.”<sup>10</sup> What remains hidden, accessible only to the kindred genius, does not belong to the external form of the science. It belongs to its indwelling, manifestly nonmanifesting, yet life-granting spirit. As Schelling articulated this in this version of *Die Weltalter*:

Whoever has to some extent exercised their eye for the spiritual contemplation of natural things knows that a spiritual image, whose mere vessel (medium of appearance) is the coarse and ponderable, is actually what is living within the coarse and the ponderable. The purer that this

image is, the healthier the whole is. This incomprehensible but not imperceptible being, always ready to overflow and yet always held again, and which alone grants to all things the full charm, gleam, and glint of life, is that which is at the same time most manifest and most concealed. (283)

If one were to apply this to *Die Weltalter* itself, one could infer that the text itself works against its own letter, endeavoring to intimate the invisible and inaudible within the rigorous orders of the text’s own visibility and audibility. The spirit of reading, so to speak, is the call to read the unwritable and follow the movements of *die verborgene Spur der Natur*, the hidden trace of nature.

Schelling spoke of this in his address *Über das Verhältnis der bildenden Künste zu der Natur* / *On the Relationship of the Fine Arts to Nature*, delivered on October 12, 1807, at the Akademie der Wissenschaften in Munich. Discussing the relationship between the fine arts and nature, Schelling argued that, as with nature, art is “dead” when “you do not bring the spiritual eye to it which penetrates the exterior and feels the active force [*wirkende Kraft*] in it” (I/7, 295). The spiritual eye “feels [*empfindet*]” the sublime (freedom) insofar as it has intimated itself within form. It is not the gaze of the theoretical, which only surveys manifest orders, reducing what is most forceful to a rule-bound appearance. The spiritual eye, rather, intimates the unprethinkable (*unvordenklich*) future in a thing, that is, its “creating life” and its “power to exist” (I/7, 294). However, the spiritual eye glimpses the sublimity of freedom only through the proxy of the beautiful. There is no direct access to the sublime. This would be the way to utter madness and death. Rather, using a phrase that appears with frequency from his earliest works until his final Berlin lectures, Schelling claimed that “we must go through the form [*über die Form hinausgehen*] in order to gain it back as intelligible, alive, and as truly felt [*empfunden*]” (I/7, 299). The prepositional phrase *über etwas hinaus*, literally a going through in order to get beyond, traces the movement (what Schelling called “negative philosophy”) of the spiritual eye as it intuits within form that which actively contests form. The aesthetic intuition (the spiritual eye) senses the sublime in “the pain of form” as the artist “seals the power of fire, the lightning of light, in hard stone and the fair soul of tone in strict timbre” (I/7, 304). Only by going through the form can one feel its spiritual life: “Only through the completion of form can the form be annihilated” (I/7, 305). Through this annihilation (through the suspension of the tyranny of the Real without thereby eradicating the Real) lies “the highest beauty without character” in the sense that the “universe would have no determinate measurement, neither length, nor width, nor depth because it contains all with equal infinity. Or that the art of the creative nature would be formless because it itself is subjected to no form” (I/7, 306). Or, to paraphrase another one of Schelling’s formulations, the spiritual eye feels the soul’s grace in the body. The “body is the form and grace [*Anmut*] is the soul,

although not the soul in itself, but the soul of form, that is, the soul of nature [*die Naturseele*].” Hence the soul is not, as certain traditions within Medieval theology and philosophy would have it, the *quidditas* or the essence of a thing (then soul = form), but rather (the deformative force indwelling within all form). The soul is the excess of the form within the form, its animistic life (after all, *anima* is Latin for soul as well as a life principle). The soul is a kind of Dionysian force, squandering its force beyond the ego’s capacity to preserve itself. “Panthers or tigers do not pull the carriage of Dionysus in vain” (337). Art emerges in the generosity that is liberated by the suspension of the ego’s hegemony. “The soul in the person therefore is not the principle of individuality. Rather, it is that through which one is lifted beyond all selfhood and through which one becomes capable of sacrifice of oneself, of selfless love, and, what is the highest, of contemplation and knowledge of the essence of things and with this, of art” (I/7, 312). Without soul, without “great and general enthusiasm, there are only sects” (I/7, 327). The theoretical eye (always a form of egoism) strives to find the truth in things, taking refuge in the work’s hypertrophic status as a thing and partitioning the results of its gaze as *the* truth and *the* good. The spiritual eye, on the other hand, affirms the advent of divine fecundity within the grace and beauty of things. This grace is a prodigality that does not hold the future in reserve, but rather releases it to the nonprecalculable advent of freedom’s grace.

For Schelling, then, a complete work of art, of which *Die Weltalter* may have been a candidate, is the work of both genius (the work of the productive imagination, the graceful descent of freedom into necessity, the always ironic self-articulation of the Divine Word) and the work’s simultaneous capacity to reflect upon itself as an event of freedom. It is an original work whose theme is the expression of the inscrutability of its own possibility and the inexpressibility of its own ground. It is the Word falling in love with its anterior silence. Spirit (the irreconcilable tension between form and soul, cultural specificity and the void of divine silence) does not proclaim itself. Rather, in the moment of its greatest intensity, it grows silent [*verstummt*]. *Verstummen* is not a mere negative dialectical degeneration into muteness. Rather, in hearing the faint echoes of silence within discourse, discourse falls in love with always being underway toward its own inherent silence—a silence that speaks louder than words but which can only be approached (but never attained) through words.<sup>11</sup> Language attempts, to borrow a phrase from Lyotard’s *Le différend*, “to counter Wittgenstein and say the unsayable.” As Schelling put it later:

Just as many people imagine a beginning without any presuppositions at all, they would also not be able to presuppose thinking itself and, for example, also not deduce the language in which they are expressing this. But since this itself could not happen without language, there would

remain only the growing silent [*das Verstummen*] that the helplessness and faint audibility of language really seek to approach. The beginning would have to be at the same time the end. (II/1, 312)

Art, then, is language in love with itself, affirming both the historical and cultural particularities of its mode of articulation as well as the fecund void of its ground. The complete work of art affirms both poles of its potency: what is externally articulated and what is inwardly inexpressible. Such a tension led Schelling to conclude quite dramatically at the end of this version of *Die Weltalter* that there are three kinds of thinkers and, hence one could say by implication, that there are also three kinds of readers. “Since Aristotle it is even customary to say of people that nothing great can be accomplished without a touch of madness. In place of this, we would like to say: nothing great can be accomplished without a constant solicitation of madness, which should always be overcome, but should never be utterly lacking” (338). At this point Schelling offers the following—quite startling—strategy of assessing people. First, there are the dead intellectuals, devoid of the madness of freedom, relegated to civil service before the letter of the truth. These “sober spirits” have severed themselves from the drunken center and, if one were to apply the language of the *Freedom* essay, they are, despite their apparently harmless pettiness, in a dangerous way physically and morally sick. They are dying on the periphery.

One could say that there is a kind of person in which there is no madness whatsoever. These would be the uncreative people incapable of procreation, the ones that call themselves sober spirits. These are the so-called intellectuals [*Verstandesmenschen*] whose works and deeds are nothing but cold intellectual works and intellectual deeds. Some people in philosophy have misunderstood this expression in utterly strange ways. For because they heard it said of intellectuals that they are, so to speak, low and inferior, and because they themselves did not want to be like this, they good-naturedly opposed reason [*Vernunft*] to intellect instead of opposing reason to madness. But where there is no madness, there is also certainly no proper, active, living intellect (and consequently there is just the dead intellect, dead intellectuals). (338)

The dead(ly) *Verstandesmensch*, despite her or his intellectual acumen and sobriety, are purveyors of the desiccated spirit (the desert of soulless form). Their thinking ultimately belongs to the realm of *Blödsinn* (imbecility) and idiocy. “The utter lack of madness leads to another extreme, to imbecility (idiocy), which is an absolute lack of all madness” (338–339). The truth of the sick intellectual is precisely that: a truth. But it is an imbecilic truth, a piece of minutia.

The sick, considered as such, can only produce more sickness. If such an argument sounds familiar, it is probably because this was a similar position to the one advocated by Friedrich Nietzsche. Although there is little evidence that Nietzsche read much Schelling or that he had any sympathy with him, Nietzsche nonetheless also argued that the imbecilic "truths" of the herd were part of the poisonous arsenal of the scholar. As Gilles Deleuze eloquently argues this point in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*:

Stupidity is not error or a tissue of errors. There are imbecile thoughts, imbecile discourses, that are made up entirely of truths; but these truths are base, they are those of a base, heavy and laden soul. . . . In truth, as in error, stupid thought only discovers the most base—base errors and base truths that translate the triumph of the slave, the reign of petty values or the power of an established order.<sup>12</sup>

It does not follow from either Schelling or Nietzsche's argument that they are glibly advocating an utter surrender to madness. This would, in the end, not be essentially different than the ascetic priest's desire to lead the herd into any other kingdom of ethical imperatives. Schelling, for his part, attempted to arouse a kind of theocratic sensibility, a *Gesinnung* or enculturated disposition by which Reason remains at the disposal of madness, enchanted by it, humbled by it, continuously solicitous of it, but not such that this drunken ground annihilates Reason. Rather, madness "animates" Reason.

In addition to an intellectually comatose life devoid of madness, there were "two other kinds of persons in which there really is madness" (339). One kind of person is simply mad, that is, reason has been altogether vanquished by freedom. They have been, to borrow Hölderlin's phrase, "struck by Apollo." This "kind of person is governed by madness and is someone who really is mad. One cannot say, strictly speaking, that madness originates in them. It only comes forth as something that is always there (for without continuous solicitation of it, there would be no consciousness) and that is not now suppressed and governed by a higher force" (339). For the simply mad, the tension between freedom and necessity, madness and reason, has resulted in the incontestable victory of freedom. Freedom without necessity does not suit mortality for it is the way of madness for survivors and annihilation for the rest. The second kind of person copes with madness, preferring a relationship between reason and what remains in excess of reason rather than succumbing either to the slow death of the utterly reasonable life or the catastrophe of reason's complete eclipse. "For in what does the intellect prove itself than in the coping with and governance and regulation of madness?" (338). This kind of person "governs madness and precisely in this overwhelming shows the highest force of the in-

tellect" (339). This marks the mortal love affair with its withdrawn yet prodigally drunken and extravagant center. Schelling wrote not only for such lovers, but to arouse such love in the desert of intellectual sobriety. Schelling implies that only one who already knows the generosity of reading, which is utterly opposed to the sectarian spirit of disciplinary camps, can read *Die Weltalter* in a vital fashion.

### III

I spoke above of *Die Weltalter* as a "philosophical poem" and there is a reason for this. When Schelling came to Berlin in 1841 and presented *The Philosophy of Revelation* as his inaugural lecture course, he reflected during the first lecture on the status of his earlier philosophy. He reminded his audience that the negative philosophy was "only a poetic invention." "It was a poem that reason itself poeticized. For reason is bound to nothing, not even to the true. Reason excludes nothing, asserts nothing, and perceives everything."<sup>13</sup> Reason does not invent a philosophical poem for itself. The poem is written, and continues to be written, for reason by a ground other than reason. Who, then, is the author of philosophy? What is the origin of philosophy? Strictly speaking, the origin or the author of philosophy cannot become an object of philosophy. The existence of reason is manifest but the ground of reason is inscrutable, what Schelling in the *Freedom* essay called "ein nie aufgehender Rest," an irreducible remainder. Yet, if self-reflection cannot fathom its ground, how does reason think that which it cannot grasp, the remainder that always eludes thinking's capacity to orient itself to its own activity? In the 1820–21 Erlanger lectures, for example, Schelling called thinking's indebtedness to a ground that it cannot conceive but to which it is always beholden, a "knowing not-knowing [*nicht wissendes Wissen*]."<sup>14</sup> In the inaugural Berlin lecture series, Schelling used the phrase *das nichtdenkende Denken* or the "not-thinking thinking." (PO, 126). As Reason introspectively intuits what offers itself at the limits of Reason, it finds that it cannot completely articulate itself. "This infinite potency of Being relates itself" to thinking "as simply the matter of thinking and not as the object of thinking . . . . The true *prima materia* of thinking cannot be the thought as the single form is the thought . . . . It relates itself to actual thinking only as that which is 'not-not-to-think' [*das Nicht-Nichtzudenkende*]" (PO, 126). In *Die Weltalter*, the true *prima materia* of thinking is addressed, *inter alia*, as *Freedom*, that within Being which does not have being, the negating force of the future, the *Überseyende*, God as the superactual, beyond that which has being, and "therefore a sublimity beyond Being and Not-being" (238), "the devouring ferocity of purity" (236), the second potency (the A<sup>2</sup>). Schelling also refers to freedom by linking

it to Plato's *χώρα*, that "wild, unruly matter or nature" (326), or to Plato's *μη ὄν*. The *μη* does not negate Being so much as to suggest a potency otherwise than Being within Being. In a footnote in the *Freedom* essay, Schelling also refers this term to a distinction that Augustine made in his critique of emanationism in *On the Free Will* (*de lib. arb.* L.I, C.2). Augustine argued that nothing could have come out of God's substance before God itself. Therefore, God must have created *ex nihilo*. "This nothing has long been the cross of the understanding. The Scriptures offer a clue in the expression: the person is ἐκ τῶν *μη ὄντων*, created out of that which is not. This is akin to the *μη ὄν* of the Ancients which, like the creation out of nothing, can receive a positive meaning for the first time through the above distinction" (I/7, 373). Hence Schelling claims in *Die Weltalter*: "Precisely that which negates all revelation must be made the ground of revelation" (223).

Not only does the ground of reason elude reason, it contests it. Schelling emphasized this in the inaugural Berlin lectures. Freedom announces the "overturn of reason" because it can have no positive content: "It is negative because it is just busy with clearing the way [*Wegschaffen*]. What is its content? Only the incessant overturning of reason [*der fortwährende Umsturz der Vernunft*] and its result: that reason, in so far as it takes itself as the principle, is capable of no actual knowledge" (PO, 152). *Umsturz* connotes not only an utter reversal, a turning upside down, or an overthrow, but it also has political implications, suggesting a *coup d'état* or a *Putsch*. In clearing the way, reason is deposed and its ultimate authority is stripped as it intuits the incomprehensibility of pure possibility. This *coup* reverses the priority of reason and makes it beholden to the superiority of that which, considered in itself, can have no positive content and can result in no completed principle. It opens reason to its Other. Schelling, in the Erlanger lecture series, called this indebtedness and openness of reason, its wonder or amazement [*Erstaunen* or *thaumazein*] before the "unprethinkability [*Unvordenklichkeit*]" of its ground, the "ecstasy of reason" in which it "therefore must leave its place. It must be set outside of itself as that which no longer exists at all. Only in the giving up of oneself [*Selbstaufgebenheit*] can the absolute subject rise up to us as we also glimpse it in astonishment [*Erstaunen*]" (IPU, 39).

Although I may be stating the obvious, it is important to remember that Schelling is not dispensing with reason and the understanding, but rather overturning their presumed authority. Furthermore, in this *Umsturz*, Schelling is not thinking the ground of reason as, *strictu sensu*, the "author" of reason, for the very notion of an author implies an organized and intentional agent. Rather, the unruly is the ground of the ruly and the latter remains beholden to the former. Yet, were there only the unruly, there would be no life, no thought. "There is only life in personality and all personality rests on a dark ground which is therefore also the ground of knowledge. But it is only the understanding that

develops into form [*herausbildet*] that which is contained in this ground as concealed and merely potential and elevates it to *actus*" (I/7, 413–414). Reason, the understanding, indeed, consciousness itself, is the theater in which the divine poem is writing itself, despite the impossibility of its author's actually being an author. Reason is an activity without agency.

Yet reason does find itself caught in the net of the intelligible, although it can ask how it came to be here. "The entire world, so to speak, lies caught in reason, but the question is: How did it come into this net?"<sup>15</sup> This question could serve as a possible ingress to the manner of questioning and thinking that characterizes *Die Weltalter*. Despite the dark night of its past and the obscurity of its future, reason finds itself in an intelligible world. Yet the origin of the intelligible, the measurable and discernable world as well as rational self-reflection, is God (freedom, the absolute, the irreducible remainder, pure space) becoming time. Or to put it another way: it is the nonrepresentability of the eternal ironically manifesting or representing itself as time. "The doctrine that God created the world in time is a pillar of genuine faith. The labor of this present work would be adequately rewarded had it only made this thought comprehensible and intelligible. For since there is no time in God itself, how should God create the world in time if there is not a time outside of God?" (307–308). Schelling's answer: the world is intelligible *in time* because freedom presents itself *as time*.

Schelling's solution anticipates, indeed, informs, for example, Søren Kierkegaard's (and later Martin Heidegger's) analysis of the moment (*Øiblikket*, *das Augenblick*). In *The Concept of Anxiety* Kierkegaard claimed that "Thus understood, the moment is not properly an atom of time but an atom of eternity. It is the first reflection of eternity in time, its first attempt, as it were, at stopping time."<sup>16</sup> The present moment conceals eternity, although eternity associates with the present as what has been lost to the past but as what returns to overturn the present. Hence the future "is the incognito in which the eternal, even though it is incommensurable with time, nevertheless preserves its association with time."<sup>17</sup> The moment holds together irreconcilable forces: presence and its Other.

For Schelling, reason, like the intelligible world, finds itself absent from origin and before an inconceivable future, a relation that Schelling speaks of in terms of intimations, not concepts. "The future is intimated" (199). The intimation, or inkling, *die Ahnung*, is the lost and irrecoverable ground of the past suggesting itself as what is still to come, but in such a way that its coming does not preserve the present but rather overturns it. God, the whole, the cosmos, *das Urwesen*, the *A*<sup>3</sup>, is the living tension of *times* within Being itself. "The explanation as to how the eternal could be conscious of its eternity poses special difficulty for the deeper thinker, although most people pass over it with a spring in their step. No consciousness whatsoever can be thought in an empty, abstract eternity. The consciousness of eternity can only be articulated in the phrase: 'I am the one who was, who is, who will be'" (263). Readers of Kant's *Critique of*

*Judgment* will recognize this supremely "sublime" thought as the inscription over the Temple of Isis (of Mother Nature).<sup>18</sup> The generativity or procreativity of Being is the generativity or procreativity of time. Nature, Being, is the auto-generativity of absolute space (eternity), manifesting (ironically) as time, as a self-composing poem (the auto-production or *autopoiesis*), writing itself in the theater of thinking.<sup>19</sup> As such, the poem is always alive, irreducible to its present revelations. The ground within existence contests the latter's capacity to take hold of itself:

As such, it always remains that if one of them has being, then the other cannot have the *same* being. That is, it remains that both exclude each other with respect to time, or that God as the Yes and God as the No cannot have being *at the same time*. We express it intentionally in this way for the relationship cannot be of the kind such that if the posterior, say A, has being, then the posterior, hence B, would be sublimated, or simply ceased to have being. Rather, it always and necessarily abides as having the being *of its time*. If A is posited, then B must just still persist *as the prior*, and hence, in such a way, that they are nonetheless, at the same time, *in different times*. For different times (a concept that, like many others, has gotten lost in modern philosophy) can certainly be, as different, at the same time, nay, to speak more accurately, they are necessarily at the same time. Past time is not sublimated time. What has past certainly cannot be as something present, but it must be as something past at the same time with the present. What is future is certainly not something that has being now, but it is a future being at the same time with the present. And it is equally inconsistent to think of past being, as well as future being, as utterly without being. (301–302)

The ground of presence is what no longer has being and eludes the constitutive workings of the understanding, yet which is also still to come. Again, it is important to emphasize that the whole, the A<sup>3</sup>, is not something transpiring in time. Hence, Schelling claimed in the first draft of *Die Weltalter* that "because each moment [*Augenblick*] is the *entirety of time*, it could only be asked—not: How much time has already gone by? But—How many times have there already been?" (WA, 80). A being, an existent, both has and does not have Being as a moment. The twinkling of the eye is not a moment *of time*, but a production of the rotatory movement of time, a breathing contraction and intensification of eternity into a time:

No thing has an external time. Rather, each thing only has an inner time of its own, inborn and indwelling within it. The mistake of Kantianism with respect to time consists in it not knowing this general subjectiv-

ity of time. Hence it delimits time in such a way that it becomes a mere form of our representations [*Vorstellungen*]. No thing comes to being in time. Rather *in* each thing time comes to being anew and does so immediately from out of eternity. (WA, 78–79)

Each time is alive, an inhaling and exhaling, contracting and expanding, systolic and diastolic, force.

Hence, Schelling conceived of *Die Weltalter* as "the genealogy of time" (WA, 75). It was to be a kind of *Divine Comedy* of Being's temporal autoproduction, a circular ascent toward an empyrean discourse on futurity.<sup>20</sup> There are the multiple drafts of *The Past*, which complete the negative philosophy, narrate poetically the point of departure that remains shrouded in dark night, and prepare the way for the positive philosophy. While there are only a few extant pages of *The Present*, the history of Freedom's differential presentations [*Darstellungen*], Schelling spent the next four decades of his life engaged in the articulation of such a history. Calling it a "Supplement [*Beilage*] to *Die Weltalter*," Schelling gave a talk called *Über die Gottheiten von Samothrake/On the Deities of Samothrace* to the Bavarian Academy of Sciences on October 12, 1815, thus inaugurating the work of the analysis of Freedom as it has presented (presenced) itself.<sup>21</sup>

Yet what of the third book, the empyrean address of futurity? How does one speak the language of premonitions and intimations? What is the form of prophetic discourse, especially since the future announces itself through disruption and dislocation? There are, at least to my knowledge, no extant fragments of the proposed book of *The Future*.

Yet perhaps there are some small intimations. In this version of *Die Weltalter*, for example, Schelling speaks of the dark past that also intimates itself as the future as the "awful" and "terrible." "If we take into consideration the many terrible things in nature and the spiritual world and the great many other things that a benevolent hand seems to cover up from us, then we could not doubt that the Godhead sits enthroned over a world of terrors. And God, in accordance with what is concealed in and by God, could be called the awful and the terrible, not in a derivative fashion, but in their original sense" (268). Elsewhere in the text, he links the "decisive crisis" as it expands toward freedom "to death and to magnetic sleep" (291). Concerning the latter, that is, Franz Anton Mesmer's discovery of "animal magnetism" (what is now called "hypnosis"),<sup>22</sup> Schelling distinguished three degrees of induced sleep. On the "lowest rung" the "healing force of that sleep rests on the restoration of the uninterrupted guidance between the higher and the lower principles." The second degree consists of becoming exposed to one's soul. "What is spiritual in the person would become free in relationship to the soul and would draw the soul to it in order to show it, as if in a mirror, the things hidden in the soul's interior and what lies still wrapped up in the soul itself

(pertaining to what is future and eternal in the person)." The third degree, however, makes inordinate demands on language and our customary modes of behavior. "Finally, we would have to search for the third degree in the relationships that lie utterly outside customarily human relationships, and, in the current context, it is better to be silent about them than to speak of them" (294).

Schelling opted to remain silent about the third book, the third time, the third age (birth, life, and, thirdly, death), and the third degree. This is not to say that Schelling refused a discourse on the awful, on the alterity of futurity. Its time had not come, although, thought in another way, its time is always coming. "Perhaps the one is still coming who will sing the greatest heroic poem, grasping in spirit something for which the seers of old were famous: what was, what is, what will be. But this time has not yet come. We must not misjudge our time" (206). Perhaps this might serve as some indication of Schelling's current timeliness.

#### IV

I would like to turn now to the question of Schelling's relation to systematic thinking. There is perhaps no more prevalent impression regarding Schelling than his purported status as being, along with Hegel, one of the final and one of the most arrogantly ambitious of a long lineage of systematic thinkers. Put simply, did not Schelling try to think everything? Was not his career a series of abortive attempts to arrive at *the* system? Indeed, throughout all three versions of *Die Weltalter* there is repeated talk of the system, and of the Whole (*das Ganze*). In fact, the second line of the *First Book* reads: "It is not given to everyone to know the end and it is given to few to see the primordial beginnings of life and it is given to even fewer to think through the whole of things from beginning to end" (207). What could be more unrepentantly systematic than the attempt to "think through the whole of things from beginning to end"? Schelling even works out a kind of formula for the Whole (312). It was this very insistence on the systematic that led Heidegger, for instance, to conclude that "if the system is only in the understanding, then ground remains and that which opposes ground is excluded from the system as the other of the system, and system is, seen from the whole of beings, no longer the system."<sup>23</sup> This, for Heidegger, is the "difficulty" in which Schelling "fails [*scheitert*]."

To what extent, then, can one speak of a system of freedom? How can freedom retain its integrity (its ipseity so to speak) within the systematic demand? Is not philosophy that makes a claim of unity and holism [*Ganzheit*] a denial of freedom? A system admits subjects into its regime to the extent that the law of the system's organizing *arche* or principle can order them. A philosophical system, moreover, construes itself as the system of systems and, as

such, accounts for the very possibility of sense. It is not a particular regime of sense, but an account of that by which any kind of sense whatsoever is possible. Its principle, by extension, must be the principle for any kind of principle, the metacritical possibility of any critical project, the *Grundsatz aller Grundsätze*. The question can now be even more sharply formulated: How can one account (systematically) for freedom when freedom itself is incompatible with the logic of an account? How can there be a principle of freedom without it destroying the very system that it would found and govern? Does not freedom threaten to erode the very movement of principle directed organization? If its enabling law (its fundamental principle) governs the system, how can it be at all related to the lawless and the unruly, that is, how can it be free? Does this not necessarily involve making the unruly a rule and the irrational somehow rational?

Schelling's answer is stark and uncompromising: the system of freedom is a contradiction and that, rather than being an argument against the system, is the secret to its vitality. The system of freedom is the lucid in relationship to the dark, the ruly in relationship to the unruly, identity in relationship to difference:

We grasp that the first existence is the contradiction itself and, inversely, that the first actuality can only persist in contradiction. All life must pass through the fire of contradiction. Contradiction is the power mechanism and what is innermost of life. From this it follows that, as an old book says, all deeds under the sun are full of trouble and everything languishes in toil, yet does not become tired, and all forces incessantly struggle against each other. (321)

The Whole is the systematic (Being, nature) in dynamic tension with its Other. Moreover, this tension is as such that its Other always holds the upper hand, that it commands superiority over the *de facto* priority of nature. At the risk of making too extreme of a comparison, one way to think the system of freedom is to think of it as akin to what the late French philosopher Georges Bataille called a "general economy." In *La part maudite*,<sup>24</sup> for example, Bataille claimed that a general economy is "by definition, this movement, the effect of which is prodigality," which "is far from being equal to itself" (PM, 45/99). Or, as Schelling put it in his fifth lecture on the *Philosophy of Mythology* (*Monotheism*): "that one and the same [*dasselbe*], namely God, can be one and not one" (II/2, 103). Or in this present work: "Were the first nature in harmony with itself, it would remain so. It would be constantly One and would never become Two. It would be an eternal rigidity without progress" (219).

In what Bataille called a "restricted economy," that is, a closed economy, "the problems are posed in the first instance by a deficiency of resources" while in a general economy the problem is first posed by luxury, by an "excess of



resources" (PM, 39/93). Participants in a restricted economy attempt to preserve and enhance themselves and goods circulate in so far as they are extrinsically related to a given economy's investment goals. Restricted economies are needy and miserly, dedicated to the accumulation of what is perceived to be lacking, namely, wealth (growth). In attempting to reach its goals, that is, in attempting to execute its techniques (to do its work, to perform its functions), a restricted economy concerns itself with attempting to overcome continually its lack [*manque*] of means. It begins with ends and preserves them through the acquisition of means. Its members circulate under the direction of an articulated governing principle that determines what will be of relevance and of value to the system. By establishing what matters, it establishes lines of possible equivalence. That is, the system has come into possession of its steering mechanisms. Slavoj Žižek, in one of his typical comic flourishes, likens this problem to Robert Zemeckis's cinematic adaptation of *The Flintstones*:

[W]ill the film succeed in finding a Stone Age counterpart to all of the phenomena of our society—that is to say, will it succeed in transposing modern high-tech inventions into Stone Age conditions without cheating (cars run by feet; planes flown by birds attached to their wings; a parrot serving as a dictaphone; etc.)? . . . Again, we obtain a "system" when we accept the premise of completing the list and including the entire history of philosophy: Thales? Sorry, he claimed that the origin of all is water, and I can't swim, I'm afraid of drowning. Plato? According to Plato, ideas dwell in the air, far above the earth, but I have a fear of heights; the mere thought of Plato's ideas makes me giddy . . . etc., etc.<sup>25</sup>

On the other hand, a general economy, that is, a system of freedom, begins at odds with itself, yet this disequilibrium is the superabundance that it expends. The lack of a rational principle by which to guide the expenditure of its ceaselessly reproducing energies and the impossibility of ordering all of its members once and for all is precisely the spontaneity with which energies continue to reproduce themselves. To borrow a phrase from the *Mythology* lectures, *der unendliche Mangel an Sein*, the infinite lack in Being, does not damn the system to a poverty of resources. "All beginning would lie in lack [*Mangel*], and the deepest potency on which all is hinged is what does not have being [*das Nicht-seyende*] and this is the hunger for Being" (II/1, 294). It is, rather, the unfathomable mystery of productivity's inexhaustibility and its *unvordenkliche* or unpredictable capacity to reconfigure the oblique manifestations of its plenitude. Or, with Bataille (and Leibniz): "*tous est riche*" (PM, 63).<sup>26</sup>

This infinite debt or irresolvable disequilibrium within Being (nature) which discontinuously squanders its wealth through the unprethinkable (*unvordenklich*) production of differentia implicates itself in the divine irony of all

appearance. "The potencies in the reciprocal exclusivity and their inverted opposition to each other [*gegeneinander verkehrten Stellung*] are only God outwardly disguised [*verstellte*]<sup>27</sup> through divine irony. They are the inverted [*verkehrte*] One in so far as, according to appearance, what is hidden, what should not be active, is obvious and active and what is positive, what should be obvious, is negated and in the state of potency" (II/2, 90). All restricted economies are products of an inverted or *verkehrte* general economy in which the energies produced by the general economy are used to restrict the further circulation of their source. Even need and stinginess are ironic productions of an original prodigality. If one speaks of the general economy as a "living system" whose heartbeat is the always ironic and *verstellte* circulation of freedom in all necessarily inverted restricted economies, then the abstraction of a restricted economy from the movement of general economy is what Schelling called a *Stoppung*, a clotting. The superabundant energies of the earth have been restricted by the exclusive investments of a particular world. Although the relationships to freedom (the A<sup>2</sup>) are always delimited by the divine irony of the very appearance of a world (a restricted economy or A<sup>1</sup>), there is an immanent difference between the world that hermetically seals itself within itself and the world that expands into productive tension (the A<sup>3</sup>) with the extravagance of indwelling freedom. This living tension (*Spannung*) of the universe, however, defies containment by dialectical sublimation. "The divine Being is not sublimated [*aufgehoben*] in this tension. It is only suspended. But the intention of this suspension is no other than to posit as actual, *actu*, what is otherwise not possible." There is no tension-absolving, life-halting *Aufhebung* and hence the general economy does not and cannot take possession of itself. It cannot become equal to itself or represent itself to itself because the very condition of divine expenditure is that it must eternally become disequal to itself. In the end, freedom is not free to be unfree. Freedom must be free. It keeps becoming a self that is not identical with itself and it always has more than any *thing* needs and hence it perpetually squanders the infinite luxury of a lack of presence to itself. This marks its "divine force of displacement [*Verstellungskraft*], which appears to affirm what its intention is to negate and to negate what its intention is to affirm" (II/2, 92). Circulating members of a general economy can never fully take possession of their freedom because there always remains *ein nie aufgehender Rest*, an (indivisible remainder) or an irremediable bill that grants goods their singularity and their extravagance. Freedom is like the sun, which grants a gift of life so prodigal that it can never be matched or returned in equal measure. Or, to put it another way: The quantity of energy in a general economy or system of freedom always exceeds the restricted and *verstellte* force of its actuality. Actuality (the real or A<sup>1</sup>) can never assimilate or match its superabundant and eternally displaced source. Rather, this displacement within Being, that is, this lack within Being, "the actual



mystery of divine Being that in itself lacks all Being" (II/2, 53), is precisely the source of its luxuriance.

Furthermore, this source is as such that its designation as a source has already overdetermined it. In the *Freedom* essay, Schelling spoke of this source as not at all a source but rather the non-source of source itself or the *Ungrund des Grundes* (non-ground of ground) (I/7, 407–408) or the "*vor allem Grund vorübergehenden Ungrund*" (non-ground which precedes all ground) (I/7, 407–408). For Schelling, what I am here calling a general economy and what he called a system of freedom (the *universum* or *das Ganze* or *das Wesen*), explicates itself dynamically as both ideal and real, expanding and contracting, as holding itself back even in exhaling yet dying (physically and morally) when, in the moment of contraction, it remains peripheral to itself and cannot inhale.

In two lecture series given after the *Freedom* essay, Schelling continued to reflect on systematicity. Not long after the death of Caroline (the first lecture was delivered on February 14, 1810), Schelling was persuaded to hold a lecture series at the home of Georgii with a small number of other people in attendance. These lectures are now collectively referred to as the *Stuttgarter Privatvorlesungen* or *Stuttgart Private Lectures*. Coupled with a lecture series given during the Winter Semester of 1820–21 in Erlangen, dubbed the *Initia Philosophiae Universae* by Horst Fuhrmans, they offer some of Schelling's most specific thoughts on the paradoxical character of the system. The following *Athenäum* fragment of Friedrich Schlegel epitomizes the necessary delusion that the thought of freedom demands: "It is equally deadly for the spirit to have a system and not to have a system. It must therefore resolve itself to combine both."<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the demand for a system, a view to the whole within which thinking finds itself situated, can neither be avoided nor satisfied. Although one intuitively the system's irascible steering mechanism only in perpetually failing to locate it (it is everywhere yet in excess of all things), "the system is the prize for which our age is struggling" (IPU, 3). Yet thinking cannot appropriate the system. Rather, thinking itself is the property of the system and thinking is called to become aware of that within which it finds itself already circulating. "A system in which everything is embraced as knowable is possible; only it must not be invented but rather it can only be found as a system *per se*, that is, as already at hand [*Vorhandendes*] in the divine understanding" (SP, 102). To articulate the system requires that one attempt to think like God, which is both necessary and impossible. The system as the product of human imagination [*Einbildungskraft*] is no longer sufficient for our time (SP, 102). Such a system "is almost like our historical novels" and in so far as they wish to assert themselves as the "only possible system," they are "supremely illiberal" like the Scholastic system. One does not construct a system but rather reflects upon (or ascends toward) the living, ever-mobile heart of the Whole of which one is already a living expression.

Since the steering mechanism is not to be owned but rather remains hidden within the system's inexhaustible expressivity, it is not a mechanism at all, but living and spontaneous, continually multiplying itself in differential localities. "The system must have a principle that is in itself and through itself and that reproduces itself in each part of the whole. It must be organic: The one must be determined through everything and everything must be determined through the one. It may exclude nothing nor may it one-sidedly subordinate anything nor suppress anything" (SP, 102–103). Rather, the system expresses the "organic unity of all things" (SP, 103). As Schelling then articulates it in one of his most compact yet lucid accounts of indifference, this "organic unity" is the absolute identity of freedom and necessity:

The thought here is not that the real and the ideal are logically or numerically of the same kind [*einerlei*]. It is one and the same matter posited in both forms, but it is in each of these forms its own *Wesen* and not a *Wesen* of the same kind. If, for example, Jacob is also called Israel, it would always be the same individual that was not differentially individualized through its differential names. This is not however the case with the identity of the real and the ideal. One posits for example

$$\frac{A}{B = C}$$

in which B and C are identical because of the *Wesen* of A, but they are different from each other as forms or considered with reference to themselves. B can eternally not become C and C can eternally not become B even though A is in B and A is in C as its own *Wesen*. Precisely because the same [*dasselbe*] *Wesen* is in each of them, there is between them a *wesentliche* (i.e., not a merely formal, logical, or nominal) unity. But at the same time it is an actual opposition or dualism in which neither can sublate [*aufheben*] the other under itself. Because A individualizes itself in B and in C, both receive an equal right to exist. (SP, 104–105)

The system, then, is God self-differentiating and, as such, it cannot be demonstrated because freedom itself does not admit of demonstration. Rather, that any kind of demonstration is at all possible is already testimony of freedom. Discursive activity is business conducted within the Real and the Real cannot be deployed to demonstrate its Other. Such a demonstration would assimilate the Other of reason to the regime of Reason. "The existence of the Unconditioned cannot be proven like the conditioned. The Unconditioned is the element within which all demonstration is possible" (SP, 108). God as a general economy demands a divine thought. "One conceives the God outside of oneself with the God within oneself. One cannot know God except through a divine principle."

Hence, "all of philosophy is only a manifestation of God, that is, a continuing proof of God" (SP, 109). The mobility of the system assures that no principles are static. Only when the mobility of the system clots do individual moments claim sovereignty for themselves. "All errors in philosophy have originated in this stalling [*Stehenbleiben*]. The physiologists explain miscarriages and monsters through an inhibition [*Hemmung*] or clotting [*Stockung*] and the same is valid for systems . . ." (IPU, 2). On the other hand, this does not make all "errors" simply false. Rather, as Schelling claimed in the initial version of *Die Weltalter*: "Each axiom [*Satz*] is false outside the system. Only in the system, in the organic context of the living whole, is there a truth." The multiplicity of various systems is not the wholesale falsity of these systems. Rather, "the whole *differentia* [*Verschiedenheit*] of previous systems originated through their ossification [*Festwerden*] into a single point of view." The false is *das Stillstehen*, the coming to a halt (WA, 48). Any axiom, considered with regard to itself, can at best only be relatively true. As such, however, it is severed from the center of its life and, to continue Schelling's analogy, it will die. "Only what can no longer develop dies" (IPU, 2). Such a death results from the egoism of a restricted economy that cannot maintain a dynamic relationship to its restrictions. That the system will fail, however, is testimony of the nascent productivity of its withdrawn origin. "The true sense can only be that God is without beginning of its beginning and without end of its end, that its beginning did not itself begin and its end does not itself end; that is, it does not cease to be an end. It is an eternal beginning and an eternal end" (II/3, 258). The system is the affirmation of the glory of Being's incessant natality and fatality that is the life of divine disequilibrium. "This unity must set itself at variance with itself [*sich entzweien*] in order to reveal itself" (SP, 112). The continuing self-restriction of God into a self (the continuously metamorphosing "personality" of Being) is the ongoing event of revelation (SP, 118).

Yet, as such, the system contests entrapment within the order of the intelligible. (Such entrapment is a closed economy that cannot recognize itself as such.) Rather, the presentation of the system holds its own representability in the very "crisis" or "cision" [*Scheidung*] (i.e., the disequilibrium of the whole) out of which it emerged. Schelling was quite explicit about this in the first version of *Die Weltalter*:

The system is certainly possible, even actual, but it is not presentable . . . Therefore this entire knowledge is only in a continuous and never ceasing generation [*Erzeugung*] so that it can never become a dead possession. It is the inwardly repetitive and mimetic [*nachbildende*] process of this great and monstrous [*ungeheuer*] process of all life from its still beginning until the present and even into the most distant future. But how few have enough force [*Kraft*], ability [*Vermögen*], and self-denial to give themselves into this process. (WA, 102)

Instead of the fanatical reassurance that a systematized world affords, the relationship between system and freedom quiets down the din of nature by implicating it in the silence of the hidden trace (*Spur*) of freedom. The representability of the whole remains in constant tension with its nonrepresentable ground and this dynamic tension between the excessive energies of a nonrepresentable ground and the restricted energies of representable existence marks the life of the whole (*das Ganze*). "The whole therefore stands as A that from the outside is B and hence the whole = (A = B). Therefore the whole, because God is that which does not have being (is not manifest) in it, inclines, in accord with its essentiality and in relation to what is other, for the most part toward not being that which has being" (323). Thinking cannot constitute, articulate, or otherwise arrest the life of the Whole. The Whole is always more than it actually is. "There is a silent, exclusively passive Whole, not an actual Whole that could be articulated as such. Hence it is certainly always full of life with respect to the particular parts, but considered from the outside or as a Whole, it is utterly without effect" (275).

There is then no last word on the system. Where exactly does the article "the" take thinking as it tries to hear what is said by the phrase "the system"? If an articulation of *the* system has always said too much yet too little about *the* system, what is there finally to be said about it? Nothing. There is always more to be said about the concrete ways in which freedom manifests itself, yet there is finally nothing that can really be said about freedom itself. As Schelling, seized by the power of Socratic ignorance, concluded toward the end of the first version of *Die Weltalter*:

I would like to take this opportunity to say, if it were not too immodest, what I so often felt, and in an especially lively way with this present presentation: how much nearer I am than most people could probably conceive to this growing silent of knowledge [*Verstummen der Wissenschaft*] which we must necessarily encounter when we know how infinitely far everything that is personal reaches such that it is impossible actually to know anything at all. (WA, 103)

The thought and the feeling, impossible as it may be, of a system of freedom beyond the melancholy failure of thinking to articulate its ground does not impel resignation or despair or an abnegation of responsibility, but a *Verstummen*, a growing silent before the sublimity of freedom's inexpressibility. In *Die Weltalter*, haunted by the specter of Caroline's death, Schelling turned to the figure of the aporetic Socrates who inhabits all discourse in order to lead them from within themselves to absurdity, to the daimonic silence that the *elenchus* induces. Socratic ignorance is not mere ignorance because its goal was "to know

that he knows nothing. But he still knew this and this certainty was not the beginning but the goal of his researches" (WA, 103). The Socratic silence did not come from a "lack of knowledge" but a "not knowing because of the exuberance [*Überschwenglichkeit*] of knowledge and of objects" (WA, 103). Socratic knowledge is an exuberant knowing-not-knowing. In this respect, Schelling later (in the 1842 *Philosophy of Mythology*) quite strikingly called Socrates "the true Dionysus of philosophy." He was the "daimonic man" who destroyed the "immobile unity of the Eleatics" with "a destructive dialectic" (II/2, 284). The exuberant silence and iconoclastic voice of the daimonic philosopher, the "disruptive spirit," knew that all goods within a general economy are local and hence that "certain questions did not admit of rational but simply historical answers" (II/2, 284).

Finally, the system of freedom, the ceaseless circulation of spontaneous energies, is a *divine system*. It is the system of God in love with the productive tensions of its own *Wesen*. At this point, one could call this divine tension between the systematic and the unruly a kind of *value system*. God (freedom) "is essentially good and not so much something good as the Good itself" (237). The system of freedom marks the relationship between the human and the Good. In this respect, it is not the presence of evil that drives the human away from God, that is, away from freedom. Rather, it is anxiety [*Angst*] before the Good that drives creatures away from the divine center. Indeed, it drives the light of God away from the destructive force of its own center. The center is the source of life, but it is also that which, in its pure form, is antithetical to all that would follow from it. To come too close to the center is to be destroyed. To remain on the periphery is to become sick or, on the moral level, to succumb to evil. Hence, in this version of *Die Weltalter*, Schelling claims that "anxiety is the governing affect that corresponds to the conflict of directions in Being, since it does not know whether to go in or out" (336). This conflict drives the creature to the periphery, where it takes harbor in itself as it shuns the overwhelming force of its own life. Anxiety "leaves the cision [*Scheidung*] and brings the forces to ever greater severance so that the contractive force, so to speak, trembles for its existence" (WA, 41).

In the *Freedom* essay Schelling was quite clear about this. The origin of human evil is anxiety before the Good, that is, anxiety before freedom as the source of one's life and the source of one's destruction. "The anxiety of life itself drives humans out of the center in which they were created. For life, as the purest being [*Wesen*] of all willing, is a consuming fire for every particular will" (I/7, 381). For the inclination of the human is "not to be capable of maintaining its gaze upon the divine and upon truth" (I/7, 390). Hence, thinking is driven to take refuge in *Blödsinn*, in imbecilic truths, much in the same way that Nietzsche asked if the scientific mode (*Wissenschaftlichkeit*) might not be "a cunning self-defense against—the truth?"<sup>29</sup>

In the *Freedom* essay Schelling called the capacity to affirm the Good (beyond a world partitioned into good and evil) "religiosity [*Religiosität*]." This is not to say that Schelling advocated a return to religious dogma or a lugubrious sentimentalism, "what a sick age names idle brooding, reverent premonitions, or the desire to feel the divine" (I/7, 392). "Religion is higher than premonition [*Ahnung*] and feeling" (I/6, 558). Rather, religiosity is the exercise of "true freedom" that operates in consonance "with a holy necessity." It is the same as sensitivity to the *wesentliche* knowledge in which the spirit and the heart "freely affirm what is necessary" (I/7, 341–342). Religiosity is an *ecstatic amor fati*. Religiosity does not always manifest itself in the sublime agitations of enthusiasm as, for example, with the Stoic Cato who, despite his reserved character, always did what was right, but never out of a sense of duty, but because "he could have in no way acted otherwise" (I/7, 393). Religiosity is an obsession with freedom, such that, if I here speak with Levinas, one is held hostage by the Other. Unlike the ancillary ethics, the *Nebenhaus* of a Kantian categorical imperative, religiosity is not deontological but rather one is captured by the superiority of freedom such that "there is only the highest staunchness [*Entschiedenheit*] for the right, without any choice." One is beyond the *aequilibrium arbitrii*, the choice between alternatives, which Schelling called "the plague of all morality" (I/7, 392). In a way not altogether dissimilar to Spinoza's "intellectual love of God," one becomes the joyful hostage of the disequilibrium of the Whole and one cannot help but affirm and mirror divine generosity. Religiosity is the link holding together a living discord. "It is conscientiousness [*Gewissenhaftigkeit*], or that one act like one knows and not contradict the light of the understanding in one's deed. One calls religious a person for whom this is impossible not for human, physical, or psychological reasons, but for divine reasons" (I/7, 392). This kind of ethical obsession Schelling sometimes called faith, but not in the Kantian sense of *Fürwahrhalten*, or assuming that something is true because reason *needs* it to be true, but in the "original meaning of a trust [*Zuversicht*] and confidence [*Zutrauen*] in the divine that excludes all choice." Faith resembles what Eckhart and Heidegger called *Gelassenheit* (a term that Schelling also uses), a *releasement* to that which one can no longer resist because it calls one as that to which one belongs. As Schelling articulated it in this version of *Die Weltalter*: "And perhaps precisely that releasement [*Gelassenheit*] shows that something of the qualities of that primordial stuff still dwells within them, of the stuff that is passive on the outside but on the inside is spirit and life" (286). At this point, one could wonder what Schelling would have made of Kierkegaard's analysis in *Fear and Trembling* of Abraham as a knight of faith such that his responsibility to God exceeded his capacity to justify himself ethically to his community. Schelling leaves unanswered the question as to whether faith interrupts the ethical, or whether the ethical, now thought of as faith, has already vitiated the possibility that ethics could be

relegated to a community's code of ethics. Perhaps one could at least say this: that faith for Schelling is what prayer was for Kierkegaard, the unconditional elasticity of the birds of the air and the lilies of the field that manifested the irremovable presence of their joy in their patient affirmation of the divine movement of time. "Therefore it is that God is blessed, who eternally says, Today. And therefore it is that the lilies and the birds are joy, because with silence and unconditional obedience they are entirely present to themselves in being today."<sup>30</sup> Schelling called this in this work "not the will to something" but "rather the pure will without obsession and craving" (236).

Hence, Schelling insists that one does not enjoy religiosity because one is ethical (in so far as this means dutiful obedience to the prevailing moral codes). It "is not a mere ethics [*Sittlichkeit*] (which always includes a relationship of subjugation in itself)" (I/6, 558). Rather, religiosity robs one of ethical choice. One could not but be ethical. It would already be unethical to ask whether or not one should be ethical. Or, to put it another way, knowledge of freedom is as such that it is at the same time an ethical obsession. Schelling called this divine possession "character." It is "the fundamental condition of all ethics" (I/4, 690). One does not, however, choose one's character (WA, 93). One is seized by it. It is "the contraction of the first true will through which the primordial purity covers itself over [*überkleidet*] with Being" (WA, 93). Theory does not lead to praxis but rather theory is already a praxis. As Socrates in the early dialogues often claimed, to know the Good is to do the Good and that failure to do so could only mean a lack of knowledge. "Religiosity already means according to its origin a being bound [*Gebundenseyn*] of action; but in no way a choice between contraries . . . but the highest staunchness for the right, without choice" (I/6, 558).

However, while the conscientious adhere to a justice beyond the good and evil of the *aequilibrium arbitrii*, this does not entail that one should eradicate a *sense* of justice. One cannot legislate conscientiousness and hence one needs some preliminary structure of justice. However, these moral codes and deontological demands can only serve as propaedeutics for freedom. They cannot produce freedom. Rather they are, at best, training exercises for freedom. Their work is *Gesinnung*, the enculturation of the moral disposition, what Aristotle in the *Politics* called *ethismos*, the training for right action. "This rigor of enculturation, like the rigor of the life in nature, is the kernel out of which the first true grace and divinity pour forth like blood" (I/7, 393). It is only in the "presupposition" of the "steadfast seriousness of a *Gesinnung*," in an uncompromisingly ethical cast of mind, that "a ray of divine love descends upon it." There comes to be a love, a kind of holy affirmation, of the relentless beauty of the cosmos as a kind of mad grace (for what is freedom, and thereby grace, for Schelling if not divine madness?). That is, there comes to be the "highest transfiguration [*Verklärung*] of the moral life into grace and divine beauty" (I/7, 394).

Finally, I would like to make a couple of very brief remarks about some potentially controversial translation choices. It is simply to say the obvious that even the best translations are failures and I suspect that it would be wanton *hubris* for me to count the present work even among the class of good translations. Nonetheless, I assume full responsibility for my scholarly crimes and welcome whatever helpful comments an intrepid reader might wish to offer me.

One of the issues of greatest difficulty for me was the constellation of meanings that forms around *das Wesen*, *Seyn*, and *das Seyende*. Such problems have long tormented translators of Heidegger and they return when one translates the work of the philosopher that Heidegger held in the highest esteem. *Das Wesen*, or sometimes *das Urwesen*, *prima facie* suggests "essence" and Schelling does sometimes link it to words such as "nature." Yet "essence" resonates too much with a tradition of thinking that links it to transhistorical forms (ideas) that remain the selfsame in and through the ephemeral tides of becoming. For Schelling, *das Wesen* names the tension between present being (existence) and the simultaneous intimation of that which is as no longer being (the past) and that which is as not yet being (the future). As my own language evidently strains as I try to articulate these distinctions, the pressure and strangeness that such words exert does offer a suggestion of the difficulty of Schelling's own language. The *Wesen* holds together what has being and what is, but which does not have being. Hence, Being, the infinitive *Seyn* (or *Sein* as it is rendered in contemporary German) maintains a dynamic tension between what *is present* (what "has" being) and what *is* as either no longer or not yet. Since Schelling often links the infinitive *Seyn* with its noun form, *das Seyende*, I have tried to minimize confusion by translating the infinitive with a capital B (Being) and *das Seyende* as "what has being." Hence, one can speak of the Being of what has being (presence) and the being of what does not, *strictu sensu*, "have" being (the past, the future). As for *das Wesen*, the holistic tension of times, I have opted for "being," but with either "a" or "the" preceding it, depending on the context. *Wesen* is a critical term because it names the whole (what *is* as having being and what *is* as not yet/no longer having being, i.e., "the eternal Yes and the eternal No"). And if the time of thinking is the time of Being writ small, the *Wesen* names both human being and Being itself. My translation choices may well be a barbaric solution to the problem, but the demands of both syntax and felicity drove me to them.

I have also employed the root of the word "decision," namely, "cision," to handle *die Scheidung*. Schelling plays with the relationship between *Scheidung*, "cut" (the meaning of "cision") and *Entscheidung*, "decision." These words are

furthermore linked to "crisis," "critique," etc.<sup>31</sup> Since these relationships are critical to Schelling's argument, I have here risked infelicity to preserve them.

I have furthermore included what I hope are some helpful annotations in the form of endnotes. Again, it was my wish not to covet Schelling's work for my own, but to make it available to as wide an audience as possible. (Given the difficulty of the text, I sometimes lament just how wide that audience will be. Nonetheless, quite remarkably and with no hint of modesty or pessimism, Schelling claimed at the end of the Introduction to the second version of *Die Weltalter* that, with a new articulation and appreciation of the being of materiality, such thinking will at last achieve the popularity that it has always sought for in vain. "Then popularity, so often sought in vain, will arise on its own" [WA, 118]).

Lastly, anyone who has looked at the German original finds a continuous block of writing without any chapter headings or breaks. When Schelling's son published this version of *Die Weltalter* in 1861, he included a synoptic Table of Contents. Since Karl Schelling's synopsis relies on what appear to be obvious shifts of gear within the text, I have opted to insert these chapter headings into the body of the text. My motivations were both aesthetic and practical. At the least, I hoped that it might aid the reader in navigating more easily around this labyrinthine text. Purists should just ignore this bit of enthusiasm altogether.

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## INTRODUCTION

[199] The past is known, the present is discerned, the future is intimated.

The known is narrated, the discerned is presented, the intimated is prophesied.<sup>1</sup>

That knowledge is the simple consequence and development of its own concepts was a valid representation [*Vorstellung*] until now. Its true representation is that it is the development of a living, actual being [*Wesen*]<sup>2</sup> which presents itself in it.

It is an advantage of our time that this being has been given back to science and, indeed, it may be asserted, in such a way that it may not be easily lost again. It is not too severe to have judged that, in the wake of the now awoken dynamic spirit, all philosophy that does not take its power from it can still only be regarded as an empty misuse of the noble gift of speaking and thinking.

What is living in the highest science can only be what is primordially living, the being that is preceded by no other and is therefore the oldest of all beings.

Therefore nothing precedes or is exterior to this primordial life that might have determined it. It can develop itself, insofar as it develops itself, only freely, out of its own drive and conation, purely out of itself.<sup>3</sup> But it does not develop lawlessly but only in accordance with laws.<sup>4</sup> There is nothing arbitrary in it. It is a nature in the most complete understanding of the [200] word, just as the person is a nature regardless of freedom, nay, precisely because of it.

After science has reached objectivity with respect to its object, it then appears as a natural consequence that it seek the same with respect to its form.

Why was or is this impossible until now? Why cannot what is known in the highest knowledge also be narrated with the rectitude and simplicity of all else that is *known*? What holds back that intimated golden age in which truth again becomes fable and fable again becomes truth?

A principle that is outside and above the world must be granted to the person. How else could the person, alone among all creatures, trace the long

trail of developments from the present back into the deepest night of the past? How else could the person alone climb up to the beginning of the ages if there were not in the person a principle of the beginning of the ages? Created out of the source of things and the same as it, the human soul is conscientious<sup>5</sup> of creation. In the soul lies the highest clarity of all things, and the soul is not so much knowing as knowledge itself.

But the supramundane principle, still in its primordial purity, is not free in the person but is bound to another, lower principle. This other principle is itself something that became and is therefore, by its nature, unknowing and dark. It also necessarily darkens the higher principle with which it is combined. In it rests the recollection of all things, of their original relationships, of their becoming, of their meaning. But this archetype of things sleeps in the soul as that which has become dark and forgotten, even if it is not a fully dissolved image. Perhaps it would never again awaken if there did not lay in every darkness itself the intimation of and longing for knowledge. But incessantly called from this to its ennoblement, the higher principle feels that the lower principle is not added to it in order to remain fettered by it. It is with it in order to have an Other through which it would be able to contemplate itself, present itself, and be intelligible to itself. [201] In the higher principle everything lies without differentiation and as one. But in the Other it can differentiate, express, and set apart what in it is one. [Hence there is in the person that which must again be brought back to memory, and an Other that brings it to memory; one in which the answer to every research question lies and the Other which brings the answer out of it. This Other is free from everything and is capable of thinking everything, but it is bound by this innermost witness and cannot hold anything for true without the agreement of this witness. On the other hand, the innermost is originally bound and cannot unfurl itself; but through the Other it becomes free and reveals itself to the same.] Therefore, both yearn with equal intensity for the cision [*Scheidung*]<sup>6</sup> within which one would return home to its original freedom and reveal itself to itself<sup>i</sup> and within which the Other would thereby be able to receive from the former one and likewise become knowing, albeit in a totally different way.

This cision, this doubling of ourselves, this secret circulation in which there are two beings, a questioning being and an answering being, an unknowing being that seeks knowledge and an unknowing being that does not know its knowledge, this silent dialogue, this inner art of conversation, is the authentic mystery of the philosopher. From the outside this conversation is thereby called the dialectic and the dialectic is a copy of this conversation.

i. It thereby again transposes itself into its original and innate knowledge. [All footnotes belong to Schelling or to his son. The later are indicated by ED. The endnotes are my own.]

When the dialectic has become only form, it is this conversation's empty semblance and shadow.

Therefore, everything known, in accord with its nature, is narrated. But the known is not here something lying about finished and at hand since the beginning. Rather, it is that which is always first emerging out of the interior through a process entirely specific to itself. The light of knowledge must rise through an internal cision and liberation before it can illuminate. What we call knowledge is only the striving toward *anamnesis* [*Wiederbewußtwerden*]<sup>7</sup> and hence more of a striving toward knowledge than knowledge itself. For this reason, the name Philosophy had been bestowed upon it incontrovertibly by that great man of antiquity. Hence the view, harbored from age [202] to age, that philosophy can be finally transformed into actual knowledge through the dialectic and to regard the most consummate dialectic as knowledge itself, betrays more than a little narrowness. The very existence and necessity of the dialectic proves that it is still in no way actual knowledge.

In this regard, the philosopher is situated in no other circumstances than any other historian. In order to know what they want to know, the historian must also question the testimonies of old documents or the recollection of living witnesses. They need ample discrimination or critical activity<sup>8</sup> in order to separate the false from the true, the erroneous from the correct, in the received traditions. They also need discrimination in themselves, from whence belongs the customary saying that they must seek to liberate themselves from the concepts and peculiarities of their time. There are still many other similarities, but it would be too drawn out to speak of them here.

Everything, absolutely everything, even that which by nature is eternal, must have already become internal to us before we can present it externally or objectively. If the writer of history does not awaken in himself or herself the past age whose image they want to project to us, then they will never present it truly, nor vividly, nor in a lively fashion. What would all history be if an inner sense did not come to assist it? It would be what it is for so many who indeed know most all that has happened, but who know not the least thing about actual history. Not only human events but the history of nature has its monuments and one can surely say that they do not abandon on their wide path of creation any stages without leaving behind something to indicate them. These monuments of nature, for the most part, lie there in the open, and are explored in manifold ways and are, in part, actually deciphered. Yet they do not speak to us but remain dead unless this succession of actions and productions has become internal to human beings. Hence, everything remains incomprehensible to human beings until it has become internal to them, that is, until it has been led back to that which is innermost in their being and to that which to them is, so to speak, the living witness of all truth.

[203] Now some have always thought that it would be possible to set this subordinate<sup>ii</sup> entirely to the side and sublimate [*aufheben*] all duality so that we, so to speak, see only in an interior fashion and live entirely in the supramundane, knowing everything immediately.<sup>9</sup> Who can simply deny the possibility of such a transposition of the human being into its supramundane principle and hence an elevation of the powers of the mind to vision [*Schauen*]?<sup>10</sup> From time to time, every physical and moral whole needs, for its preservation, the reduction to its innermost beginning. Human beings keep rejuvenating themselves and become newly blissful through the feeling of the unity of their being. It is in precisely this that especially those seeking knowledge continually summon up fresh power. Not only poets, but also philosophers, have their ecstasies. They need this in order to be safe, through the feeling of the indescribable reality of that higher representation, against the coerced concepts of an empty dialectic that lacks enthusiasm. But it is something other than the constancy of this state of intuition that fights against nature and the determination of life as it is now. For however we may consider this state's relationship to the above, it always comes back to this: what in this state was together in an indivisible way, unfolds in it and is partially set apart in it. We do not live in vision. Our knowledge is piecemeal, that is, it must be generated piece by piece, according to sections and grades, all of which cannot happen without reflection.

Therefore, the goal is not reached in simple vision. For there is no understanding in vision in and for itself. In the external world, everyone more or less sees the same thing, yet not everyone can express it. Each thing, in order to reach its perfection, passes through certain moments. A series of processes, one following the other, where the later always meshes with the earlier, brings it to its maturity. The farmer, for example, sees the progression in the plant as well as the scholar does, and yet the farmer cannot actually contemplate the plant [204] because he cannot hold the moments apart from each other and cannot consider them separately and in their reciprocal opposition. In this way the human being can let run through themselves and, so to speak, immediately experience that succession of processes through which the infinite manifold is, in the end, produced out of the highest simplicity of being; nay, to speak more accurately, the human being must experience this in themselves. But all experience, feeling, and vision is, in and for itself, mute and needs a mediating organ in order to come to expression. If the visionary lacks this organ or intentionally pushes it away from themselves in order to speak immediately from vision, then they lose their necessary standard and are one with the object and, for any third person, they are like the object itself. For this reason, they are not a master of their thoughts and struggle in vain to express the inexpressible without any certainty. What they find they just find without, however, being certain of it, with-

ii. The outer tool.

out being able to hold it steadily in front of themselves and without being able to again look at it intellectually as in a mirror.

Therefore, that respective external principle is not to be given up at any price. Hence, everything must be brought to actual reflection in which it could reach the highest presentation. Here runs the boundary between theosophy and philosophy, which the lover of knowledge will chastely seek to protect. Theosophy is much ahead of philosophy in depth, fullness, and vitality of content in the way that the actual object is ahead of its image and nature is ahead of its presentation. And this difference certainly approaches incomparability if a dead philosophy that seeks the being in forms and concepts is taken as the point of comparison. Hence, the predilection of those with inward dispositions for theosophy is as easy to explain as the predilection for nature as opposed to art. The theosophical systems have the advantage over everything else hitherto current: at least there is in them a power, even if it does not have power over itself, while in the other systems, in contrast, there is but unnatural and conceited art. But just as little of nature is inaccessible when one has the properly understood art, so is little of the fullness and depth of life inaccessible when one has the properly understood knowledge. [205] It only reaches it step by step, mediately, and through gradual progress, so that, on the one hand, the knower is always distant from this object and, on the other hand, this object remains separated from the knower and the object of a level-headed, peacefully savoring contemplation.

Therefore, all knowledge must pass through the dialectic. Yet it is another question as to whether the point will ever come where knowledge becomes free and lively, as the image of the ages is for the writer of history who no longer recalls their investigations in their presentation. Can the recollection of the primordial beginning of things ever again become so vital that knowledge, which, according to its matter and the meaning of the word, is history, could also be history according to its external form? And is the philosopher able to turn back to the simplicity of history, like the divine Plato, who, for the entire series of his works is thoroughly dialectical, but who, at the pinnacle and final point of transfiguration in all of them, becomes historical?

It seems left open to our age to at least open the way to this objectivity of science. As long as this age restricts itself to the interior and to the Ideal, it lacks the natural means of an external presentation. Now, after having long gone astray, it has again developed the recollection of nature and of nature's former oneness with science. Yet it did not abide by this. Hardly had the first steps in reuniting philosophy with nature occurred when the old age of the physical had to be acknowledged and how it, very far from being the last, is, rather, the first from which everything begins, even the development of divine life.<sup>iii</sup> Since then, science no longer begins from the remoteness of abstract thoughts in

iii. How, if only last in view of its dignity, it is first in view of all development.



order to descend from them to the natural. Rather, it is the reverse. Proceeding from the unconscious existence of the eternal, science guides it up to the highest transfiguration and into divine consciousness. The most supersensible thoughts now receive physical power and life and, vice versa, nature becomes ever more the visible imprint of the highest concepts. [206] Soon the contempt with which only the ignorant still look down on everything physical will cease and once again the following saying will be true: The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. Then its popularity, so often sought after to no avail, issues itself forth from itself. Then there will no longer be a distinction between the world of thought and the world of actuality. There will be one world and the peace of the golden age heralds itself first in the concordant conjunction of the sciences.

With these prospects, which the present writing will seek to justify in more than one way, an often mulled-over attempt, which contains some preparation for that future objective presentation of science, may well dare to come out. Perhaps the one is still coming who will sing the greatest heroic poem, grasping in spirit something for which the seers of old were famous: what was, what is, what will be. But this time has not yet come. We must not misjudge our time. Heralds of this time, we do not want to pick its fruit before it is ripe nor do we want to misjudge what is ours. It is still a time of struggle. The goal of this investigation has still not been reached. We cannot be narrators, only explorers, weighing the pros and cons of all views until the right one has been settled, indubitably rooted forever.

## FIRST BOOK

### THE PAST

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*A*

THE ETERNAL LIFE OF THE GODHEAD  
AS THE WHOLE OR THE CONSTRUCTION  
OF THE COMPLETE IDEA OF GOD

---

POINT OF ENTRY:  
THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN NECESSITY  
AND FREEDOM IN GOD

[207] As with the coming time, God self-referentially [*fürsichtig*] shrouds the point of departure for the past beginning in dark night.<sup>11</sup> It is not given to everyone to know the end and it is given to few to see the primordial beginnings of life and it is given to even fewer to think through the whole of things from beginning to end. Imitation, rather than the inner drive, leads to a research that confuses the senses as if by an inevitable fate. Hence, inner fortitude is necessary in order to keep a firm hold of the interrelation of movement from beginning to end. But they would then like, where only the deed decides, to arbitrate everything with peaceful and general concepts and to represent a history in which, as in reality, scenes of war and peace, pain and joy, deliverance and danger alternate as a mere series of thoughts.

There is a light in this darkness. Just as according to the old and almost hackneyed phrase that the person is the world writ small, so the events of human life, from the deepest to their highest consummation, must accord with the events of life in general. Certainly one who could write completely the history of their own life would also have, in a small epitome, concurrently grasped the history of the cosmos. Most people turn away from what is concealed within themselves just as they turn away from the depths of the great life and

shy away from the glance into the [208] abysses of that past which are still in one just as much as the present.

All the more so and because I am conscious that I do not speak of something familiar or popular or of that which is in accord with what has been assumed, it seems necessary to me to recollect first and foremost the nature of all happenings, how everything begins in darkness, seeing that no one sees the goal, and so that a particular event is never intelligible by itself but rather that the whole entire transpired occurrence is intelligible. Then just as all history is not just experienced in reality or only in narration, it cannot be communicated, so to speak, all at once with a general concept. Whoever wants knowledge of history must accompany it along its great path, linger with each moment, and surrender to the gradualness of the development. The darkness of the spirit cannot be overcome suddenly or in one fell swoop. The world is not a riddle whose solution could be given with a single word. Its history is too elaborate to be brought, so to speak, as some seem to wish, to a few short, uncompleted propositions on a sheet of paper.

But to speak the truth, it is no less the case with true science than it is with history that there are no authentic propositions, that is, assertions that would have a value or an unlimited and universal validity in and for themselves or apart from the movement through which they are produced. Movement is what is essential to knowledge. When this element of life is withdrawn, propositions die like fruit removed from the tree of life. Absolute propositions, that is, those that are once and for all valid, conflict with the nature of true knowledge which involves progression. Let, then, the object of knowledge be *A* and then the first proposition that is asserted would be that "*A* = *x* is the case." Now if this is unconditionally valid, that is, that "*A* is always and exclusively only *x*," then the investigation is finished. There is nothing further to add to it. But as certainly as the investigation is a progressive kind, it is certain that "*A* = *x*" is only a proposition with a limited validity. It may be valid in the beginning, but as the investigation advances, it turns out that "*A* is not simply *x*." It is also *y*, and it is therefore "*x* + *y*." One errs here [209] when one does not have a concept of a kind of true science. They take the first proposition, "*A* = *x*," as absolute and then they perhaps get, or have in mind from somewhere else in experience, that it would be the case that "*A* = *y*." Then they immediately oppose the second proposition to the first instead of waiting until the incompleteness of the first proposition would demand, from itself, the advance to the second proposition. For they want to conceive of everything in one proposition, and so they must only grant nothing short of an absolute thesis and, in so doing, sacrifice science. For where there is no succession, there is no science.

From this it seems evident that in true science, each proposition has only a definite and, so to speak, local meaning, and that one who has withdrawn the determinate place and has made the proposition out to be something absolute

(dogmatic), either loses sense and meaning, or gets tangled up in contradictions. Then insofar as method is a kind of progression, it is clear that here method is inseparable from the being [*Wesen*] and, outside of this or without this, the matter is also lost. Whoever then believes that they may make the very last the very first and vice versa, or that they can reformulate the proposition that ought only be valid in a particular place into something general or unlimited, may thereby indeed arouse enough confusion and contradictions for the ignorant. But in so doing, they have not actually touched the matter itself, much less damaged it.

God is the oldest of beings—so Thales of Miletus is already purported to have judged. But the concept of God is of great, nay, of the very greatest, range, and is not to be expressed with a single word. Necessity and freedom are in God. Necessity is already recognized when a necessary existence is ascribed to God. To speak naturally, there is necessity insofar as it is before freedom, because a being must first exist before it could act freely. Necessity lies at the foundation of freedom and is in God itself what is first and oldest, insofar as such a distinction can take place in God, which will have to be cleared up through further consideration. Even though the God who is necessary is the God who is free, both are still one and the same. What [210] is a being from nature and what is as such through freedom are completely different. If God were already everything from necessity, then God would be nothing through freedom. And yet God is, according to general consensus, the most voluntaristic being.

Everyone recognizes that God would not be able to create beings outside of itself from a blind necessity in God's nature, but rather with the highest voluntarism. To speak even more exactly, if it were left to the mere capacity of God's necessity, then there would be no creatures because necessity refers only to God's existence as God's own existence. Therefore, in creation, God overcomes the necessity of its nature through freedom and it is freedom that comes above necessity not necessity that comes above freedom.

What is necessary in God we call the nature of God. Its relationship to freedom is similar (but not identical) to the relationship that the Scriptures teach is between the natural and the spiritual life of the person. What is understood here by "natural" is not simply the by and large "physical," that is, the corporeal. The soul and the spirit, as well as the body, if not born again, that is, elevated to a different and higher life, belong to the "natural." The entirety of Antiquity knows as little as do the Scriptures of the abstract concept of nature.

Even this "nature" of God is living, nay, it is the highest vitality, and it is not to be expressed so bluntly. Only by progressing from the simple to the complex, through gradual creation, could we hope to reach the full concept of this vitality.

Everyone agrees that the Godhead is the Supreme Being, the purest Love, infinite communicativity and emanation. Yet at the same time they want it to exist as such. But Love does not reach Being [*Seyn*] from itself. Being is

ipseity [*Seinheit*], particularity.<sup>12</sup> It is dislocation. But Love has nothing to do with particularity. Love does not seek its own [*das Ihre*] and therefore it cannot be that which has being [*seyend seyn*] with regard to itself. In the same way, a Supreme Being is for itself groundless and borne by nothing. It is in itself the antithesis of personality and therefore another force, moving toward personality, must first make it a ground. An equivalently eternal force of selfhood, of egoity [*Egoität*], is required so that [211] the being which is Love might exist as its own and might be for itself.

Therefore, two principles are already in what is necessary of God: the outpouring, outstretching, self-giving being, and an equivalently eternal force of selfhood, of retreat into itself, of Being in itself. That being and this force are both already God itself, without God's assistance.

It is not enough to see the antithesis. It must also be recognized that what has been set against each other has the same essentiality and originality. The force with which the being closes itself off, denies itself, is actual in its kind as the opposite principle. Each has its own root and neither can be deduced from the other. If this were so, then the antithesis would again immediately come to an end. But it is impossible *per se* that an exact opposite would derive from its exact opposite.

Indeed, humans show a natural predilection for the affirmative just as much as they turn away from the negative. Everything that is outpouring and goes forth from itself is clear to them. They cannot grasp as straightforwardly that which closes itself off and takes itself, even though it is equivalently essential and it encounters them everywhere and in many forms. Most people would find nothing more natural than if everything in the world were to consist of pure gentleness and goodness, at which point they would soon become aware of the opposite. Something inhibiting, something conflicting, imposes itself everywhere: this Other is that which, so to speak, should not be and yet is, nay, must be. It is this No that resists the Yes, this darkening that resists the light, this obliquity that resists the straight, this left that resists the right, and however else one has attempted to express this eternal antithesis in images. But it is not easy to be able to verbalize it or to conceive it at all scientifically.

The existence of such an eternal antithesis could not elude the first deeply feeling and deeply sensitive people. Already finding this duality in the primordial beginnings of nature but finding its source nowhere among that which is visible, early on one had to say to oneself that the ground of the [212] antithesis is as old as, nay, is even older than, the world; that, just as in everything living, so already in that which is primordially living, there is a doubling that has come down, through many stages, to that which has determined itself as what appears to us as light and darkness, masculine and feminine, spiritual and corporeal. Therefore, the oldest teachings straightforwardly represented the first nature as a being with two conflicting modes of activity.

But in later times, ages more and more alienated from that primordial feeling, the attempt was often made to annihilate the antithesis right at its source, namely, to sublimate the antithesis right at its beginning as one sought to trace one of the conflicting modes back to the other and then sought to derive it from that other. In our age, this was true especially for the force that is set against the spiritual. The antithesis in the end received the most abstract expression, that of thinking and Being. In this sense, Being always stood in opposition to thinking as something impregnable, so that the Philosophy that would explain everything found nothing more difficult than to provide an explanation for precisely this Being. They had to explain this incomprehensibility, this active counterstriving against all thinking, this active darkness, this positive inclination toward darkness. But they preferred to have done away entirely with the discomfiting and to resolve fully the incomprehensible in comprehension or (like Leibniz) in representation [*Vorstellung*].

Idealism, which really consists in the denial and nonacknowledgment of that negating primordial force, is the universal system of our times. Without this force, God is that empty infinite that modern philosophy has put in its stead. Modern Philosophy names God the most unlimited being (*ens illimitatissimum*), without thinking that the impossibility of any limit outside of God cannot sublimate that there may be something in God through which God cuts itself off from itself, in a way making itself finite (to an object) for itself. Being infinite is for itself not a perfection. It is rather the marker of that which is imperfect. The perfected is precisely the in itself full, concluded, finished.

Yet also to know the antithesis is not enough if, at the same time, the unity of the being is not known, or if it is not known that, indeed, the antithesis is [213] *one and the same*, that it is the affirmation and the negation, that which pours out and that which holds on. The concept of a connection [*Zusammenhang*] or of anything similar to that is much too weak for the thought that should be expressed here. The merely various can also connect. Precisely that which is set in opposition can only be essentially and, so to speak, personally, "one," insofar as it is only the individual nature of the person that is able to unite that which is in conflict. But if one wanted to call everything that is not one and the same a connection, then one would have to say of a person who appears gentle, then wrathful, that the gentle person connects to the wrathful person in them, although, according to the truth, they are one and the same person.

If someone wanted to say further: it is a contradiction that something is *one and the same* and also the exact opposite of itself, then they would have to explain this principle more precisely since, as is known, Leibniz already disputed the absoluteness of this still always repeated rule.<sup>13</sup> Thereupon they might want to consider that a contradiction might not be precisely what one would want.

The authentic, essential contradiction would be immediately sublimated again, or, rather, transformed into something merely formal and literal, if the unity of the being were taken to mean that that which has been set apart are themselves one and the same. Even the most slipshod expression: the Yes is also the No, the Ideal is also the Real, and vice versa, would not justify this imbecilic explanation because in no judgment whatsoever, not even in the merely tautological, is it expressed that the combined (the subject and the predicate) are one and the same. Rather, there is only an identity of the being, of the link (of the copula). The true meaning of every judgment, for instance, A is B, can only be this: *that which is A is that which is B*, or *that which is A and that which is B* are one and the same. Therefore, a doubling already lies at the bottom of the simple concept: A in this judgment is not A, but "something = x, that A is." Likewise, B is not B, but "something = x, that B is," and not this (not A and B for themselves) but the "x that is A" and "the x that is B" is one and the same, that is, the same x. [214] There are actually three propositions contained in the above cited proposition. The first, "A = x," the second, "B = x," and, following first from this, the third, "A and B are one and the same," that is, "both are x."

It follows from itself that the link in judgment is what is essential and that which lies at the bottom of all the parts.<sup>14</sup> The subject and the predicate are each for themselves already a unity and what one by and large calls the copula just indicates the unity of these unities. Furthermore, the judgment is then already exemplified in the simple concept and the conclusion is already contained in the judgment. Hence, the concept is just the furled judgment and the conclusion is the unfurled judgment. These remarks are written here for a future and most highly desirable treatment of the noble art of reason because the knowledge of the general laws of judgment must always accompany the highest science. But one does not philosophize for novices or for those ignorant of this art. Rather, they are to be sent away to school where, as in other arts, no one easily dares to put forward or to assess a musical work who has not learned the first rules of a musical movement.

Hence, it is certainly impossible that the Ideal *as such* is ever the Real and vice versa, and that the Yes is ever a No and that the No is ever a Yes. To assert this would mean sublimating human comprehension, the possibility of expressing oneself, even the contradiction itself. But it is certainly possible that one and the same = x is both Yes and No, Love and Wrath, Leniency and Strictness.

Perhaps some now already locate the contradiction here. But the correctly understood principle of contradiction actually only says as much as that the same *as the same* could not be something and also the opposite of that something. But the principle of contradiction does not disallow that the same, which is A, can be an other that is not A (*contradictio debet esse ad idem*). The same person can be called, for example, good in accordance with their character or in their actions and *as this*, namely, likewise in accord with their character or in

their actions, cannot be evil. But this does not disallow that they might be evil in accord with what in them is not in their character or active. In this [215] manner, two contradictory, self-opposed predicates can certainly be ascribed to that person. Expressed in other words this would mean: of two things exactly opposed that are stated of one and the same thing, according to the law of contradiction, if one is in force as the active and as that which has being, then the other must become that which is respectively not acting, Being.

Now, what here should be, actually and in the strictest sense, that which is opposed yet is "one and the same = x," is the affirming and negating force. It therefore appears that when both *actually* become one, the one or the other would have to become that which respectively does not have Being and is not acting—something like (because this seems to most people to be something hostile) the negating force.

But the original equivalence (equipollence)<sup>15</sup> between both of them now appears between them. Since each, by nature, is equally originary and equally essential, each also has the same claim to be that which has being. Both hold their own weight and neither by nature yields to the other.

Therefore, it is conceded that of that which has been opposed, if they indeed become one, only one of them would be active and the other would be passive. But, enabled by the equivalence of both, it follows that if one is passive, then the other must be so also, and, likewise, if one is active, then, absolutely, the other must also be active. But this is impossible in one and the same unity. Here each can only be either active or passive. Hence, it only follows from that necessity that the one unity decomposes into two unities, the simple antithesis (that we may designate as A and B) intensifies itself into that which has been doubled. It does not follow that in God one force is active and the other is inactive, but rather that God itself is of two different kinds; first the negating force (B) that represses the affirmative being (A), positing it as the inwardly passive or as what is hidden; second, the outstretching, self-communicating being that in clear contrast holds down the negating power in itself and does not let it come outwardly into effect.

This can also be considered another way. That which has been set apart [216] are already in themselves not to be brought apart. The negating and contracting force could not be for itself without something that it negates and contracts, and that which has been negated and contracted cannot be anything other than precisely that which is in itself affirmative and flowing from itself. Hence, this negating power dislocates itself from itself in order to be, so to speak, its own complete being. In turn, that potency which, in accordance with its nature, is spiritual and outstretching, could not persist as such were it not to have, at least in a hidden manner, a force of selfhood. Therefore, this also dislocates itself as its own being and, instead of the desired unity, there has now resulted two oppositionally posited unities located apart from one another.

Should we want to sacrifice one of the two, we would always thereby have given up one of the two principles itself. Because only one is active in it, each of these unities then conducts itself as this one, the first as B, the other as A. But were these equivalent such that neither could, by nature, take second place to the other, then also each of the two unities again maintains the equivalency and each has the same claim to be that which has being [*seyend zu seyn*].

And so then now if both of them were fully apart from one another and without reciprocal contact, then they would be the same as the two primordial beings in the Persian teaching, one being a power insisting on closure and the darkening of the being and the other insisting on its outstretching and revelation. Both do not conduct themselves as one, but as two Godheads.<sup>16)</sup>

But it still remains that "one and the same = x" is both principles (A and B). But not just in accordance with the concept, but really and actually. Hence, "the same = x" that is the two unities must again be the unity of both unities and with the intensified antithesis is found the intensified unity.

There still seems to be an unavoidable contradiction such that the two unities, having been set apart, should be posited as active and as one. And yet this still admits of resolution such that the unity here demanded has no other but the following meaning. That which has been set apart should be one, that is, a unity of the two is posited, but it is not [217] concomitantly posited that they cease being that which has been set apart. Rather, insofar as there should be unity, there should also be antithesis. Or unity and antithesis should themselves again be in antithesis. But the antithesis is in and for itself no contradiction. It could be no more contradictory that there could be A as well as B, than that just as there is unity, there is antithesis. Again, these are, between themselves, equivalent. The antithesis can as little surrender to unity as unity can surrender to the antithesis.

The antithesis rests on this, that each of the two conflicting powers is a being for itself, a real *principle*. The antithesis is only as such if the two conflicting principles conduct themselves as actually independent and separate from each other. That there should be both antithesis and unity therefore means as much as: that of the negating principle, the affirming principle, and, again, the unity of both, each of these three should be as its own principle, separated from the others. But through this, the unity appears along the same lines with the two principles that have been set in opposition. It is not something like what is chiefly the being. Rather, the unity is just a principle of the being and hence, perfectly equivalent with the two others.

The true meaning of this unity that has been asserted in the beginning is therefore this: "one and the same = x" is as much the unity as it is the antithesis. Or both of the opposed potencies, the eternally negating potency and the eternally affirming potency, and the unity of both make up the one, inseparable, primordial being.

## 1) WHAT IS NECESSARY OF GOD = THE NATURE OF GOD

### a) the triad of principles in what is necessary of God or the nature of God

And here, first after the consummate unfurling of that initial concept, can we glimpse the first nature in its full vitality. We see it, in an equally originary way, decomposed, as it were, into three powers. Each of these powers can be for itself. Hence, the unity is a unity for itself and each of the opposite powers is a whole and complete being. Yet not one of them can be *without* the others also being and hence, only together do they fulfill the whole concept of the Godhead and only that God is necessary. Not one of them is necessary and by nature subordinate to the others. The negating potency is, with regard to that [218] inseparable primordial being, as essential as the affirming potency. And the unity is, in turn, not more essential than each of the opposites are for themselves. Therefore each also has fully the same claim to be the being, to be that which has being. Not one of them can bring itself by nature only to Being or not to be that which has being.

And the law of contradiction, which says that opposites cannot be in one and the same thing and at the same time be that which has being, here, at last, finds its application. God, in accordance with the necessity of its nature, is an eternal No, the highest Being-in-itself, an eternal withdrawal of its being into itself, a withdrawal within which no creature would be capable of living. But the same God, with equal necessity of its nature, although not in accord with the same principle, but in accord with a principle that is completely different from the first principle, is the eternal Yes, an eternal outstretching, giving, and communicating of its being. Each of these principles, in an entirely equal fashion, is the being, that is, each has the same claim to be God or that which has being. Yet they reciprocally exclude each other. If one is that which has being, then the opposed can only be that which does not have being. But, in an equally eternal manner, God is the third term or the unity of the Yes and the No. Just as opposites exclude each other from being what has being [*vom seyend-Seyn*], so again the unity excludes the antithesis and thereby each of the opposites, and, in turn, the antithesis or each of the opposites excludes the unity from being what has being. If the unity is that which has being, then the antithesis, that is, each of the opposites, can only be that which does not have being. And, in turn, if one of the opposites, and thereby the antithesis, has being, then the unity can only retreat into that which does not have being.

And it is not now the case that somehow all three remain inactive so that the contradiction itself could remain in concealment. For that which is these three is the necessary nature, the being that is not allowed not to be, that absolutely must be. But it can only be as the inseparable One of these three. Not one of these for itself would fulfill the whole concept of the necessary being (of

the Godhead), and each of these three has the same right to be the being, that is, to be that which has being.

[219] It is thus found that the first nature is, with regard to itself, in contradiction. It is not in contradiction by chance nor is it in one in which it would have been transposed from the outside (for there is nothing outside of it). Rather, it is in a necessary contradiction, posited at the same time with its being and hence, which, more accurately said, is itself its being.

People appear to have a greater aversion for contradiction than for anything else in life. Contradiction coerces them into action and forces them from their cozy repose. When, after a long time, the contradiction is no longer to be covered over, they seek to at least conceal it from themselves and to distance the moment in which matters of life and death must be acted upon. A similar convenience was sought in knowledge through the interpretation of the law of contradiction in which contradiction should never be able to be. However, how can one put forward a law for something that can in no way be? When it is known that a contradiction cannot be, it must be known that it nevertheless in a certain way is. How else should "that which cannot be" appear to be and how should the law prove itself, that is, prove to be true?

Everything else leaves the active in some sense open. Only the contradiction is absolutely not allowed not to act and is alone what drives, nay, what coerces, action. Therefore, without the contradiction, there would be no movement, no life, and no progress. There would only be eternal stoppage, a deathly slumber of all of the forces.

Were the first nature in harmony with itself, it would remain so. It would be constantly One and would never become Two. It would be an eternal rigidity without progress. The contradiction in the first nature is as certain as life is. As certainly as the being of knowledge consists in progression, it necessarily has as its first posit the positing of the contradiction.

A transition from unity to contradiction is incomprehensible. For how should what is in itself one, whole and perfect, be tempted, charmed, and enticed to emerge out of this peace? The transition from contradiction to unity, on the other hand, is natural, for contradiction is insufferable to everything and everything that finds itself in it will not repose until it has found the unity that reconciles or overcomes it.

*b) the unprethinkable decision in the nature of God—  
the concept of that which does not have being*

[220] Only the contradiction brings life into the first necessary nature that we have until now only considered conceptually. Just as with the three principles whose irresolvable concatenation the first nature is, such that *each* in accord with its nature is that which has being, but such that if one has being,

then necessarily the other does not have being and such that it at the same time still does not befit the first nature to have the freedom to be or not to be, so there is similarly in the first nature also necessitated a decision, even if only one that transpires blindly. If the one has being, then the other does not have being, yet each should and must in the same way be that which has being. With this there is nothing left over except an alternating positing, where alternately now one is that which has being and the other is that which does not have being and then, in turn, it is the other of these which has being and the one which does not have being. Yet, so that it thereby also comes exclusively to this alternating positing in that primordial urge for Being, it is necessary that one of them be the beginning or that which first has being and after this, one of them is the second and one of them is the third. From this, the movement again goes back to the first and, as such, is an eternally expiring and an eternally recommencing life.

But precisely *that* one commences and one of them is the first, must result from a decision that certainly has not been made consciously or through deliberation but can happen rather only when a violent power blindly breaks the unity in the jostling between the necessity and the impossibility to be. But the only place in which a ground of determination can be sought for the precedence of one of them and the succession of the other is the particular nature of each of the principles, which is different from their general nature which consists in each being equally originary and equally independent and each having the same claim to be that which has being. This is not like saying that one of the principles would absolutely have to be the one that proceeds or the one that succeeds. Rather, just that, because it is allowed by its particular nature, the possibility is given to it to be the first, the second, or the third.

It is now clear that what is posited at the beginning is precisely that which is subordinated in the successor. The beginning is only the beginning insofar as it is not that which should actually be, that which truthfully and in itself has being. If there is therefore a decision, then [221] that which can only be posited at the beginning inclines, for the most part and in its particular way, to the nature of that which does not have being.

Precisely the affirmative principle, the authentic being or that which has being (A) as not active, that is, as not having being, is posited in the originary negation. This is not to say that it would, as that which has being, be altogether negated (this is impossible). On the contrary, it is posited as that which has being, but not as having the being of that which has being or, in other words, not as that which has been revealed actually to have being. On the other hand, that which is singularly active in this unity is the negating potency (B), which, as the potency that has been opposed to the being or that which actually has being, cannot be called that which has being, although it in no way because of that is that which does not have being or nothing.

Therefore, whether we might look at what is active in that originary negation or at that which is posited as inactive or passive in it, we will in any case say that the originary negation for the most part shares in the nature of that which does not have being or itself appears as not *having being*.

The concept of not having being, but especially the not being that occurs everywhere in so many forms, has always led the beholder astray and, like a real Proteus, manifoldly brought them into confusion. For just as it is manifest to hardly anyone that actual power lies more in delimitation than expansion and that to withdraw oneself has more to do with might than to give oneself, so is it natural that where they encounter that which through itself does not have being, they rather regard it as "nothing" and, when it is asserted that it "is" precisely as that which does not have being, they rather explain this away as the greatest contradiction.

They could have been liberated from this simple grammatical misunderstanding, which also prejudiced a good many interpreters of the Greek philosophers, and from which the concept of the *creatio ex nihilo*, among others, also seems to owe its origin, with this distinction, entirely easy to learn and which can be found, if nowhere else, certainly in Plutarch, between non-Being [*nicht Seyn*] (μὴ εἶναι) and the Being which has no being [*nicht seyend Seyn*] (μὴ ὄν εἶναι). This lets one also defend the expression "privation (στέρησις)" with which Aristotle indicated the other, the opposed τούναντίον, namely, insofar as the negating [222] force, which contracts the being, does not posit that it is-not, but rather that it is not that which has being.

Even the most general consideration must incidentally lead to the concept of that which does not have being. For that which is in each thing the actual Being cannot, because of the antithesis, ever be one and the same with that which has being. Rather, it is, in accord with its nature, that which does not have being but, because of that, it is in no way "nothing." For how should nothing be that which is Being itself? Being must after all be. There is no mere Being in which there would be nothing which has being whatsoever (no A without B). That which does not have being is not something that has being against others (objectively), but is something that has being in itself (subjectively). It is only over and against that which mainly has being that it is that which does not have being. But in relationship to itself, it is certainly that which has being. Everything that has being of a humbler rank relates itself, when contrasted with being of a higher rank, as that which does not have being. The same A that, in contrast with another, is that which has being, can appear in contrast with an A of an even higher order as that which does not have being.

So something more or less allows itself expression in our way that Plato already showed in the magnificent dialogue about that which does not have being in which he shows how that which has no being is necessary and how, with-

out this insight, certainty would be entirely indistinguishable from doubt and truth would be entirely indistinguishable from error.<sup>17</sup>

Conceptually, that which has being is always that in which the affirming principle is active and outwardly manifest. But it does not always follow that what has being in accord with the concept is, for this reason, that which indeed really has being. For in an inverted order, or where there is still no order, level-headedness, and organization, that which in itself or essentially has being can just as well become that which does not have being, when contrasted with what, in accord with its being, really does not have being. Just as the good person suppresses the evil within themselves, the evil person, conversely, silences the good within themselves and posits that what in accord with its being is that which has being is really that which does not have being.

We still want to recall the misuse that another kind of sophistry makes of the concept of not having being. Because Being appears as the highest to blind feeling and because all Being [223] is founded on the closure of the being, sophistry then concludes (if it has not been supplemented too much through this explanation) that Being is unknowable and because to them everything is *Being*, nothing is knowable; all knowing knowledge dissolves Being and only the unknowing one knows. Certainly in itself only that which has being is what is knowable and what does not have being is not what is knowable. But it is still only incomprehensible insofar as and in as much as it is not that which has being. But insofar as it is as such and at the same time something that has being, it is certainly comprehensible and knowable. For that through which it does not have being is precisely that through which it has being. For it is not that which does not have being on account of a comprehensive lack of light and being but on account of an active restriction of the being and hence, on account of acting force. We may therefore look to what is interior and concealed in it or to what is exterior and manifest about it. The former is precisely the essentiality itself but the latter is an active force. Nay, we would like to say more correctly that the latter is the force, the absolute might, which, as such, must likewise be something that has being and therefore must be something knowable.

That God negates itself, restricts its being, and withdraws into itself, is the eternal force and might of God. In this manner, the negating force is that which is singularly revealing of God. But the actual being of God is that which is concealed. The whole therefore stands as A that from the outside is B and hence, the whole = (A = B). Therefore, the whole, because God is that which does not have being (is not manifest) in it, inclines, in accord with its essentiality and in relation to what is other, for the most part toward not being that which has being. This is therefore the beginning, or how we have otherwise already expressed it, the first potency.

Hence, according to the oldest teachings, night is not in general the uppermost being (as these teachings are misunderstood these days), but rather the



first that, precisely because of this, becomes the lowest in the progress of the movement. Precisely that which negates all revelation must be made the ground of revelation.

The same thing allows itself to be demonstrated from another angle. A being cannot negate itself without thereby making itself turn inward and therefore making itself the object of its own wanting and desire. The beginning of all knowledge lies in the knowledge of one's ignorance. [224] But it is impossible that the person posits himself or herself as ignorant without thereby inwardly making knowledge into an object of their desire. Positing oneself as that which does not have being and wanting oneself are therefore one and the same. Each being primarily wants itself and this self-wanting is later precisely the basis of *egoity*, that through which a being withdraws itself or cuts itself off from other things and that through which it is exclusively itself, and therefore is, from the outside and in relation to everything else, negating.

But the power of a beginning is only in wanting in general. For that which is wanted and therefore that which should actually be in accord with the intention is posited as that which does not have being precisely because it is that which is *wanted*. But all beginning is founded on that which is not, on what actually should be (that which in itself has being). Since a being that has nothing outside of itself can want nothing other than simply itself, the unconditioned and absolutely first beginning can lie only in self-wanting. But wanting oneself and negating oneself as having being is one and the same. Therefore, the first beginning can only be in negating oneself as that which has being.

For the beginning really only lies in the negation. All beginning is, in accord with its nature, only a desire for the end or for what leads to the end and hence, negates itself as the end. It is only the tension of the bow—it is not so much that which itself has being as it is the ground that something is. It is not enough for a beginning that now commences or becomes not to be. It must be expressly posited as that which does not have being. A ground is thereby given for it to be. No beginning point (*terminus a quo*) of a movement is an empty, inactive point of departure. Rather, it is a negation of the starting point and the actually emerging movement is an overcoming of this negation. If the movement was not negated, then it could not have been expressly posited. Negation is therefore the necessary precedent (*prius*) of every movement. The beginning of the line is the geometrical point—but not because it extended itself but rather because it is the negation of all extension. One is the beginning of all number, not so much because it itself is a number but because it is the negation of all number, of all multiplicity. That which would intensify itself must first gather itself together and transpose itself into the condition of being a root. [225] What wants to grow must foreshorten itself and hence, negation is the first transition whatsoever from nothing into something.

There is therefore no doubt that if a succession takes place among the primordial powers of life, only the power that contracts and represses the being can be the initiating power. What is first in God after the decision or, because we must assume that as having *happened* since all eternity (and as still always happening), what is altogether first in God, in the living God, the eternal beginning of itself in itself, is that God restricts itself, denies itself, withdraws its essence from the outside and retreats into itself.

The currently accepted teaching about God is that God is without all beginning. The Scripture to the contrary: God is the beginning and the end. We would have to imagine a being regarded as without beginning as the eternal immobility, the purest inactivity. For no acting is without a point out of which and toward which it goes. An acting that would neither have something solid upon which to ground itself nor a specific goal or end that it desires, would be a fully indeterminate acting and not an actual and, as such, distinguishable one. Certainly, therefore, something that is eternal without beginning can be thought as not actual but never as actual. But now we are speaking of a necessarily actual God. Therefore, this God has no beginning only insofar as it has no beginning of its beginning. The beginning in it is an eternal beginning, that is, a beginning that was, as such, from all eternity and still always is and one that never ceases to be a beginning. The beginning that a being has outside of itself and the beginning that a being has within itself are different. A beginning from which it can be alienated and from which it can distance itself is different than a beginning in which it eternally remains because it itself is the beginning.

But the divine nature does not allow that it is just an eternal No and an eternal denial of itself. It is an equally valid part of its nature that it is a being of all beings, the infinitely self-granting and self-communicating being. In that it therefore conceals its being, there thereby appears, by force of the eternal necessity of its nature, [226] the eternal affirmation of its being as it opposes the negation (which is not sublimated but abiding, albeit now receding into the negative). In contrast, the negating force represses itself and precisely thereby intensifies itself into an independent being.

Exactly as when the body collects itself and cools off and a perceptible warmth spreads around it so that it therefore elevates the previously inactive warmth into an active warmth, so too, and with a wholly equal necessity, that originary negation becomes the immediate ground, the potency that begets the actual being. It posits this being outside of itself and independent of itself as a being removed from itself, nay, as a being opposed to it, as that which in itself eternally has being.

Through this, a new light falls upon that originary negation. A being cannot negate itself as actual without at the same time positing oneself as the actualizing potency that begets itself. Hence, conversely, positing oneself as the

actualizing potency of oneself and, in turn, positing oneself as not having being is one and the same.

In the first potency (in  $A = B$ ), there was also something that had being (A). But this was posited here as not having being (as passive, as object). In accordance with the presupposition, that which is begot by it is posited as that which has being such that *it has being* [*das Seyende als Seyendes*]. It can in this way be called that which has being to the second power (we indicate it by  $A^2$  in which now the negating power, B, disappears). And from this it would be clear that if that originary No is the beginning or the first, than the being opposed to it is the second and the successive being.

That the former can only proceed and that the latter can only succeed can, however, still be looked at in another way. It is natural to the negating force that it represses the being. Once a negating force is posited, it can effect nothing else but the closure of the being. But the negating force is fully alien to the affirming principle in itself. And yet the affirming principle actually has being as that which has being only by repressing the negating force in itself. Furthermore, it would, with regard to itself, never come forth and therefore never elevate to act if the negation of the being [227] had not proceeded. In that it has being, it certainly has it from itself. But that it again has being, that it laboriously proves itself and reveals itself as having being, has its ground in the negating potency. If there were not the No, then the Yes would be without force. No "I" without the "not-I" and in as much as the "not-I" is before the "I." That which has being, precisely because it has being from itself, has no ground to desire that it be. But to be negated conflicts with its nature. Therefore, in that it is at all negated, it follows that, excepting that in which it is negated, it is in itself unnegated and in its own purity.

The primordial antithesis is given with these two potencies. Yet the antithesis is not such that it is based on a completely reciprocal exclusion, but only as such that it is based on an opposed relationship, on, so to speak, an inverted position of those first life forces. What in the proceeding potency was the exterior, contracting, and negating, is itself, in the successive potency, the inner, contracted, and self-negated. And conversely, what was there inhibited is what is here free. They are infinitely far from each other and infinitely near. Far, because what is affirmed and manifest in one of them is posited in the other as negated and in the dark. Near, because it only requires an inversion, a turning out of what was concealed and a turning into what is manifest, in order to transpose and, so to speak, transform, the one into the other.

Hence, we already see here the structure for a future, inner unity in which each potency comes out for itself. Hence, the day lies concealed in the night, albeit overwhelmed by the night; likewise the night in the day, albeit kept down by the day, although it can establish itself as soon as the repressive potency disappears. Hence, good lies concealed in evil, albeit made unrecog-

nizable by evil; likewise evil in good, albeit mastered by the good and brought to inactivity.

But now the unity of the being thus seems torn and hence, each of the opposites stands for and in itself as its own being. Yet they incline themselves toward unity, or they come together in one and the same because the negating force can only [228] feel itself as negating when there is a disclosing being and the latter can only be active as affirming insofar as it liberates the negating and repressing force. It is also impossible that the unity of the being could be sublimated. Hence, facilitated by eternal necessity through the force of indissoluble life, they posit outside and above themselves a third, which is the unity.

This third must in itself be outside and above all antithesis, the purest potency, indifferent toward both, free from both, and the most essential.

From the foregoing it is clear that this cannot be the first, nor the second, only the third, and can only comport itself as having the being of the third potency =  $A^3$ .

Just as the originary negation is the eternal beginning, this third is the eternal end. There is an inexorable progression, a necessary concatenation, from the first potency to the third. When the first potency is posited, the second is also necessarily posited, and both of these produce the third with the same necessity. Thereby the goal is achieved. There is nothing higher to be produced in this course.

Yet having arrived at its peak, the movement of itself retreats back into its beginning; for each of the three has an equal right to be that which has being. The former differentiation and the subordination that followed from it is only a differentiation of the being, it is not able to sublimate the equivalence with regard to that which is as what has being. In a nutshell, it is not able to sublimate the existential parity [*die existentielle Gleichheit*].

But we still cannot at all talk here of an ethical relation because we still have only posited blind nature and not an ethical principle. We are taught often enough that the Ideal stands over the Real, that the physical is subordinated to the spiritual, and other such things. There is never a lack of such instruction for us. Indeed, this subordination seemed to be expressed as what was most determined in that we always posited what was akin to the Real as the first potency and what was akin to the Ideal as the second potency. But if one begins thereby to posit as actually subordinated that which ought to be subordinated, what then does one have? [229] One is already finished in the beginning. Everything has happened and there is no further progression.

That originary, necessary, and abiding life hence ascends from the lowest to the highest. Yet when it has arrived at the highest, it retreats immediately back to the beginning in order again to ascend from it. Here we first attain the consummate concept of that first nature (after which all particular concepts, which only had to be posited in order to attain this consummate concept, must

again be expelled), namely, that it is a life that eternally circulates within itself, a kind of circle because the lowest always runs into the highest, and the highest again into the lowest. Hence, it is impossible, by virtue of the nature of the three principles, that each as well as each not be that which has being and therefore they are only thinkable in this urge toward existence as an alternating positing. Hence, now one, now the other, is that which has being. Taking turns, one prevails while the other yields.

Naturally, in this constant annular drive, the differentiation of the higher and the lower again sublimates itself. There is neither a veritable higher nor a veritable lower, since in turn one is the higher and the other is the lower. There is only an unremitting wheel, a rotatory movement that never comes to a standstill and in which there is no differentiation. Even the concept of the beginning, as well as the concept of the end, again sublimates itself in this circulation. There is certainly a beginning of the potency in accordance with its inherent possibility, but this is not an actual beginning. An actual beginning is only one that posits itself as not having being in relationship to that which should actually be. But that which could be the beginning in this movement does not discern itself as the beginning and makes an equal claim with the other principles to be that which has being. A true beginning is one that does not always begin again but persists. A true beginning is that which is the ground of a steady progression, not of an alternating advancing and retreating movement. Likewise, there is only a veritable end in which a being persists that does not need to retreat from itself back to the beginning. Hence, we [230] can also explain this first blind life as one that can find neither its beginning nor its end. In this respect we can say that it is *without* (veritable) beginning and *without* (veritable) end.

Since it did not begin sometime but began since all eternity in order never (veritably) to end, and ended since all eternity, in order always to begin again, it is clear that that first nature was since all eternity and hence, equiprimordially a movement circulating within itself, and that this is its true, living concept.

These are the forces of that inner life that incessantly gives birth to itself and again consumes itself that the person must intimate, not without terror, as what is concealed in everything, even though it is now covered up and from the outside has adopted peaceful qualities. Through that constant retreat to the beginning and the eternal recommencement, it makes itself into substance in the real sense of the word (*id quod substat*), into the always abiding. It is the constant inner mechanism and clockwork, time, eternally commencing, eternally becoming, always devouring itself and always again giving birth to itself.

The antithesis eternally produces itself, in order always again to be consumed by the unity, and the antithesis is eternally consumed by the unity in order always to revive itself anew. This is the sanctuary (ἑστία),<sup>18</sup> the hearth of the life that continually incinerates itself and again rejuvenates itself from the ash. This is the tireless fire (ἄκράματον πῦρ) through whose quenching, as

Heraclitus claimed, the cosmos was created.<sup>19</sup> It is circulating within itself, continuously repeating itself by moving backward and again forward as was shown in the visions of one of the prophets.<sup>20</sup> This is the object of the ancient Magi teachings<sup>21</sup> and of that doctrine of fire as a consequence of which the Jewish lawgiver left behind to his people: "The Lord your God is a devouring fire,"<sup>22</sup> that is, not in God's inner and authentic being [*Wesen*], but certainly in accordance with God's nature.

But this unremitting movement that goes back into itself and recommences is incontestably the scientific concept of that wheel [231] of birth as the interior of all nature that was already revealed to one of the apostles,<sup>iv</sup> who was distinguished by a profound glimpse into nature, as well as to those who later wrote from feeling and vision.

This movement can be represented as a systole and a diastole. This is a completely involuntary movement that, once begun, makes itself from itself. The recommencing, the re-ascending is systole, tension that reaches its acme in the third potency. The retreat to the first potency is diastole, slackening, upon which a new contraction immediately follows. Hence, this is the first pulse, the beginning of that alternating movement that goes through the entirety of visible nature, of the eternal contraction and the eternal re-expansion, of the universal ebb and flow.

Visible nature, in particular and as a whole, is an allegory of this perpetually advancing and retreating movement. The tree, for example, constantly drives from the root to the fruit, and when it has arrived at the pinnacle, it again sheds everything and retreats to the state of fruitlessness, and makes itself back into a root, only in order again to ascend. The entire activity of plants concerns the production of seed, only in order again to start over from the beginning and through a new developmental process to produce again only seed and to begin again. Yet all of visible nature appears unable to attain settledness and seems to transmute tirelessly in a similar circle. One generation comes, the other goes. Nature goes to the trouble to develop qualities, aspects, works, and talents to their pinnacle, only again to bury them for centuries in oblivion, and then start anew, perhaps in a new species, but certainly only to attain again the same peak.

Yet this first being never comes to Being since only together do the three potencies fulfill the concept of the divine nature, and only that this nature is so is necessary. Since there is consequently an unremitting urge to be and since it cannot be, it comes to a standstill in [232] desire, as an unremitting striving, an eternally insatiable obsession [*Sucht*]<sup>23</sup> with Being. The ancient saying is appropriate regarding this: Nature strives for itself and does not find itself (*quaerit se natura, non invenit*).

Were life to remain at a standstill here, it would be nothing other than an eternal exhaling and inhaling, a constant interchange between life and death,

iv. ὁ τροχὸς τῆς γενέσεως, James 3: 6 [the wheel of genesis].

that is, not a true existence but only an eternal drive and zeal to be, without actual Being.

It is clear that the life could never come to an actual existence by virtue of the simple necessity of the divine [nature]<sup>24</sup> and hence, certainly not by virtue of necessity in general.

How or by virtue of what was the life redeemed from this annular drive and led into freedom?

Since each of the three principles has an equal claim to be that which has being, the contradiction cannot be resolved through one of the principles somehow becoming that which has being at the cost of the others. But since the contradiction can also not remain, and since it does so because each of the principles wants to be that which has being for itself: thus no other solution is thinkable other than that they *all* communally and voluntarily (then by what would they be coerced?) sacrifice being that which has being and hence, debase themselves into simple Being. For thereby that equivalence (equipollence) automatically terminates that did not refer to its essence or its particular nature (by virtue of which they form more of a gradation), but only such that each of them was driven by nature in the same fashion to be that which has being. As long as this necessity continues, they must all strive to be in one and the same locus, namely, in the locus of that which has being and hence, so to speak, to be in a single point. A reciprocal inexistence [*Inexistenz*] is demanded because they are incompatible and when one has being, then the others must be without being.<sup>25</sup> Hence, this necessity can only terminate if all of the potencies have sacrificed, in the same fashion, being that which has being. When one of them has being, then all of the potencies, in accordance with their nature, must strive to be the same. As soon as this necessity terminates, a confrontation becomes possible, that is, that each of them enters into its potency. [233] Space opens up and that blind necessity of reciprocal inexistence metamorphosizes into the relationship of a free belonging together.

By itself this is certainly illuminating enough. Yet a question emerges: How is it possible that all of the potencies communally sacrifice being that which has being?

In itself it is clear that nothing whatsoever can give up having being except before something higher. Just as long as the human heart feels, so to speak, entitled to selfish desire until its yearning, its craving, that inner void that devours it, is not fulfilled by a higher good and just as the soul only settles and stills itself when it acknowledges something higher than itself by which it is made exuberantly blissful, so too can the blind obsession and craving of the first [nature]<sup>26</sup> only grow silent before something higher, before which it happily and voluntarily acknowledges itself as mere Being, as not *having being*.

Furthermore, that renunciation and subsidence into Being should be voluntary. But until now there has been nothing in that first nature except irre-

sistible drive and insensate movement. So long as it is not placed outside of this involuntary movement, there is no freedom thinkable within it. It cannot resist this movement by itself. Another movement, something incontestably higher, can only withdraw it from it. And since that involuntary movement is based on the necessity of the reciprocal inexistence, it cannot be free of this movement except when a cision, a confrontation, occurs, without it having anything to do with it. The possibility is then given to it either to accept this cision and thereby redeem itself from the annular drive or not to accept it and thereby again fall prey to that blind obsession and craving.

Therefore, in any case, its liberation and deliverance can only come through an Other that is outside of it and wholly independent of it and exalted above it. Since it ought therefore to acknowledge itself as mere Being and not as *having being* before that other, this is not possible without recognizing at the same time its truly having being in that Other.

## 2) FREEDOM IN THE BEING OF GOD

*The concept of the spirit without nature = the highest concept of the Godhead*

[234] Naturally, the next object for consideration concerns what kind of Other this will be.

First and foremost, it is obvious that the Other cannot be posited by that eternally commencing nature in a continuous series (*in actu continuo*, so to speak) as a potency that belongs to it. Rather, it is outside and above all potency, a lack of potency in itself. In the same way, it cannot again, as it was before, be obsession, desire, or nature; or else this could not help here. Rather it must be free of all desire, completely without obsession and nature.

But precisely because of this, it cannot be something necessarily actual. And since we do not yet know of anything freely actual, it can in no way be something actual. And it is certainly not something that is not actual. It is therefore that which in itself neither has being nor does not have being. Rather, it is exclusively the eternal freedom to be.

There is a univocity in all of the higher and finer teaching that the highest is exclusively above all Being. The feeling is present in all of us that necessity follows from all existence as its grim fate. The only thing actual or the only thing that strives to be actual is precisely thereby in contradiction and contradiction is the cause of all necessity. An inner feeling tells us that the true, eternal, freedom only dwells above Being.

For most people, because they have never felt that freedom, to be that which has being or a subject seems the highest, although this word "subject" already suggests that everything that only has being, insofar as it is this,

acknowledges something higher above itself. Therefore they ask: What then could be thought above all Being, or what is it that neither has being nor does not have being? And they answer themselves modestly: nothing.

It certainly is nothing, but in the sense that the pure Godhead is nothing and that as a spiritually pondering poet expressed it:

*Die zarte Gotttheit ist das Nichts und Übernichts,  
Wer nichts in allem sieht, Mensch glaube, dieser siehts.*

The gentle Godhead is nothing and beyond nothing  
Who sees nothing in all things, believe me, sees this.<sup>27</sup>

[235] The Godhead is nothing because nothing can come toward it in a way distinct from its being [*Wesen*] and, again, it is above all nothingness because it itself is everything.

It certainly is nothing, but in the way that pure freedom is nothing. It is like the will that wills nothing, that desires no object, for which all things are equal and is therefore moved by none of them. Such a will is nothing and everything. It is nothing insofar as it neither desires to become actual itself nor wants any kind of actuality. It is everything because only from it as eternal freedom comes all force and because it has all things under it, rules everything, and is ruled by nothing.

In general, the meaning of negation varies depending on whether it is related to the exterior or the interior. For the highest negation in the exterior sense must be one with the highest affirmation in the interior sense. That which is everything in itself cannot precisely for this reason have at the same time everything outside of itself. Each thing has properties by which it is known and comprehended and the more properties it has, the more comprehensible it is. That which is greatest is round and without properties. Taste, or, the gift of differentiation, finds nothing tasteful in the sublime, just as it finds little to taste in water that is scooped from the spring. Hence, in a profound play on words, an ancient German writer calls that will poor that, because it itself is enough, has nothing that it can want.

Freedom or the will, insofar as it does not will anything actual, is the affirmative concept of absolute eternity. We can only imagine this as that which exceeds all time, as eternal immovability. Everything is aimed at this, everything yearns for this. All movement has only eternal immovability as its goal and all time, even that eternal time, is nothing but the constant obsession with eternity.

Everything only rests when it has found its proper being, its support and continuance, in the will that wills nothing. In the greatest restlessness of life, in

the most violent movement of all forces, the proper goal is always the will that wills nothing.

Every creature, especially every person, actually only strives toward [236] the state of no conation [*das Nichtwollen*].<sup>28</sup> This is not just done by the person who withdraws from all coveted things, but, albeit unwittingly, by the one who abandons themselves to all of their desires, since this person too only desires the state in which they have nothing more to will, even though this flees from them and the more zealously they follow it, the farther it distances itself from them.<sup>29</sup>

One usually says that the human will is for the Kingdom of Heaven and this is true if by this will the pure, naked, simple will is understood. Then the person who would be transposed into their pure conation would alone be free of all nature.

Hence, that which is without nature, which the eternal nature desires, is not a being and does not have being, although it is also not the opposite. Rather it is eternal freedom, the pure will, but not the will to something, such as the will to reveal itself, but rather the pure will without obsession and craving, the will insofar as it actually does not will. We have expressed the Highest elsewhere as pure equivalence (indifference) that is nothing yet everything. It is nothing, just like the pure happiness that does not know itself, like the composed bliss that is entirely self-fulfilled and thinks of nothing, like the calm interiority that does not look after itself and does not become aware of its not Being. It is the highest simplicity, not so much God itself, but the Godhead, which is hence, above God, in the way that some of the ancients already spoke of a Super-Godhead [*Übergotttheit*]. It is not divine nature or substance, but the devouring ferocity of purity that a person is able to approach only with an equal purity. Since all Being goes up in it as if in flames, it is necessarily unapproachable to anyone still embroiled in Being.

Everyone unanimously agrees that God, in accordance with its highest self, is pure spirit. But whether everyone has thought the full purity and ferocity of this thought can be doubted.

Indeed, the earlier theologians explicitly teach that by the expression "spirit," God is not posited in a special class or category of being, in something like the so-called "pure spirits," nor is God posited as if God were only spirit, in contrast to the things of nature. God [237] is beyond all spirits. God is the most spiritual spirit, pure, inscrutable breath,<sup>30</sup> the spirit of all spirit, so to speak. Up to this point, the spirituality of God coincides with the simplicity of its being.

According to the theologians own teachings, not only is no kind of opposition compatible with this simplicity, but not even once can anything whatsoever that is different than its being be ascribed to the Godhead.

According to a strict understanding of this doctrine, one cannot say of the Godhead that it is good since this sounds as if the "good" were supplementing its Being as something distinct. But the good is its Being *per se*. It is

essentially good and not so much something good as the Good itself. Likewise: God is not actually eternal, but is itself its eternity. No activity distinct from the Godhead's being can be ascribed to it. Such activity would be to a being as possibility is to actuality. But there is nothing potential in God. God is pure *actus*. Strictly speaking, one cannot then call the Godhead "conscious," since this would presuppose a differentiation between itself and that of which it is conscious because the Godhead is a wholly pure consciousness and is nothing whatsoever and everything is wrapped up in its being. According to this doctrine, one cannot precisely call the Godhead willing because the Godhead is the will, pure freedom itself, although precisely for this reason the Godhead can also not be called the not-willing. Finally, that primordial principle, displeasing only to the totally ignorant, also follows from this doctrine, namely, that the Godhead, in itself, neither is nor is not; or in another expression, albeit not quite as good, namely, that the Godhead is as well as is not. It is not in such a way that Being would befit it as something differentiated from its being, since it is itself its Being and yet Being cannot be denied to it precisely because in it Being is the being [*Wesen*] itself.

Since therefore according to the so-called ontological proof it should follow from this unity of Being and essence that God is a necessarily existing essence, then that idea was not properly understood. Since the concept of having being includes a differentiation [238] from Being in it, a distinction that is denied in regard to the Godhead, and, according to the ancient saying, what is Being itself, has no Being (*Ejus quod est Esse, nullum est Esse*).

God, in accordance with its highest self, is not a necessarily actual essence, but the eternal freedom to be.

But it is equally obvious how that unity of essence and Being (that presents itself here spontaneously as the expression of the highest spirituality) in no way exhausts the full concept of the living God. Science can be as little satisfied as feeling with a God who is not because it is Being itself, who is not vital because it is life itself, who is not conscious because it is pure consciousness itself. Both demand a God who is there in a particular way that is differentiated from its being, who is not, in accordance with its being, knowledge, but who knows something explicitly and in particular; a God whose activity is not wrapped up in its essence, but who, in deed, namely, in a way distinguishable from its essence, acts.

Certainly this remark puts us in danger of grasping in advance that which should only be evident through a gradual unfolding. Only this is noted so far: how completely in recent times the thread of the spiritual and doctrinal tradition has been torn off; what ignorance of concepts which had long been available had disseminated, illuminated by the fact that some people were persecuted because they asserted that, in accordance with the highest concept, Being cannot be ascribed to the Godhead, even though this was taught since

the earliest times. Or illuminated by the fact that others believed that they had to dispute that unity of essence and Being even though again it was taught with complete strictness and at the same time with the consequence that the Godhead neither has being nor does not have being. They did this without intimating that they disputed the primordial foundation of the spirituality of God and without knowing that this is the most ancient doctrine: God is the superactual, beyond that which has being [*das Überseyende*] (τὸ ὑπερόν), therefore a sublimity beyond Being and Not-being.<sup>31</sup>

### 3) THE CONNECTION OF WHAT IS NECESSARY IN GOD WITH WHAT IS FREE OR FREEDOM

*a) the immediate effect of what is higher in God (of freedom)  
on what is necessary in, or the nature of God—  
Descent of the eternal nature to the All*

But now in order to turn back to the context of the investigation, it is evident from these remarks that the concept of that which in [239] itself neither has being nor does not have being, that state without nature, that we posit outside and above the eternal nature, is one and the same with the concept that was always contemplated as the highest concept of the Godhead.

By virtue of the simple necessity of its nature (this is proven), actual existence never occurs either in God itself or outside of God. Therefore, we had to acknowledge still something else outside and beyond that necessity of God that in the three potencies constitutes eternal nature. This Other is eternal freedom, pure conation itself. Or expressed otherwise: we had to acknowledge that in the actual, living God is a unity of necessity and freedom.

It is first incumbent upon us to present how the contradiction is redeemed by that which is higher, how the blind being that is in conflict with itself could be delivered from necessity.

First of all, the possibility of coming to be is already given to it by that which is higher since, on the one hand, it can only give up being that which has being before something higher and, on the other hand, precisely that which has being has no Being and therefore can only be that which has being relatively, that is, in such a way that an Other is a Being to it. Since although in itself it neither has being nor does not have being, it can only stand against everything else as having being. This is not to say that it is sublimated as something that in itself neither is nor is not, but that it has being as that which neither has being nor does not have being.<sup>32</sup>

But in that eternally commencing life there lies the wish to escape from the involuntary movement and from the distress of pining. And through its

simple presence, without any movement (since it is still pure conation itself), that which is higher, magically, so to speak, rouses in that life the yearning for freedom. The obsession [*Sucht*] abates into yearning [*Sehnsucht*], wild desire turns into a yearning to ally itself, as if it were its own true or highest self, with the will that wills nothing, with eternal freedom.

Yearning nature has no relation to that pure spirit except that pure spirit is the freedom to be and in as much as it, in comparison with all else, [240] has being ( $\tau\acute{o}$  'ON). In contrast, yearning nature has in itself the possibility to come to Being, to subject (understood in the authentic meaning of the word), to the stuff of actualization, so to speak, for that pure spirit.

But only here one finds the following distinction. Nature is capable of the immediate relationship to the incomprehensible spirit only by virtue of that which is spirit within it, is free, and is elevated in the same way over that which does not have being ( $A = B$ ) and that which has being ( $A^2$ ). Since only what is itself free from all antithesis can draw nigh to that which is without contradiction. Now this relationship (the  $A^3$ ) in its turn does not connect with the lowest ( $A = B$ ) immediately but rather through the mediate ( $A^2$ ). Therefore, in order to come into relationship with that which is beyond having being [*das Überseyende*], eternal nature must take on that state within itself in which what is free in it elevates itself above its Other and becomes the immediate subject of an in itself unfathomable spirit. But each of the other two principles establishes itself in its appropriate place in such a way that the first potency occupies the lowest place, the second the middle place, and the third the highest place.

This is the natural effect of all yearning, namely, that what is similar to the higher elevates itself but that what is less similar to it, that on account of which its elevation was inhibited, is cast down and lowered into the depths. Only in view of the highest does each principle get to know the locus that befits it; the standard is only in the highest. Nothing lower, even a being receptive to the highest, can partake in the highest without a cision in itself, without a simultaneous debasement of the lower part and a heightening of the part that is determined by nature to be in an immediate relationship with the highest. The lower part, because it is incapable by itself of coming into a relationship with the highest, can come into a dominant conjunction with it only insofar as it sets it free within itself. This cision, this inner divergence, the work of true yearning, is the first condition of every rapport with the divine.

This entrance of yearning into the eternal nature marks a new moment to which we must hold fast in our reflection. [241] This is that moment that the intimating primal world marked as the splitting apart of the world-egg<sup>33</sup> by which they hinted at that closed wheel, that inscrutable movement that could never be held fast; that moment in which the earthly and the heavenly first divided.

The cause of this crisis is without the conation or doing of the most completely pure being: since eternal nature first spots that against which it becomes Being, the merely expressible,<sup>34</sup> and can therefore simultaneously give up, in all its forces, the expressing potency, being that which has being;<sup>35</sup> and because this awakens within it the yearning to escape the eternal annular drive and to reach continuance and rest; and furthermore because the highest is the standard by which the lower principle knows its lowliness and the higher principle knows its dignity. But yearning turns the mere beginning and only the first inner effort (*nisus*) into the cision. Only when the relationship to the highest actually emerges into being on account of this inner beginning is the cision first confirmed; and it first becomes abiding only when eternal nature, placed into freedom by the confirmed cision itself, is able to *decide*. And now, by virtue of an eternal wanting or decision, it eternally and inseparably allies itself to the highest as its immediate subject and becomes its unwavering Being, its abiding substratum. Hence, in itself, nature does not become less lively or have less being. Rather, it is because it is first elevated to true, blessed, ordered life that it becomes Being with respect to the highest.

For each matter only flourishes when it is in its place. The lower, when it sets the higher free, also becomes free from it and so takes on its own due independence. In turn, the higher can now unfold freely because it elevates itself above the lower and occupies the place befitting to it.

The cision is primarily based on the relationship of that steadfast but inexpressible unity in which each potency, which should be that which has being, that is, that which should be the same and therefore, so to speak, should be in one place and one point, is transformed into the relationship of a totality. Therefore, that blind, necessary [242] being which strove to be the one and which nonetheless could not be it, is debased to the All.

Therefore, that dark, inscrutable, and inexpressible being becomes the All in a subjugation and cision that does not happen once and for all, but in a moment that is eternally, always, and still happening.

But in order to speak of particulars, the highest potency of eternal nature, what within it is free and akin to spirit ( $A^3$ ), is elevated to the immediate subject of the pure Godhead. But the two other potencies, which equally were primordial beginnings, become only a condition and, so to speak, the way to this highest potency (to the  $A^3$ ) and in as much were something distinct from the highest. Through their sinking and because the higher climbs up, they take root in their freedom and their independence as the foundation and, so to speak, prime matter of everything distinct from the divine subject, as the refuge and place to live (*mayon*, *Psalm* 90:1)<sup>36</sup> for creatures away from eternity, as what is eternally in the middle between God and created beings. On the other hand, they take root as the divine exterior, as what is first visible of God, as that glory



and magnificence with which the divine subject (A<sup>3</sup>), and mediately the invisible Godhead itself, first covers itself from creatures.

That creatures could not live in the pure fire of the spirit and that they have a passive base with respect to it which is nonetheless, from within, full of force and life, is the inheritance of creatures from eternity. It is necessary to think such an originary prime matter that is independent, in a certain respect, from God. Otherwise all creatures would have emanated from or have been created out of the being of the pure Godhead. This is an inadmissible view both in itself and because it sublimates all of the freedom of creatures in relation to God. This prime matter must be conceived not as having been since eternity, but rather only as having become so in the eternal movement through subjugation and debasement (as we have just shown). In this way, if the progression has been correctly comprehended, the difficulties that resist the representation of eternal matter in other systems in which the succession of ideas is lost disappear straight away.

[243] But although, with respect to the highest (A<sup>3</sup>), both potencies are only matter and substratum, both initial potencies still take on by themselves the relationship befitting them. The first potency (the eternal force of negation) becomes the lowest. The opposite (in which the spirit is manifest and the negating force is repressed), however, becomes the higher, respectively.

*b) the organic relationship of the three principles  
(in what is necessary of God)  
in its subordination under the purely divine or the free*

(α) the first potency as possible substratum for (external) nature

It is indeed befitting the matter at hand that precisely what seemed to be the negation of all revelation, that force of God by which God denied itself and shut itself away—that precisely this is laid down as the ground of all revelation and is now henceforward actually confirmed as the eternal beginning, as the first echelon and substratum of immortal life.

The deepest, and therefore the lowest, that is posited out of the unspeakable and becomes manifest, is that force of the beginning that draws the being to or into itself and pushes it back into concealment. The original text of the Scripture names heaven and earth "the expansion of divine might." This meant that the entirety of the visible world once lay in that negation and was only lifted out of it through a later development. But precisely because of this, the world still always lays in that negation. That original negation is still the mother and wet-nurse of the entire world that is visible to us.

Therefore, that force of the beginning posited in the expressible and exterior is the primordial seed of visible nature, out of which nature was unfolded

in the succession of ages. Nature is an abyss of the past. This is what is oldest in nature, the deepest of what remains if everything accidental and everything that has become is removed. This is precisely that constant tendency to restrict the being and to place it in darkness.

The true primordial and fundamental force of all things corporeal is the attracting being that grants a thing form, that delimits it in a place, that incarnates that which in itself is spiritual and incomprehensible. Indeed, the spiritual and the incomprehensible constantly contradicts the thing and announces itself as an evaporating, spiritualizing being, hostile to all limits. Yet it appears everywhere [244] only as something coming to the fore out of an originary negation in respect to which that attractive force comes to the fore as its mooring, as its actual ground.

That tendency (to restrict the being) is even recognizable in customary expressions such as: "Nature eludes the eye and conceals her secrets," or "Only when pressed by a higher power does she discharge, from an originary concealment, what will be."<sup>37</sup> In point of fact, everything in nature becomes only through development, that is, through the constant contradiction of a swathing, contracting force. Left to itself, nature would still lead everything back into that state of utter negation.

Considered in itself, Nature is like Penia showing up at Zeus's feast. From the outside, Penia was the picture of poverty and extreme need. On the inside, she shut away divine plenitude which she could not reveal until she had wed Wealth, Excess himself, that effusively and inexhaustibly garrulous being (A<sup>2</sup>). Even then, however, the child wrested from her womb appears under the form and, so to speak, press, of that originary negation. It was the bastard child of Need and Excess.<sup>38</sup>

In accord with its ground, therefore, nature comes out of what is blind, dark, and unspeakable in God. Nature is the first, the beginning in what is necessary of God. The attracting force, the mother and receptacle<sup>39</sup> of all visible things, is eternal force and might itself, which, when set forth, is seen in the works of creation. Nature is not God. For nature only belongs to what is necessary in God and, strictly speaking, God is called God only in accordance with its freedom. And, furthermore, nature is only a part, a potency, of this necessity. But God can only be called the whole and not even this after it has become the All out of the One and, so to speak, come to pass from the Godhead.

The systems that want to explain the origin of things as descending from above almost necessarily come to the thought that the emanations of the highest primordial force sometime or other reach their extremity [245] below which there is nothing. This extremity can itself be called only a shadow of the being, a minimum of reality, only to some extent still having being, but not really. This is the meaning of non-being according to the Neo-Platonists, who no longer understood Plato's real meaning of it. We, following the opposite direction, also



recognize an extremity, below which there is nothing, but it is for us not something ultimate, but something primary, out of which all things begin, an eternal beginning, not a mere feebleness or lack in the being, but active negation.

Nature attains expressibility in that great decision not merely insofar as it enters into its own potency, but also insofar as nature's inner contradiction, something that until now had not been noticed because we always had the whole in mind, is soothed within nature itself solely because of the relationship into which it now enters.

For that being, repressed by the negating force, is not silent and dead to the degree that we seemed to assume until now. It is insensitive to itself, but confined and seized by the attracting force, it feels itself as a spiritual, affirming being and the more it has been brought into confinement, the more powerfully, in the measure of its nature, that it presses out of it. But the negating force does not let up. If it could let up, then everything would retreat, for it is the force of the beginning.

Therefore, that first potency is not merely entangled in that general state of contradiction in which we have glimpsed the whole, but the contradiction is also within the first potency itself. When the first potency is considered in itself, the ground of a rotatory movement lies in it. It feels the conflicting being within it but yet cannot give birth to it since the first potency is still equipotent in relation to the conflicting being. The law of the first potency is to abide, to moor the spiritual again and again and thus preserve the ground of the eternal progression. But the harder it pulls in order to bring the being into the depths, the more the being fights against it in the way that all expansive nature strives ever more violently to expand the more it has been compressed.

[246] Hence, since that first potency unites within it conflicting forces, of which one always craves the outside and of which the other is inwardly restrained, its life is a life of loathing and anxiety<sup>40</sup> since it does know whether to turn inward or outward and in this fashion falls prey to an arbitrary, revolving motion.

But everything longs for unwavering Being. Nothing wants to persist in contradiction. This is also true of that potency of the beginning. But it cannot come out of the contradiction by itself since it is its nature to be in contradiction. Only one thing could be a help to it, namely, if it would enter out of that alternating, mutually excluding relationship with the higher principle (the  $A^2$ ) and enter into an organic relationship with it. This is impossible in that initial equivalence since both potencies, so to speak, want to be in a single point because both make the same claim to be that which has being. But if the negating principle ( $A = B$ ) only knows itself as a potency of the being and thereby makes space for the other principle opposed to it (the  $A^2$ ), then the opposed principle can become helpful to it and become its liberator from contradiction since the opposed principle is, in accordance with its nature, unlocking and liberating.

Therefore, if this other principle is, then the first principle must also abide so that there is something that it could unlock and liberate. And then that relationship of an initially excluding equivalence transforms itself into the relationship of a necessary concatenation. For if there is one, then, and precisely on account of this, there is also the Other.

Were there not a potency of negation, then there would be no reason that the affirming, unlocking potency would be. But, on the other hand, the former potency only comes to continuance because of the latter. Now, the negating force can quietly be active and repress the being all of the time. Antecedently (*antecedenter*), that which has being is still fettered. Only subsequently, through a higher potency, is it liberated. It is not a contradiction that what, in an antecedent moment, was confined may become, in a following moment, free. Moreover, it must have been confined in order to be able to be liberated. The confining force is not sublimated on account of this but is rather confirmed when another [247] force following it places the confined force in freedom. A Before and an After first emerge here, an actual articulation and thereby a soothing. The attracting or indrawing force first feels itself as the force of the beginning when it is overwhelmed by its subsequent principle. And the now liberated principle first knows the attracting principle as its necessary precedent (*Prius*), as its first ground and support. It loves it as the condition, as the vessel, so to speak, out of which it arises.

Something similar that, in the final analysis, is actually the same as it, might serve as an elucidation of this relationship. Long ago it was attempted to present matter as the product of two forces. These were the same forces that hitherto appeared to us as the primordial forces of all life: the attractive and the expansive. But it was never conceivable how, given that the two forces are equipotent (of the same potency), something graspable and something maintaining continuance could come from their clash. For if one may now assume that the two forces are equally strong or that one prevails over the other, then, according to the former supposition, they would have to sublimate each other reciprocally (like equal weights on a lever), or the stronger would have to sublimate the weaker. In the former case, there would be nothing perceptible remaining anywhere. In the latter case, the stronger force with its surplus would alone be left, without something corporeal having come into being. There is no way to change this if one does not want to accept here a prior and posterior (a *Prius* and *Posteriorius*, a distinction of potency) between the forces. But if the state of the swathing, of the being engulfed of the expansive force by the attracting force is the prior, which is then, in a subsequent fashion, overwhelmed by another potency that is independent of the first potency: then, for the first time, because each force stays in its Being and essence, a product must come forth that, like matter, stands between total restriction and complete expansion, stopped, so to speak, in the middle.

Hence, that potency of the beginning, which, with regard to itself, is wavering and without continuance, is first brought to continuance through the organic relationship to the higher potency. But this organic relationship itself is [248] first posited through the cision, since the originary One becomes All, and each one of the principles enters into its own potency, into the relationship appropriate to its particular nature.

Hence, that other principle, the savior and liberator of nature, so to speak, must, in any case, be outside and above this nature and thereby comport to it as the spiritual comports to the corporeal; yet only as something spiritual to which nature is the next echelon and that is again capable of an immediate relationship to it.

Vulgar language looks upon the earth as the place where the essential is suppressed and fettered and calls the region where it is free and lives in its own essentiality "heaven." Therefore, if that potency of the beginning, lowered down to Being and brought to continuance, is the primordial seed of future, visible nature, then we will not err if we assert that the higher potency, in which, inversely, the being is manifest and the negating force is concealed, if lowered down to Being, is nothing other than the primordial stuff of pure supernal essentiality and the basis and the, so to speak, prime matter of the future spirit world. For even that higher potency, which, with respect to the lesser potency, is like pure spirit and life, nay, like the divulger of all its wonders, can still, with respect to a higher potency, sink and become matter and take on passive qualities. As strange as the expression may sound that the spirit world has matter, a basis upon which it rests, nothing can truly exit outside of God that was not created out of a substratum distinct from God's highest self.

(β) the second potency as possible substratum of the spirit world (A<sup>2</sup>)

The highest research, as well as daily, recurring observation, convinces that there are supernal influences on account of which all earthly life exists and by which it is ruled and that without these influences there would soon emerge a stoppage, a reverse movement of all life. Air, water, and all of the elements are only uncomprehending tools whose collective order and attunement-as-one [*Ins-Eins-Stimmung*] must be supported solely by a cause or primordial matter [*Ur-Sache*]<sup>41</sup> that is distinct from the elements and elevated above them. This is what the Ancients called the fifth essentiality. [249] The extent to which the subordinate forces, in reference to themselves, are disabled, is illuminated by those years of a generally malformed harvest which emerge without particular prior events in external nature and without unusual air, heat, rain, and weather. But these supernal influences, which, so to speak, are the continual medicine of our earth and from which life and health originates, come in the end, albeit through many intermediaries, from that primordial source of all life. These su-

pernal influences are immediate or mediate discharges of the spiritual world whose being alone is the animating breath of all of nature. Without this breath, nature would soon get into a reverse motion and thereby break down. In the end, it would again fall prey to that originary contradiction and initial inconstancy out of which it was posited only through the organic relationship to the spiritual world.

It is a general belief that the spiritual world is nearer to the Godhead than is nature. As the dying Socrates says that he is going to God, the same expression is still used with regard to the piety of the pious. This may be founded on the following. That whole life that we described previously is only *the road to God*, the eternal movement of which nature is the beginning. It is only, in accord with the intention, a progressing actualization of the highest where each subsequent level is nearer to the pure Godhead than the earlier. To this extent the transition of the person to the spiritual world can be called a "Going to God," presupposing that one has walked the *road of life* (which is hence, so named) and not that, because of one's own guilt, one has inverted the direction and changed from the ascending to the descending.

It is customary to call the spiritual world, in contrast to nature, eternity. Nature is eternal yet still commencing and it retains the nature of the initializing. But that which has being in itself (A<sup>2</sup>) is of the nature of the eternal. Being begotten does not contradict the nature of eternity because just as only the commencing can beget, the eternal is only begotten.

But how does this higher potency have continuance with regard to itself? Is [250] there not an opposition within it and thereby a ground for contradiction and for that ill-fated movement?

We have assumed the higher potency as a principle in which the spiritual turns toward the outside and in which the dark primordial force is negated and inwardly posited. Just as in the potency of the beginning the expansive being strives to get away from negation, so does the darkening primordial force in the higher potency. The second potency is an independent, separate being for itself. In it lies the material to be unfolded into its own world. But its law is to repress the negating primordial power. Therefore, a conflict of directions is necessary to it. Even it, in regard to itself, falls prey to that swirling movement that seems everywhere to be the commencement and the first appearance of the creative forces.

Even this potency cannot help itself. Even it can only be helped by a higher potency. But in that first, excluding striving where each of the potencies wanted to be that which has being for itself, it did not know a relationship to something else outside of itself. Hence, in *the great cision*, even it was not merely disentangled from the general contradiction, but was liberated from the interior and brought to continuance. For in entering its appropriate locus, it knows itself only as a potency and knows a higher potency above it. It becomes

Being in relationship to this higher potency so that this higher potency can be active in it as in its own matter or immediate element. While it always remains, with respect to itself, what it is, namely, an eternal Yes that holds the negating force with it and conceals it, it is not a contradiction if that higher potency (A<sup>3</sup>) liberates the negating force in the second potency and unfolds it with level-headedness and intention into another world. For its nature is just to be the originary affirmative principle that confines the dark primordial force. It is only demanded that it be the ground or beginning of the second potency: but what happens subsequently does not sublimate that first ground. Rather, it confirms it because it presupposes it.

As long as that spiritual being conflicted with the negating primordial force, it was, against its nature, which is of the discharging, outpouring type, coerced to be inwardly active and hence, it could [251] also not help the nature that was in need of its help. Now, because the affirmative being is placed in freedom with respect to the negating force through a higher potency, the spiritual world can discharge freely and be active downwardly or in nature. In such a way the most consummate harmony finally emerges, such that the third is to the second precisely what the second is to the first. The whole is animated, as with a single breath, first through the third.

But this third, with regard to itself, is also incapable of continuance. For so long as blind necessity ruled, because there was no confrontation of forces, that pure, nonantithetical being (A<sup>3</sup>) could only be in conflict with whatever else had being and had to turn back against them as a consuming fire. Just as antithesis excluded unity, unity excluded antithesis. But precisely thereby the ground was given to that alternating movement, to that continuous revivification of the antithesis, to that continuous recommencement, since neither unity nor antithesis should alone be, but rather unity as well as antithesis.

If the unity (A<sup>3</sup>) could elevate itself and be outside the antithesis, then the antithesis could be outside the unity and there was no contradiction. But this was impossible in that initial equipollence and state of non-divorce<sup>42</sup> of the principles. Hence, since that principle that, in accordance with its being, is free but was born from necessity, could not tear itself loose from the subordinate principle, and since the free, living progress from the lower to the higher and from the higher to the highest was inhibited, each principle that could not proceed, had to react. Thereby a backward process emerges that, as always, ended with the consumption (by fire) of the previous idols.<sup>43</sup> This is like the spontaneous combustion that occurs in organic bodies if the subordinate becomes so intensified that its opposition to the higher and thereby the freedom of the latter is sublimated. But that life, because in itself it is immortal and because it can in no way be, always again revives itself anew out of the ashes, like a Phoenix, and hence, the eternal circle emerges that we have previously described.

(γ) the third potency = the universal soul or the link  
between God and the world

[252] Hence, just as the first potency keeps its continuance only through its organic relationship with the second potency, the second potency does likewise only through the same relationship to the third. But the third potency cannot elevate itself by itself; it cannot attain *actus* as what it is (as the highest potency): hence, the whole sinks back into itself and into a lack of continuance unless the third is helped so that it can dwell freely outside the antithesis in its own purity as the quiet and peaceful unity.

But this help from the potency cannot come to the being that appeared from below and out of necessity because the helping potency itself belonged to that eternal nature. For the eternal nature attained its summit in that being, in that child of eternity that the ceaselessly restless time wanted to bear right from the beginning in order to elevate itself to eternity by means of itself. Hence, the boundary between nature and freedom, between the natural and the supernatural, is here. If there were nothing outside that blind necessity, then life would remain in the dark, chaotic state of an eternal and hence never commencing movement, of an eternal and hence neverending movement. But in view of eternal freedom, the summit of nature is also elevated to freedom and with it all the other forces simultaneously come to continuance and being in that each force enters into its appropriate place. Hence, each partakes in the higher influence of which it is in foremost need, although indirectly all partake in the divine.

If the first ground of nature is known in that first potency, by virtue of which the necessary being locked itself up within itself and denied itself externally, and if the spiritual world is known in the second potency which stands opposed to the first potency, then we cannot be in doubt concerning the meaning of the third potency. It is that universal soul by which the cosmos is ensouled, the soul which through the immediate relationship to the Godhead is now levelheaded and in control of itself. It is the eternal link between nature and the spiritual world as well as between the world and God. It is the immediate tool through which alone God is active in nature and the spiritual world.

[253] Hence, that first wild fire is here calmed for the first time into peaceful material, which is nonetheless perhaps determined to be taken up again in the succession and posited into a still higher circulation of life. The One becomes the All with reference to a higher One and the inexpressible becomes the expressible in relationship to what is for it the word. Out of the "before" and "after," out of the excluding relationship, emerges an "at this same point in time," a joint and intertwined continuing.<sup>44</sup> Indeed (what is not to be overlooked), what in the movement was the beginning or the first now becomes the lowest; what was the middle becomes here the intermediary; what was the

end and the third becomes the highest. Before this, there was no space and the three principles were not apart from each other. Now, since they sacrifice being one and the same (that which has being), space comes to be and there emerges a true "over" and a true "under." The reader, who must always keep their view fixed on the progressing movement, will notice how here, for the first time, something figural comes to be out of the non-figural. In that wild movement there was only one differentiation that we designated among corporeal things as "right" and "left." There was only a single direction, that of the negating movement, which we name the direction among visible things from right to left since the movement was one that goes into itself or back to itself, that only rose in order to go back to itself anew, whereas the affirming movement only retreats in order to rise again. This distinction becomes clear with regard to the latter movement when the stretching (that is, positive) muscles are active in the rising movement and the bending (that is, negative) muscles are active in the declining movement. But in the opposite movement, the inverse takes place.

While life so voluntarily accepted that organic relationship in itself and became capable of the relationship to the highest, it sinks and actually becomes Being for the pure Godhead. But this Godhead, which to or in itself neither has being nor does not have being, comes to have being on account of the life that stands subordinate to it and in relationship with it. Now, the Godhead is supported by eternal nature and keeps over it not unlike the sun over the earth or the bird over its brood. Whoever should find this simile ignoble, need [254] only compare the expressive word at *Genesis* 1:2, in accordance with its fundamental meaning.<sup>45</sup> Now, the Godhead recognizes in nature its own eternal nature and is from now on, albeit free with respect to nature and neither bound to it nor growing into it, nonetheless inseparable from it.

This organism of potencies is posited "under the form of the past":  
the requirement of an (eternally posited) past in God itself

Here it is to be expected that that the objection will break forth that has long weighed heavily on the mind of the reader. Therefore, that state of contradiction precedes the God that has being. God does not have being from all eternity as God must and as general belief holds. Something, indeed, a chaotic state, rife with contradiction, in the divine nature precedes the God that has being. It would certainly look bad for the entire ground of our doctrine if these consequences were permitted. Therefore, we answer: God can never *come* to have being. God has being from eternity. But what follows from this? Nothing but that the cision likewise happened from eternity; from eternity the necessary is subject to freedom. On account of the Godhead that has being, on account of that supernatural being of freedom, the primordial state of the contradiction, that wild fire, that life of obsession and craving, is posited as the past. But, be-

cause the Godhead, having being from eternity, can never come to have being, that primordial state is posited as an eternal past, as a past that did not first become past, but which was the past from the primordial beginning and since all eternity.

If we wanted to walk the road of historical, that is, scientific, presentation,<sup>46</sup> then what God has within itself as its eternal past, must also be dealt with as the first and actual precedent of God. The consideration that this precedent is God's *eternal* past ought not to prevent us from this. God itself knows this life as what has passed through God and therefore as what is the past in relationship to God. That this life is what is *eternally* past is only the final determination that we add to the whole great concept whose knowledge is the prize of the whole investigation up to now.

For we have not actually gained anything other than the complete concept of the Godhead, which to or in itself neither has nor does not have being, but which, on account of the eternal relationship to its nature, [255] eternally has being with respect to what is external to the Godhead. How should we have penetrated into this concept and grasped its plenitude if we had not gone to work bit by bit, on the condition that in the end we show the whole, consummated concept in a single view?

It is well enough known how most, or all, who began this work before us, took a totally different point of departure. Everyone departs from the assumption that the Godhead is in itself an eternal stillness, totally engulfed in itself and wrapped up in itself and, at least so far, they are speaking intelligible words. But if they then venture forth further and say: that the Godhead, in itself without nature, the eternal freedom, took on, through its revelation, nature, or that a being emerged or that it posited something out of itself, and that with this emergence or positing, life, movement, and revelation begins, then they are speaking words incomprehensible to themselves or others. For how what is in itself without nature and beyond all obsession and craving, *took on* nature, or how what is first purely and fully wrapped up in itself can, in a subsequent moment or act (for it cannot be thought otherwise), emerge out of itself without ground or occasioning cause, or how it could by itself sublimate or interrupt its eternal unity and stillness: this simply cannot be rendered intelligible with any kind of thought.

It has already been proved in the foregoing that the highest and the purest concept of the Godhead, which is generally conceded and already has been laid as the foundation of the ontological argument, namely, that that concept, by virtue of which essence in it is also Being and Being also essence, necessarily leads to another concept, namely, that the Godhead in itself neither has being nor does not have being. But it is demanded, as with a single voice, that the Godhead be what has being. No God satisfies reason and feeling that is a pure *It*. They demand a God that is a *He*.<sup>47</sup>

How the pure Godhead, in itself neither having being nor not having being, can have being is the question of all the ages. The other question, how the Godhead, not manifest in itself and engulfed in itself, can become manifest [256] and external, is fundamentally only another expression of the same question.

Whatever answer human wit might devise, in no case ought it be one of the kind in which God, being that which has being [*im seyend-Seyn*], ceased to be that which in itself is beyond having being. There is no alternation and change in God. God cannot become manifest from out of the concealed to the extent that God ceased to be the concealed God. Nor can God have being from being beyond having being to the extent that God ceased to be that which in itself is beyond having being. Nor, like in the Galilean wedding when water was transformed into wine, can that highest spirituality and inscrutability of God be transformed into comprehensibility and scrutability.

Therefore, all attempts that want to answer that question through some kind of movement in God itself, even if it were an eternal movement, are in themselves inadmissible. For if there would be a necessary or a voluntary movement through which God merged into Being as distinct from essence, then God, in the first case, would straight away in the primordial beginning not be free and not, as God is and must be, eternal freedom. In the other case, however, God would come into Being, because already active in the movement, that is, actual and having being, as what in itself neither has nor does not have being. In both cases, therefore, God would not have being as pure conation, as eternal freedom, that is, not as what God is. But it is impossible that anything could come to have being at the cost and by the, so to speak, loss of that which it is.

There is simply only one solution to this question. Since God in itself neither has being nor does not have being, God cannot come to have being through a movement in itself, but must always remain something actually existing, but which in itself is beyond having being. God cannot anywhere in itself be that which has being or becomes (in an eternal way). It can do so only relationally with respect to an Other. And it can do this only insofar as this Other is the Being to God or is as such that it can stand in a relationship of Being to God.

This is in itself now clear enough that someone will not easily contest it. But whence that Other? This question [257] is also difficult because of the nature of the Other. For since it should be able to comport itself in relationship to the Godhead as Being, it therefore seems to accord with the nature of the Other not to have to be *what has being*. The Other does not have being in the way that the summit does not have being. The summit does not have being because it is above what has being. The Other does not have being because it is below what has being. And yet it cannot be what utterly does not have being.

Hence, it must be something that is not in itself what does not have being, but what *comes* not to have being in relationship to the highest.

Therefore, from whence this mysterious Other? The attempts to shed light on this that were made from the earliest times are known. The oldest attempt seems to be the doctrine that the prime matter of all things distinct from God flowed out of the Godhead, although it is certain that much of what is now called the Doctrine of Emanation had a totally different sense. Although the doctrine explains little and is itself not very explicable, it does have the advantage that it leaves the Godhead in its original stillness and freedom. It is simply an unfortunate crossover between this doctrine and the traditional doctrine that God, before the beginning of things, set forth something from out of itself (according to some, even God itself) that contains the blueprint of future creation. Hence, that still Godhead, before it, so to speak, dislocated itself, was burdened in an equally originary way with the prime matter of the future world.

The representation still valid among the theologians is the closest to the truth: God is the dormant cause of the first foundation of what is distinct from God not through an external action or movement, but through God's sheer will. With this they have seen something of the truth, but the correct concept is again distorted in this expression insofar as they differentiate the will from God. This will may be eternal (as some expressly teach) or it may not. In the first case, it is not evident how this conation in pure eternity should be distinguished from the Godhead itself, especially since those most full of spirit have always taught that everything that is in God is God itself and that the will of God is not different than the conational God itself. In the other case, they assume an emergence into being within eternity, a transition from nonconation to conation in the pure Godhead, [258] which is altogether unthinkable without an intervening occasion.

The truth is that God is itself and essentially a dormant will (which is pure freedom) and, if this is true, the Other must necessarily and immediately also be. Following from this, the doctrine of the theologians could thus be conveyed: God is the cause and primordial matter [*Ur-Sache*] of that Other—not its efficient cause, but a still and essential cause. For the Other to be, nothing but that Being engulfed in the Essence is needed. For since that Being as such is not, and since it can also not abide in this withdrawal, God posits, immediately and without any movement, but precisely *through* God's purity, that Other which is Being to God. For just as that pure electric fire which, in accordance with its nature, is radiating and communicative, cannot be this for a minute without its antithesis, nay, is only itself insofar as it awakens its antithesis, so too the fire causes its opposite not through a particular effect, but through its purity and withdrawal. Or just as a fire, which cannot be actual without some matter, provided that it were necessarily actual, would posit the matter, immediately and without movement, through its mere essence, so too, in order that

the Other be, it only needs the Godhead itself as a pure spirit, withdrawn from all Being.

But according to this representation, which would be similar to the ancient doctrine of the thesis from which the antithesis follows, that first concept of the Godhead in which nothing but pure spirituality is thought is altered. For since God is not the cause of the Other through a special volition but through God's mere essence, the Other is certainly not the essence of God, but it belongs to God's essence, indeed, in a natural and inseparable way. It therefore follows that if the pure Godhead = A, and that the Other = B, then the full concept of the living Godhead which has being is not merely A, but is A + B.

It therefore seems that in the other way (where one proceeds from pure spirituality) one would also come to the above concept of the Godhead. [259] But this way or this connection could at best be a dialectical way or connection and never a historical, that is, an authentically scientific, way or connection.<sup>48</sup> We could not go back to that Withdrawal with our thoughts. We know God in no other way than in relation to nature that is eternally subordinated to God. This synthesis is our first and our oldest thinking. We know no God but a living God. That interrelation of God's highest spiritual life with a natural life is the primordial mystery of God's individuality, the wonder of inextinguishable life, as one of the Apostles eloquently expressed it (*Hebrews 7:16*).<sup>49</sup>

But if we want to generate the thought of that synthesis scientifically (as it can be no other way), we must proceed from what God posits in this synthesis itself as God's eternal past and from what in God can be posited in no other form but the past.

The past is a serious concept which is known to everyone but understood by few. Most people know no past except for the one that in each moment, precisely because of the moment, expands itself, which is still becoming itself, but which is not itself. There is no past without a determinate and decisive present. How many take pleasure in such a present? The person who does not overcome himself or herself has no past, or rather never comes out of the past and lives constantly in the past. It is charitable and beneficial to a person to have, as one says, gotten something over and done with, that is, to have posited it as the past. Only on account of the future is one cheerful and is it easy to get something done. Only the person who has the power to tear themselves loose from themselves (from what is subordinate in their essence) is capable of creating a past for themselves. This is also the only person who enjoys a true present and who anticipates an actual future. Even these customary reflections would bring to light that no present is possible that is not founded on a decisive past and that no past is possible that is not based on the present as something overcome.

Certainly the metaphysicians behave as if there were a [260] concept of eternity completely pure of any admixtures of temporal concepts. They may be right if they speak of that eternity that is externally utterly without effect and

which, in relationship to everything else, as we have shown, is as nothing. From this kind of talk, the concept of the present, as well as the past and the future, is excluded. But as soon as they want to speak of an actual, living eternity, they know nothing but a constant Now, an eternal present. Just as there is no other concept for time other than the counterplay of eternity, there is also no other concept (for eternal time) than that it is the eternally nonpresent.

But if one cannot imagine a present that is not founded on a past, then there can be no eternal present that is not based on an eternal past.

The true eternity does not exclude all time but rather contains time (eternal time) subjugated within itself. Actual eternity is the overcoming of time, as the richly meaningful Hebrew language expresses "victory" (which it posits among the first attributes of God) and "eternity" with a single word (*naezach*).

There is no life without simultaneous death. In the act itself by which being that which has being (existence)<sup>50</sup> is posited, one of the two must die so that other may live. For that which has being can, as such, only elevate itself over that which does not have being. In the moment when an organic body should come to be, matter must lose its independence and come to be mere form for its actual essence.

Every kind of life is a succession and concatenation of states in which everything prior is the ground, the mother, the birthing potency, of everything posterior. Hence, natural life is the echelon toward spiritual life. Sooner or later it comes to a point where it can neither abide nor go farther by itself. It is needful of something higher to be elevated beyond itself. Just as the natural life within a person, if it cannot find the higher spiritual potency, falls prey to inner unrest, to that to and fro movement without meaning and purpose that is the characteristic of madness, so too, writ large, the earth seems first to have found its structure, the harmony of all its creations and [261] thereby peace after the natural within it is elevated into contact with the spiritual through the person. But such a succession of states is also found in natural life, where the preceding always becomes the past in respect to the subsequent. The health and fullness of life only depends on the constancy of the progression, on the uninhibited succession of potencies. Just as all sicknesses are the consequence of an inhibited progression (developmental sicknesses), so too, all birth deformities are only the consequence of the interrupted, inhibited intensification. Since nature cannot find the potency that helps it and transfigures it into something higher, it must burgeon into a malformed life because the drive toward progression does not cease and because nature can neither abide nor go beyond itself.

Movement and progression are also in the divine life, as in all life. The question only pertains to how this divine life is differentiated in relationship to all other life and specifically from human life.

First of all, that succession and concatenation is dissoluble in human life and indissoluble in divine life. God is in a continual elevation. As the Scripture

expresses it, the ways of the Lord are just, that is, forthright—everything backward is against God's nature. Hence, God can only have that life that circulates in a continuing circle as an eternal past within God.

The dissolubility of life or the possibility that the constancy of the transition from the lower to the higher potency may be sublimated, is the cause of sickness and of natural as well as spiritual death. Hence, God alone is called the Imperishable, and only God has immortality.

There is a second distinction: the succession in God is actual and hence not one that has happened in time. In one and the same act (in the act of the great decision), 1 (the first potency) becomes what has gone before 2 and 2 becomes what has gone before 3 and hence, the whole (1, 2, 3) is again posited as what has gone before 4, that is, it becomes a succession *in* eternity itself, an included [262] time. It is not an empty (abstract) eternity, but that which contains time subjugated within itself.

The All is before the One. Necessity is before freedom. Nature is before what is external to and beyond all nature. And yet there is no time here because everything is in the process of this same, indivisible act. There is no life without the overcoming of death. Just as every existence as present is based on a past, this is especially so for that existence that actually consists of self-presence, existence that is conscious of itself.

An eternal *being* conscious [*Bewußt seyn*]<sup>51</sup> cannot be imagined or it would be the same as unconsciousness. Certainly that highest Being, that is here the same as the essence, must in itself also be the purest knowledge because what has being and Being [subject and object] are in it completely one (to this belongs the famous equation: the highest Being = the highest knowledge). But what is pure knowledge is not yet that which knows of itself. Only in relation to something else that is Being to it can the highest Being comport itself as what has being and can pure knowledge comport itself as what knows and hence, be raised to *actus*.

There is no dawning of consciousness (and precisely for this reason no consciousness) without positing something past. There is no consciousness without something that is at the same time excluded and contracted. That which is conscious excludes that of which it is conscious as not itself. Yet it must again attract it precisely as that of which it is conscious as itself, only in a different form. That which in consciousness is simultaneously the excluded and the attracted can only be the unconscious. Hence, all consciousness is grounded on the unconscious and precisely in the dawning of consciousness the unconscious is posited as the past of consciousness. Now it is certainly not thinkable that God was unconscious for awhile and then became conscious. But it is certainly thinkable that in the same inseparable act of the dawning of consciousness the unconscious and the conscious of God were grasped at the same time. The conscious was grasped as the eternally present but the unconscious was grasped with the ascertainment of what is eternally past.

[263] Consciousness consists exclusively of the act of the dawning of consciousness and hence an eternal consciousness cannot be thought in God, only an eternal dawning of consciousness. And hence that rapport into which eternal freedom enters with nature is nothing but the eternal coming-to-itself of the highest. The pure Godhead, insofar as it allies itself with nature, does not come to something alien. It comes to what is its own (εἰς τὰ ἴδια) and knows it as its own proper nature. Hence, that which in itself is eternally commencing does not know in that pure spirit a different God distinct from it. Rather, it only knows its own highest self.

Most people begin from wanting to explain a revelation of the Godhead. But that which should give itself must already have itself; what wants to articulate itself must first come to itself; what is manifest to others must already be manifest to itself. But everything that should come to itself must seek itself. There must therefore be something in the Godhead that seeks and something that is sought. But the former cannot be one with the latter and both, in accordance with the root, must remain independent of one another so that there would be eternally something that is sought and eternally something that seeks and finds—an eternal joy of finding and an eternal joy of being found. Hence, only thus can one think a consciousness that is eternally alive. This consciousness, which depends on breaking through and overcoming something opposed, is not a dead consciousness at a standstill, but an eternally living one, always emerging anew.

The explanation as to how the eternal could be conscious of its eternity poses special difficulty for the deeper thinker, although most people pass over it with a spring in their step. No consciousness whatsoever can be thought in an empty, abstract eternity. The consciousness of eternity can only be articulated in the phrase: "I am the one who was, who is, who will be."<sup>52</sup> Or, more intimately, with the untranslatable word that the highest God gave to Moses and which in the original language expresses with the same word the various meanings: "I am the one who was, I was who I will [264] be, I will be who I am."<sup>53</sup> The consciousness of such an eternity is impossible without the distinction of times. But how should the eternal, which does not find the times within itself, distinguish them except in an Other? (To the spirit of eternity this Other is nature with which it is related.) In nature, the spirit knows itself as the one who *was* because it posits nature as its *eternal* past. Hence, the spirit knows itself as what eternally must have being<sup>54</sup> since nature can be the past only in relationship to It, what has being. Thereby the spirit again gives eternity as the ground of its own eternity, or rather it gives eternity as something wholly without ground which is again based on an eternity. The spirit knows itself in nature as the one who is, as the eternally present in contrast with something before it which is eternally past. The spirit knows itself in nature as the one who *will be* because it sees itself as eternal freedom in relationship to nature and as such sees nature



as the possible project of a future conation. The spirit knows itself as the one who was not, is not, and will not be alone. Rather, the spirit is also *the same* as the one who was, who is, and who will be because it is only as the same Being engulfed within essence that it always was and also because, in the entire future, it can be only as what it is, namely, as that essential Being.

For the spirit is still as what in itself neither has being nor does not have being. It only has being in relationship to what is Being to it. It does not have being in itself. Still, spirit is eternal freedom in relationship to Being, the eternal power to actualize itself in and through Being. But it still has not announced itself. Spirit is still the will that rests, that does not actually will.

Because that nature is what is first external and visible of God, it is a quite natural thought to consider nature as the body of the Godhead and that which is beyond having being as the spirit that rules this body. But, first of all, eternal nature is a whole consisting of body, soul, and spirit. Then these three are linked to one another and, in their unfree, undivided state, together constitute that wheel of nature that in the person is what is authentically interior. But the spirit of eternity is not bound to nature, but abides in eternal freedom in relationship to nature, although spirit cannot separate itself from nature. For [265] spirit can only become tangible in its relationship to nature as the eternally healing, reconciling potency, as eternal beneficence itself.

Hence, if one wanted (as is only right) to seek a human comparison for the relationship, it would be this. The eternal nature is the same in God as what in the person is their nature, provided that if by nature one thought that which consists of body, soul, and spirit. If abandoned to itself, this nature of the person, like the eternal nature, is a life of loathing and anxiety, a fire that incessantly consumes and unremittingly produces itself anew. This nature also needs reconciliation, the means for which do not lie within itself but outside and beyond it. Only through the spirit of God, which is hence called the spirit from on high, can the nature of the person be born again, that is, escape the old life and posit it as something past and transition into a new life. That which is beyond having being [Überseyende] does not comport itself to nature with which it stands in relation as the spirit or soul to the body. Rather, it comports itself to the entirety of the nature of the person as that divine spirit which is not suited to this nature. It comports itself as the Guide—as it was already called in the ancient Mysteries—does to life.

The possibility in the eternal nature of retreating  
into its own life, independent of God

But just as the eternal spirit, free and bound to nothing, stays beyond nature, nature, too, is not coerced but is rather voluntarily subjected to spirit. The sight and presence of that essential purity has no other effect on nature except

to posit nature in freedom so that it can give way to the cision or so that it can refuse to comply with it and fall prey anew to the life of obsession and craving. Through the voluntary nature of this subjugation, however, nature proves its worth as divine nature, as what was already in itself divine, outside of that relationship to the pure Godhead. Nature itself, first posited in freedom, overcomes itself through the force of the summit and posits its own life, insofar as it is its own life and distinct from God, as the past.

Hence, nothing should rest on mere necessity and the highest voluntarism should already attest to the unlimited freedom of God in the first beginnings of life.

[266] Hence, nature subjugated itself right at its primordial beginnings, but not by dint of its own or a natural will, but rather forced by its neediness (this is the sense of the οὐχ ἐκούσα, *Romans* 8:20, although the talk here is of a *later* subjugation).<sup>55</sup> But this was for the sake of what subjugated nature and with the hope that nature should also thereby become free and should become elevated from the slavery (blind necessity) of that eternally transitory, self-consuming essence to an everlasting lordship.<sup>56</sup>

But precisely thereby, because nature is only voluntarily subjugated, nature still always retains the possibility within itself to deviate again from that order and go back to its own life averted from God. In its subjugation, nature has not sacrificed Being altogether, only its own life independent of God. And it has not given this up at the root or as a possibility, but only as actuality. Hence, in this subjugation nature maintains its own ground of self-movement, a source of freedom that does not come to act (to *actus*)<sup>57</sup> but always remains in mere possibility (potentiality).

Were the Godhead not without envy, as Plato says, it still would not be able to sublimate the forces of this life because it would thereby have to sublimate its own vitality, the ground of it being what has being [*seyend-Seyn*].<sup>58</sup>

If that connection by which God alone is a living God is not a dead connection but an eternally mobile one, we must now even think life subjugated under the Godhead as a continual readiness to come to the fore on its own. It is thereby not a blind subjugation, but an eternal bliss, a softening of seeking (of obsession), an eternal joy of finding and being found, of overcoming and being overcome.

There is only a feeling of health in the healthy body when the unity that presides over it continuously holds down the false life that is constantly ready to emerge and when it continuously holds down the movement that deviates from and conflicts with its harmony. Likewise in God, there would be no life and no joy of life were the now subordinated forces not in [267] constant possibility of fanning the flames of the contradiction against unity, albeit also unremittingly calmed anew and reconciled by the feeling of the beneficent unity that holds the forces down.



## The intensified concept of what does not have being

And here we come to the new or, rather, intensified concept, of what does not have being. That initial life of blind necessity could not be said to have being because it never actually attained continuance, Being, but rather just remained in striving and desire for Being. But now this desire is quieted insofar as it has now actually attained a dormant Being in that subjugation. But it is only quieted to the extent that it is subjugated, that is, to the extent that it knew itself as what has being of a lower order, as what does not have being, relatively speaking.

Now, we maintain the possibility that what does not now have being could endeavor to emerge from out of the state of potentiality and elevate itself again to what has being. From this comes an intensified concept of what does not have being which we are often enough forced to acknowledge in nature and life. This clearly persuades us that there would be something mediate between what is and nothing, namely, what is not and also should not be, but which still endeavors to be. It is not because it only endeavors to be. And it is not nothing because in a certain way it must be in order to covet.

No one will maintain that sickness is an actual or truly living life (*vita vere vitalis*). Yet sickness is a life, albeit only a false life, a life that does not have being but that wants to elevate itself from not-Being to Being. Error is not a true, thus actual, knowledge but it is still not nothing. Or, indeed, it is nothing, but a nothing that endeavors to be something. Evil is an inner lie and lacks all true Being. And yet evil is and it shows a terrible actuality, not as something that truly has being but as that which by nature has being in endeavoring to be.

If that initial blind life, whose nature is nothing but conflict, anxiety, and contradiction, were ever for itself or were it not [268] engulfed since eternity by something higher and placed back into potentiality, it could neither be called a sick nor an evil life. For these concepts first become possible after life is subjugated by the mollifying unity but at the same time is still free to emerge, to withdraw itself from the unity and enter into its own nature.

If an organic being becomes sick, forces appear that previously lay concealed in it. (Or if the copula of the unity dissolves altogether and if the life forces that were previously subjugated by something higher are deserted by the ruling spirit and can freely follow their own inclinations and manners of acting, then something terrible becomes manifest which we had no sense of during life and which was held down by the magic of life. And what was once an object of adoration or love becomes an object of fear and the most terrible abjection. For when the abysses of the human heart open up in evil and that terrible thought comes to the fore that should have been buried eternally in night and darkness, we first know what lies in the human in accordance with its possibility and how human nature, for itself or left to itself, is actually constituted.

If we take into consideration the many terrible things in nature and the spiritual world and the great many other things that a benevolent hand seems to cover up from us, then we could not doubt that the Godhead sits enthroned over a world of terrors. And God, in accordance with what is concealed in and by God, could be called the awful and the terrible, not in a derivative fashion, but in their original sense.

Hence, with regard to itself, that life was posited by God as past or in concealment, is always still what it was before. The forces of that consuming fire still slumber in life, only pacified and, so to speak, exorcised by that word by which the one became the all. If one could remove that reconciling potency, life would immediately again fall prey to that life of contradiction and consuming desire. But nature, so to speak, catches itself and overcomes its own necessity by way of the forces from above, abandoning itself voluntarily to the cision and thereby [269] to the eternal pleasure and joy of life of the Godhead that neither in itself has being nor is comprehensible.

## Short episode on the importance of the Old Testament for tracing the concept of God

Until now, we have steadily followed the unremitting course of the investigation which permitted no interruption because with the last additional determination, the One and the All, whose concept we wanted, was completed. For everything up to now, to speak in the vernacular, was nothing other than complete construction of the idea of God which does not let itself be grasped in a short explanation nor circumscribed with limits like a geometrical figure. What we have described up until now (insofar as possible) is only the eternal life of the Godhead. The actual history that we intended to describe, the narration of that series of free actions through which God, since eternity, decided to reveal itself, can only now begin.

Yet before we give ourselves over to the course of this history, it behooves us to linger for a while longer and consider what we have found up until now. Everything depends on grasping that unity in God that is at the same time a duality or, vice versa, on grasping the duality that is at the same time a unity. Were God one and the same with its eternal nature or bound to it, then there would only be unity. Were both outside of and separated from one another, then there would only be duality. But the concept of that unity, because it is a voluntary unity and precisely for this reason includes a duality, is completely alien to our times. Our times only want unity and want to know nothing but spirit and the purest simplicity in God.

Now, it has been shown as evident that the Godhead, in and for itself or as the purest spirit, is elevated beyond all Being. From this it follows that the Godhead could not be without an eternal potency—not a siring potency, but

one that gives birth and brings the Godhead into Being. Hence, the Godhead's living, actual existence is not dead and at a standstill. Rather, it is an eternal birth into Being whose means and tool are in the real meaning of the words called the eternal *nature* (the birthing potency) of God.

But we know what little the grounds of science can do right now [270] against a deep-seated way of thinking, especially when it is connected to conceits of a higher spirituality, such as the currently predominant so-called "pure religion of reason" which believes that the more purely that it removes all living forces of movement, all nature, from God, the more highly it places God.

How utterly modern this manner of representation is could be easily shown. For the entirety of our modern philosophy only dates as if it were from yesterday. For its originator, Descartes, completely rent the living interrelation with earlier developments and wanted to construct philosophy all over from the beginning, exclusively in accordance with the concepts of his time, as if no one before him had thought or philosophized. Since then, there is only a coherent and logically consistent further development of one and the same fundamental error that has spun itself forth into all of the various systems up to and including the most contemporary ones. It is in itself backward to apply this utterly modern standard to what has broken itself from all interrelation to the past in order to reconnect oneself again with the truly ancient and the truly most ancient.

It is desirable in itself for one who speaks about the first beginnings as an initiate to connect to something or other venerable from time immemorial, to some kind of higher, attested tradition upon which human thought rests. Even Plato himself, at the highest points and peaks of his remarks, likes to call on either a word inherited from antiquity or a holy adage. The reader or listener is thereby retrieved from the detrimental opinion that the author had wanted to spin everything out of his or her own head and only communicate a self-ascertained wisdom. The effort and tension this opinion always arouses turns into the calm mood that a person always feels when they know that they are on solid ground and which is so advantageous to research.

Such a connection is doubly desirable to the one who does not want to push a new opinion but who wants to assert again truth that existed long ago, even if it was concealed, and who wants to do this in times that really have lost all stable concepts.

[271] Where could I more likely find this tradition than in the imperturbable documents that eternally rest in themselves and that alone contain a world history and a human history that goes from the beginning to the end? These may serve as an explanation if the sayings of those holy books are remembered hitherto from time to time and if this in turn will occur more often. For if the author had just as often referred to the Orphic fragments or the *Books of Zend* or Indian scriptures, then this could perhaps have counted as scholarly

adornment and appear much less strange than the reference to these Scriptures whose consummate explanation in view of its language, history, and teaching would have to combine all of the science and erudition of the world. For no one will want to claim that the contemporary conceptual tools have exhausted the riches of the Scriptures. And no one will want to deny that the system that would explain all of the sayings and bring them into consummate harmony has not yet been found. A lot of the most difficult passages to understand must either be left in darkness or neglected. Hence, one finds the most outstanding points of teaching in our systems, but they are described rigidly and dogmatically, without the inner link, the transitions, the mediating terms that alone would have made them into a comprehensible whole that no longer demanded blind faith but would get the free assent of the spirit as well as the heart. In a word, the interior (esoteric) system, whose consecration the teachers should especially have, is lacking.

But what particularly hinders teachers from reaching this whole is the almost improper disregard and neglect of the Old Testament in which they (not to speak of those who give it up altogether) only hold as essential what is repeated in the New Testament. But the New Testament is built on the ground of the Old Testament and obviously presupposes it. The beginnings, the first great points of that system that develops into the furthest parts of the New Testament, are only found in the Old Testament. But the beginnings are precisely what is essential. One who does not know them can never come to the whole. [272] There is a coherence in the divine revelations that cannot be conceived in its middle, but only from the beginning. The New Testament shows us everything in the light of later times and in relationships that presuppose those earlier ones. But only the singular lightning flashes that strike from the clouds of the Old Testament illuminate the darkness of primordial times, the first and the oldest relationships with the divine essence itself.

Hence, that unity in duality and duality in unity that we have recognized as what is essential in divine individuality. The two names for God, often occurring separated and often occurring connected, have always attracted the attention of all researchers. One explained in the good old times that the word "Elohim," which indicates the plural, is as a rule connected with the verb in the singular because the three persons should be indicated in a single essence. This view was long ago abandoned. Indeed, all arguments of analogy fight against it.

But what would there be to object to in the interpretation that, through Elohim, the divine substance, that (and hence, the first) All of the primordial forces, would be indicated? That it would indicate that which is for itself inexpressible but which is what is actually expressed through the pure, spiritual Godhead? Jehovah was in an equally originary way posited as Elohim in this relationship of the expressing, of the *name* or the word. "What should I answer the children of Israel," asks Moses, "when I say to them, 'The Elohim of your

fathers sends me to you' and they ask me: 'What is his name?'" And Jehovah answered, "hence, you should say, 'Jehovah, the Elohim of your fathers, sends me to you. *That is my name* for eternity.'" (*Exodus* 3:15) Here it is obvious that Jehovah should be the name of Elohim. Yet Elohim is what is expressed and receives the name. Hence, Jehovah is simply called *the name* (the expressing), as in *Leviticus* 24:11, "One of the *names* was blasphemed against," and *Deuteronomy* 28:58, "If you will not fear the *glorious name*," where added to this in an explanatory fashion is, "and this terrible one, Jehovah, your Elohim." It was always noticed how this name, whose true pronunciation is unknown, consists of pure breath. From this it was concluded that it indicated that the [273] Godhead was pure breath, pure spirit. This is, as the Jews express it, the name of the essence, while Elohim is the name of the divine effects. Others noticed that the name consists of pure, so-called silent, letters (*literis quiescentibus*).<sup>59</sup> This too accords with the essence that is the pure will without actual conation. The ineffability of the name, observed as holy, also shows that It is the expressing, precisely so that this should not be designated as what is to be expressed of the Godhead. That the name is also the *tetragrammaton*<sup>60</sup> (which, by the way, is how the name of God is in all languages) certainly is not allowed to remain unheeded in the most artful and highly purposeful Hebrew language. For this has always been noticed. If we wanted to go into the particulars, even the vestigial trace of the progressive movement from 1 to 4 may be detected in the particular letters. It is no mere fabrication of blindly Christian researchers that the meaning of the holiness of the fourfold in all of Antiquity comes from the tidings whose imprint is contained in the name יהוה [YHWH]. Pythagoras must have known that one simply must count to 4, that 1, 2, 3 are nothing for themselves, and nothing comes to continuance without entering into the four stages of progression. Yes, four is the highest continuance of God and of eternal nature. The Pythagorean oath: "By the one who delivers to our soul the *tetractys*, the *fount of eternally flowing nature*"—if it did not have the above meaning, it had no meaning at all.<sup>61</sup>

This presupposed, the doctrine of the unity of the divine essence in duality shows itself as profoundly interwoven with what is innermost, even with the language itself, of the Old Testament. First of all, insofar as the plural of Elohim is connected to the verb in the singular, where the meaning, for example, of *bara Elohim* is, "the one who created is Elohim." This is also the case with the frequent liaison of Jehovah-Elohim. The doctrine of the duality in the unity is also just as clearly impressed in the language of the Old Testament. Hence, the passages where the verb in the plural is connected with Elohim (in the meaning of the unique, true God) are an indication that Elohim does not cease to be for itself because of its unity with Jehovah. [274] Also in the passages where Jehovah swears by its soul (A<sup>3</sup>) as something that is distinct and separate from Jehovah. For incontrovertibly many things that sound too natural to more con-

temporary interpreters are said or narrated of Elohim, without at the same time applying to Jehovah.

The most conspicuous appearance of the latter relationship is no doubt the angel of the countenance<sup>62</sup> or, as it is really called, the angel of Jehovah. The angel of Jehovah, itself distinct from Jehovah, appears to Moses in the flaming bush. Yet Elohim calls to Moses from the bush (*Exodus* 3:2). Soon afterward the one who speaks to him is Jehovah from which it is obvious that, according to the understanding of the narrator, the angel of the countenance is also Jehovah, yet both are still distinct. The meaning of the narration is perhaps just that Moses was deemed worthy of a vision of that highest vitality, of that inner consuming yet always again reviving (and in this respect not consuming) fire that is the nature of the Godhead.

These few hints may suffice to convince many of the more contemporary philosophers that would gladly offer their quite empty concepts as divine revelation. Or persuade the theologians, who have long thought in accordance with the philosophy of the time, that wholly other mysteries lie in the most ancient documents of religion in divine individuality (for how would this be possible without dividuality?) than they imagine in their so-called theism. The representation of a duality, lying beyond the trinity of persons, in a unity of the divine essence, the doctrine of an eternal presence and of an eternal (or eternally becoming) past, is interwoven into the innermost fibers of the language of the Old Testament Scriptures. The New Testament presupposes this and only references this in a few instances.

## THE LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL POTENCY

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### A) THE LIFE OF THE FIRST POTENCY (= "OF THE NATURE POSITED AS THE BEGINNING" OR EXTERNAL NATURE)

*(α) the soul, dwelling in eternal nature and creating within it*

Yet the reader may not come to a standstill, even at this gain. One state of affairs concatenates itself immediately to the others. Not even one time is there a momentary standstill.<sup>63</sup> Pain, anxiety, loathing of the past life, come undone, as has been shown, through [275] that crisis or setting into mutual opposition of forces. But at no moment can an indifferent togetherness of Being occur. Something new immediately elevates itself out of perished life. That which should have one time been One, yet could not, is now the All or the Whole. But this Whole is just based on an internal belonging together. There is a silent, exclusively passive Whole, not an actual Whole that could be articulated as such. Hence, it is certainly always full of life with respect to the particular parts, but considered from the outside or as a Whole, it is utterly without effect.

But in the setting into mutual opposition itself, all of the forces retain the feeling of their unity. The necessity to be one is overcome but not annihilated. Necessity remains, but as something mitigated through freedom. Love comes to be out of compulsion. Love is neither freedom nor compulsion. Even though it is separated and set into mutual opposition, it wants the inner all the more as something in order to sense itself as One and to feel itself through a voluntary, inner harmony as a living Whole. This unity is an image of what is veritably interior and that toward which Love hopes to be elevated—by God.

So now the cision is based on what is higher being elevated over what is lower than it and the lower, related to the higher, subsiding. Hence, the natural,

decisive movement, appearing immediately after the appearance of the crisis, nay, in the moment itself of its appearance, is the general attraction, the elevation of the lower with respect to the higher and thereby a new movement, new life. Just as eternal nature as a Whole attracts the spirit of eternity, each subordinated potency attracts the potency immediately higher than it.

Hence, at first the lowest potency seeks in a natural way to attract its higher to itself. For the beginning of the movement is necessarily in it as what is most deeply debased.

But just as the appearance of yearning in the eternal nature was the first beginning of the inner cision, so too the desire to be one with its higher potency is now the impetus of a similar crisis for nature reduced to the first level. So nature, full of yearning, expands itself [276] into all of its forces and what previously slept, awakes to its own life.

For nature that is now posited as the beginning, although right at the outset it was only a potency of the divine life, is in itself a whole essence and the same as the Whole (of eternal nature). This nature is not a part of the divine substance, but the whole Godhead dwells within it insofar as the Godhead from the outset composes itself and shuts itself off from itself and outwardly denies itself. A divine unity lay right at the outset as the ground of the antithesis (A and B) that is within it, albeit as concealed and taciturn. The negating force in it is what is presupposed and hence, it comports itself as the first potency. The essence (A) that is posited within it is what follows it and inasmuch is the second potency. But what is innermost in this nature, the actual essence, is neither the former potency nor the latter one but rather the secret link, the concealed force of its being one, that within it which is the A<sup>3</sup>.

If we may now consider the essence that wavers beyond nature and the spiritual world as the universal soul, as the artistic wisdom of that which dwells in the Whole, then it follows from this that what is most concealed in nature, because it is akin to that universal soul, is itself a soul-like essence. And then something similar to that artistic wisdom (*pars divinae mentis*) originally and characteristically also inhabits the lowest potency. Who could doubt this if they have ever observed how completely nature is active from the inside outward like the most levelheaded artist? The only difference between nature and the artist is that with nature the material is not outside the artist but rather one with it and inwardly growing together with it. Who could doubt this if they notice how, even before nature unfolds the actual soul, that already in so-called dead matter each shape and form is an impression of the inner intellect and knowledge? Who does not know the independent soul if they have seen the art, inwardly bound yet simultaneously free, nay, arbitrarily playing, in the great ladder of the organic essence, even in the gradual cultivation of the particular parts? Indeed, nature necessarily requires external assistance to the extent that nature only produces [277] its wonders as an organic part of a higher Whole.

But allowing for this help, which only serves to posit nature in freedom, nature takes everything from out of itself and can be purely and completely explained simply from out of itself.

Precisely this most completely inward and soul-like essence is that by which nature is capable of the immediate relationship to its higher potency. In general, every higher potency is the archetype of the lower potency, or, to say the same in the vernacular, its "heaven." But in order to be blessed with this, the lower potency must first unfold the seed enclosed within it. For, if it evinces this for its higher potency, namely, what is similar to the higher potency and heavenly, then it draws this higher potency to itself with irresistible magic and then an immediate relationship, an inner fusion, comes into being.

Hence, this heavenly, soul-like essence, which was concealed and asleep until now, first awakes with the appearance of the crisis in nature. We have become aware of this same consequence each time a higher unity, under which various forces were subjugated, relaxes itself. Curiously enough, and as if driven by divination, the first observers of magnetic sleep<sup>64</sup> designated its appearance as a crisis. But every sleep is a crisis in the sense that we have previously used the word. Hence, in the same way that spiritual life, which dwells in the subordinated organs (especially in the ganglion system), first, with the appearance of sleep, comes out and awakens from the depths in which it was immersed by the general and higher spiritual life, so too nature, posited in freedom and in its own potency, now first unfolds that soul-like substance that had been concealed within it and by virtue of which nature is an essence that is wholly itself and self-creating. Just as the stars of the night first appear when the great star of the day is extinguished, the subordinated organs first emerge on the stage of life when the general life to which they belonged and before which they had grown silent has waned.

Hence, it is essential that its own source of self-movement, independent of the highest Godhead, remain with the eternal nature and its organs. [278] Just as liberation in the eternal nature is based on the soul having been elevated over everything (on its having been actually posited as the highest potency), the crisis of external nature exclusively consists in the soul, which dwells in nature and is related to everything, subordinating all other forces and actually being brought to the highest place. But the soul feels itself only the soul of the subordinated potency, of the potency of the beginning that is determined to remain eternally. And awoken out of inactivity, the soul does not hate the contracting force but rather loves this confinement as the only way that it can come to feel itself and as that which hands over the material and the, so to speak, means, which are the only way that the soul can come out. Hence, the soul does not want somehow to sublimate the negating force, neither in general nor as what precedes it. To the contrary, the soul demands and confirms the negating force and explicitly only wants to come out and be visible in it so that

consequently the soul, unfolding from the highest, is always enveloped and retained by the negating force as if by a receptacle.

Hence, the soul also does not want suddenly and, so to speak, in one fell swoop, to vanquish the soul. Rather, the soul's artistic desire [*Lust*] now commences because overcoming the contrarily striving forces gently and gradually pleases it. And, in the end, and with levelheadedness, and without insult to the force that contains it and, so to speak, nourishes it, the soul is pleased by subordinating all forces through a piecemeal progression and thereby displaying its own mother, in whom the soul was first conceived and fostered, as a universally animated essence.

The supremely interior, the soul can only become evident, however, in the relationship in which the contrarily striving forces are brought to a reciprocal freedom and independence or to a vital, mobile antithesis. In this respect, the soul commences with the arousal of that internal bifurcation that spreads throughout all of nature. The state of nondivorce of the forces covers up the essence but the state of divorce lets it appear. But naturally in the beginning there is still the greatest amount of indecisiveness because the darkening essence, the negating force, still covers over its interior until levelheaded art has first brought it into equilibrium with the spiritual. Art then finally begins to bring the negating force under the spiritual and thereby gradually to make it utterly beholden to it. This altogether elevates the spiritual [279] so that finally, victorious over all forces, the spiritual emerges as the true essence and heaven of nature itself.

But the cision of forces can never become a complete cision because the limit should be spared and the first negation and restriction should be retained. But because a certain unity always remains, a view of the unity dawns in the cision, a view that can become manifest to what is higher (to the  $A^2$ ) because of its kinship to it. This unity appears as a circumscribed, delimited, and, so to speak, spiritual, image of a creature.

Hence, nothing unbounded can appear in this progressively ascending formation. The spirit, too, in its highest liberation, is like the creative soul in that it is still grasped and contained in a determinate unity or form which becomes manifest through the spirit just as the spirit becomes manifest through it. Hence, in this manner the entire course of nature, which liberates itself from the inside out and which strives toward light and consciousness, is epitomized through determinate creations as the many children of its desire. Each creation is just the exterior of an artist who grows together with her material and indicates what degree of liberation the supremely interior being has reached. And in this way the creative art moves, always ascending, through the entire ladder of future creatures until it reaches that first of all creatures that one day should have been the mediator between it and the spiritual world—until it reaches the fair human form in which that heavenly embryo finally unfolds fully and the

highest potency is brought over everything and where it celebrates, so to speak, the victory of its liberation.

Yet the soul, awakening from the depths of unconsciousness, does not accomplish its graduated course without higher guidance. For already in its first awakening it is deeply stirred by the dark intimation that its actual model is in the world of spirits. The more the soul arises, the more lucidly it sees into that which is above it (into the  $A^2$ ) and knows all of the possibilities contained within it, possibilities that the soul, as an artist at one with her material, seeks to express immediately and to incarnate. For the prototype of all that actually comes to be in a subordinate order [280] is found in the higher order next to it. And, conversely, that which is found in a higher order only in a prototypical fashion is found in the subordinate order in an actual and ectypal fashion.

But in the relationship in which the soul actualizes within itself what in the higher order was merely a possibility, the soul pulls this higher order ( $A^2$ ) to itself as if by bewitchment. For this is the nature of everything prototypical, namely, that through a natural and irresistible inclination, the prototype is pulled toward its ectype. Yet, furthermore, insofar as the higher order ( $A^2$ ) is pulled toward nature, it is pulled away in the same proportion from its superior order (from the  $A^3$ ). In this way the equivalence of the togetherness of being is sublimated.<sup>65</sup> For as the middle order is led away from the highest order and toward the lowest order, the highest order first cognizes in the middle order what is to the higher order its immediate subject (basis, substratum). Only now does that which has been pulled away from the higher order become the reproach or counterprojection [*Vor- oder Gegenwurf*] in which the higher order beholds itself and in which it can see.

But those images that ascend out of subordinated matter proceed up into or render apparent the intermediate order ( $A^2$ ) on account of their kinship. For these images are the magic through which the intermediate order is attracted. For at the same time in this attraction the intermediate order becomes the counterprojection [*Gegenwurf*]<sup>66</sup> of the highest order ( $A^3$ ). The latter is utterly one with the Godhead (it is but the Godhead's subject turned toward the external world). This way manifests how the images ascending from below also become manifest through the intermediate order to the highest order ( $A^3$ ) and thereby to the still concealed Godhead.

Hence, in this state, everything that someday should have been actual in nature went forth before the eyes of the eternal one and it beheld, as if in a glimpse or vision, the entire ladder of future formations, up to that creature that one day, alone among all other natural beings, should have been capable of an immediate relationship to it.

*But all these forms and formations have no actuality by themselves. For nature itself, out of which they arise, has, in comparison with the Godhead, which alone truly has being, [281] diminished into potentiality, into the relationship of that which, rela-*

tively speaking, does not have being and which preserves this relationship voluntarily (and without which the  $A^2$  is only potentially separated). Yet this entire life is not consequently absolutely and completely empty. But, in comparison with the Godhead, it is like nothingness, a mere sport that makes no claim of actuality. This sport remains in utter figurativeness and those formations, in comparison with the Godhead, are just like dreams or visions that certainly could become actual if the eternal one called that which does not have being to be that which has being. But that will is still turned in upon itself and is still indifferent toward being and does not look after it.

Consequently, after that life, which arises from below, has come to the highest order, the final part, in which it completes itself, has neither been retained nor elevated out of non-being and so it sinks back into itself, back into its own nothingness. But it does so only to ascend again and again and, in indefatigable and inexhaustible desire, to indicate to the proximately higher order, but mediately to the highest spirit, as in a mirror or a vision, what someday, if the time or hour should come, and in accordance with the pleasure of the highest One, actually should come to be in this external world.

(β) the concept of the first (spiritual-corporeal) matter =  $\psi\chi\eta'$

discussion of the concept of prime matter (alchemy)

It is self-evident that the general state of nature during this process cannot be stable or static but is rather only a state of eternal becoming, a continuing unfolding. Yet this unfolding does have its goal and this is a goal for nature, namely, that nature would become a consummate spiritual-corporeal being. But although nature can attain its highest expansion only in the final stage of the of the unfolding, nonetheless, in each moment of that unfolding, nature is already, within and in itself, not a corporeal, but a spiritual-corporeal being. This being, although when compared to the higher order ( $A^2$ ), is always subsiding and utterly beholden to it, becomes, in this comparison, matter. Yet this is a matter that, when compared to current matter, is like pure spirit and life.<sup>v</sup> In the progression [282] itself, since the negating (actually the sole incarnating) force becomes ever more subordinate to the spiritual force and since the inner heavenly embryo is unfolded ever more visibly, nature expands itself more and more to that not merely corporeal and not merely spiritual but rather to that intermediary substance, to the mitigated being of light in which the severe, obscuring force is overcome by the softness of the other force and engulfed in light. As such, it still only serves as the inner restraint and mooring of the being that is

v. Hence relatively spiritual in contrast to the ponderable, impenetrable, inert matter, but not spiritual and hence not πνευματικόν. (It) is not Πνεύμα. This it first becomes in actuality; it is only  $\psi\chi\eta'$ .)

in itself incomprehensible. And for its part, the light of the incomprehensible, which in itself is irresistible, is softened until it is bearable. This seems to be the meaning of that splendor of glory that, according to the expressions in the Scriptures<sup>67</sup> and to the unanimous manner of representation of all peoples, is the outermost aura of the invisible Godhead.

That the constitution of contemporary corporeal matter is not an original constitution is evidenced by the facts in the evolution of nature itself. The phenomena of the inner formation of individual bodies are inexplicable under the now common assumption of the impenetrability of matter. This is furthermore evidenced by the abiding capacity of matter to be transposed into a state (as in the well-known but insufficiently regarded electrochemical experiments)<sup>68</sup> in which matter, with respect to all of its corporeal qualities, disappears. And anyone who is simply satisfied with the so-called "construction of matter out of forces" must realize that the inner being of all matter is spiritual in a broader sense because forces, insofar as they are something incorporeal, are undeniably something spiritual. They must then realize the character of contemporary matter is not explicable solely by recourse to those inner spiritual forces. How it then happens that that contracting, obscuring essence, which was already overcome in the beginning, again came to the fore, is a question whose answer belongs to the course of this history. Suffice it to say that matter is still now conquerable and that it also now indicates the capacity to draw closer to that primordial state and perhaps someday again to become utterly transposed with it, although this naturally must happen through a much slower and more entangled process.

[283] If we consider the wondrous transformations by which matter is subjugated in the organic world with the human eye, out of which shine the spirit, the intellect, and the will in an uncomprehending yet sensuously sensitive fashion, then one is allowed to consider all of matter as mere appearance, that is, simply as a deferred image of the essence that really lies at the basis. It then sees all bodies only as the clothing or masks that hide that inner point of transfiguration from us. Without the presence of this inner point of transfiguration, the transition from inorganic nature to organic nature would be unthinkable, a transition that is often almost sensuously perceptible in the most corporeal things.

Whoever has to some extent exercised their eye for the spiritual contemplation of natural things knows that a spiritual image, whose mere vessel (medium of appearance) is the coarse and ponderable, is actually what is living within the coarse and the ponderable. The purer this image is, the healthier the whole is. This incomprehensible but not imperceptible being, always ready to overflow and yet always held again, and which alone grants to all things the full charm, gleam, and glint of life, is that which is at the same time most manifest and most concealed. Because it only shows itself amidst a constant mutability,



it draws all the more as the glimpse of the actual being that lies concealed within all things of this world and which simply awaits its liberation. Among the most corporeal things, metals, whose characteristic gleam has always enchanted people, were *par excellence* considered as the particular points of light through which this being glimmered among dark matter. A universal instinct had an inkling of its proximity in gold which, because of its more passive qualities—its almost infinite malleability and its softness and flesh-like tenderness, all of which combine with the greatest indestructibility—seemed most akin to that spiritual corporeal being. Even in one of those seemingly accidental word plays of which we so often have the opportunity to notice, gold was used to designate the earliest age of the world in which the glory of nature still prevails.

[284] Yet this being draws nigh to its liberation especially in organic nature. It is the oil by which the green of plants is satiated. It is the balm of life in which health has its origin. It is discernible in what shines through the flesh and the eyes, in that undeniably physical outflow whereby the presence of the pure, the healthy, and the delightful are at work on us in a charitably liberating way. Nay, it is incontestably discernible in the unspeakable, which streams forth as grace into transfigured corporeality in which even the barbarian is instinctively moved. The joyful amazement that consummate beauty posits to the cultivated perhaps has its main basis in the feeling that beauty brings matter before our eyes in its divine and, so to speak, primordial state. Nay, as if it were the object of an originary Love, this being still now, as in primordial time, draws Love to itself, and it is, because always only indicating itself, but never as something to grasp or to possess, the goal of the inclination which is always stirring, but never satiated.

The circulation between the corporeal and the spiritual, upon which human wit is so often exercised, is and remains explicable through no other assumption except that it is one and the same substance that it, on the one side, namely from below, assumes corporeal qualities, but, from above, from the side that is turned toward the spirit, goes out toward a spiritual being. All other systems, still so artificially devised, leave behind a thorn of doubt. The single system in accord with natural thinking is that spurned one of the so-called *influxus physicus* which admittedly had to be abandoned as soon as matter and spirit were brought into that unholy (incurable)<sup>69</sup> Cartesian conflict.

The whole life process is founded on this bipartite quality of that which we call matter and of that inner side, averted from our senses, that we intimate but do not discern. An image or inner spirit of life constantly emerges out of the corporeal and it always again becomes embodied through a reverse process.

The belief in the general capacity of matter again [285] to be elevated into spiritual qualities has been retained through every age with a constancy that alone would already allow us to infer its deep ground and which so coheres with the dearest and ultimate hopes of humans that it could probably never be

cradicated. One must let the rabble have the conventional concept of alchemy. But what happens with the digestion and appropriation of food, when from out of the most diverse substances the same thing is always caused in the whole and when each part always draws precisely what is suitable to it? What happens with the initial formation of the fetus? Everything that occurs around us is, if you will, a constant alchemy. It is every inner process, when beauty, truth, or the good are liberated from the attached darkness or impurity and appear in their purity. (Though the alchemist begins again *from below*—a *prima materia* that they would like to carry *ad ultimam*.) Those who understood that for which they sought, sought not for gold, but rather, so to speak, for the gold of gold, for what makes gold into gold, that is, for something far more general. Perhaps if there is an external effect by which matter was brought to coagulation as milk was brought to curdle by rennin, then there must also be an opposed potency by which, if it were in human hands, the effect of that coagulating force could either be sublimated or, to a certain degree, overcome. If all matter, in accord with its inner essence, is now exclusively singular and if the difference between corporeal things of the same echelon is perhaps more or less based on the concealment of that original being, then it would surely be possible, through a gradual overcoming of the obscuring potency, to transform the less precious into the more precious. This would nonetheless only be a quite subordinate application of a much more general faculty and, in any case, the claim of this thought is no approbation of the actual experiment. For the realm of the idea is unrestricted. But what is in itself possible, and what is relatively feasible, and what is otherwise advisable or, from another consideration, reasonable—these are entirely different questions.

[286] Since the beginning, many have desired to penetrate this silent realm of the past prior to the world in order to get, in actual comprehension, behind the great process of which they are in part cooperative members and in part sympathetic members.<sup>70</sup> But most of them lacked the requisite humility and self-denial because they wanted to tackle everything at once with supreme concepts. And if anything whatsoever checks the reader's entrance into this prehistoric time, it is precisely that rash being that wants rather to dazzle right from the beginning with spiritual concepts and expressions rather than descend to the natural beginnings of that life.

What is it, by the way, about corporeality that so offends spiritual arrogance that it regards corporeality as of such humble descent? In the end, it is just corporeality's humility and external lowliness that so offends spiritual arrogance. But the lowly is precisely highly respected in the eyes of the one according to whose judgment alone the worth and worthlessness of things is determined. And perhaps precisely that releasement [*Gelassenheit*] shows that something of the qualities of that primordial stuff still dwells within them, of the stuff that is passive on the outside but on the inside is spirit and life.



B) THE BEING OF THE SECOND POTENCY OR OF THAT  
WHICH IS THE SUBSTRATUM OF THE SPIRIT WORLD

*(α) the distinction in the placement of the principles  
between nature and the spirit world and vice versa*

It is not difficult to observe that the main weakness of all modern philosophy lies in the lack of an intermediate concept and hence, such that, for instance, everything that does not *have being* is nothing, and everything that is not spiritual in the highest sense is material in the crudest sense, and everything that is not morally free is mechanical, and everything that is not intelligent is uncomprehending. But the intermediate concepts are precisely the most important concepts, nay, the only concepts that actually explain anything, in all of science. Hence, whoever wants to think in accordance with the (misunderstood) principle of contradiction may well be adroit enough, like the Sophists, to dispute for and against everything. Yet they are utterly maladroit in finding the truth that does not lie in flagrant extremes.

But just as nature draws the being of the spiritual world to itself and thereby withdraws it from its higher being, nature also awakens within the spiritual world a longing to become one with its higher being and to draw it to the spiritual world. By virtue of this, that movement that emerges from nature finally propagates itself in the highest.

[287] After the prior explanations, it hardly demands any proof that the same creative forces that lie in nature are in the being of the spiritual world. There is also an inner duality in the being of the spiritual world in which, precisely on account of it, a concealed unity also lies at its base. This unity must become manifest by emerging to the measure as the measure in which the contrarily striving forces separate from each other and enter into an active antithesis. The yearning to draw the higher ( $A^3$ ) to itself becomes, in the being of the spiritual world, the ground of the unfolding and expansion of forces. Yet it is not the affirming principle that is contracted and concealed within it but rather it is the negating force. Hence, here it is not the discharging and self-communicating being that is delivered from delimitation. Here it is the opposite. It is that concealed force of darkness that is called forth from the innermost depths and posited piecemeal into act. It is not that this force transcends the affirming principle but rather that the most active force of selfhood and that of darkness are nonetheless enveloped by light and Love. For just as the negating principle is always the external and encompassing principle in the highest unfolding of external nature while the spiritual principle, even when liberated for the highest, remains encompassed by the negating principle, so, too, the negating principle is roused from its inactivity in the unfolding of the spiritual world (which is only a higher nature), but only in order to remain as

something active that is still within and obsequious to the gentle being of light. All creation moves toward the elevation of the Yes over the No. But just as the negating principle is subjected to the affirming principle in nature, such that the negating principle is an external principle, in the spiritual world the negating principle remains an inner principle. Here the affirming principle is also intensified, but because it is already free in itself, it is only indirectly or intermediately intensified in that its antithesis is called forth.

This difference is of the most important consequence for the entire history of nature and of the spiritual world. Many a thing that is enigmatic in its relationship and its diversity only becomes clear by virtue of the fact that the former emerged into being through the elevation of light and the latter emerged into being through the arousal of darkness. It is already manifest here that [288] a higher degree of freedom is demanded in the being of the last kind than in the being of the first kind.

*(β) the similarity of the process in the emergence of the spirit world and the  
analogy between the forces prevailing in the inner life with the magnetic  
state (excursus on magnetism, the gradations of magnetic sleep, etc.)*

But the unfolding of this darkening force out of the entirety of its depths and concealment also could not happen suddenly, but only in a piecemeal fashion. But also because here a certain unity always remained, there could likewise be only certain forms or figures that ran through the creative force. These forms or figures, in accordance with their nature, were spirits. This would already be clear from the old explanation, namely, that anything that has its delimitation (negating force) externally is corporeal or a body but anything that would have its delimitation (the force of its existence) internally or in itself is a spirit.

But here the creative force can only ascend from the lower to the higher until it has gradually resurrected the utterly supreme interior and the most concealed force of darkness out of the depths. These forces are then the purest, sharpest, and most godlike spirits.

For so much as the spirit world is closer to the Godhead than nature, so much then does what is highest ( $A^3$ ) in the spirit world surpass in purity the highest in nature, and so much then is the highest in the spirit world similar to that soul that wavers over the Whole (to the absolute  $A^3$ ). That soul is to the spirit world as the spirit world is to nature.

Hence, as the spirit world is the prototype of nature and all things of this external world are depictions of what nature beheld in the inner world, so, in turn, that universal soul is the immediate prototype of that which is creating in the spirit world. What is thereby produced in the spirit world is just the ectype, or what is actual, of that which lay in the universal soul as prototypical or possible.

But in that higher nature actualizes the thoughts of the universal soul, it irresistibly attracts the soul. And hence, this entire movement is nothing but a universal magic<sup>71</sup> that extends to the highest.

For as that universal soul is pulled toward the lower, it is pulled away in the same proportion from the most supremely high with which it was until then utterly One (its immediate, external subject). [289] But it is precisely through this drawing and withdrawing that the universal soul first becomes to the spirit of eternity the reproach or counterprojection (the object) in which the spirit can behold everything. Since those spiritual figures ascend in the universal soul as images or visions, the spirit of eternity must also behold them in the universal soul as in a mirror, where, so to speak, the most concealed thoughts of the spirit's own subject become manifest to it.

The visions of these innermost thoughts of God are hence, the visions of the future spirits that are determined, along with the being of nature, for creation. And thus the eternal one first beheld in this free desire of the eternal nature, which, so to speak, is at play with itself, everything that someday should become actual in nature and then everything that someday should become actual in the spirit world. So eternal nature showed him the way in which he could lead her, were it to be pleasing to her, out of darkness and back into the light, out of baseness and into glory. But everything passed before the eye of the eternal only as a glimpse or a vision. It passed as a glimpse because the eternal only looked for it in the, so to speak, gentle mean. It passed as a vision because the eternal has no actuality in comparison to it but rather passed again into becoming and there was nothing abiding, nothing stable, but rather everything was in incessant formation. For this life, which in itself is only a dream and a shadow, still lacked divine reinforcement.

The word "idea," which came to us from the Greeks, actually denotes, in accordance with its original meaning, nothing other than our German word "*Gesicht*" [vision, face], and, indeed, in both senses that the word designates: the glimpse and what passes by in the glimpse.

In terms of its origin, the doctrine of these divine ideas or visions before the beginning of the world is lost in the deepest night of Antiquity. When it appears, the doctrine is only a fragment of a great doctrine belonging to the early, no longer extant, true history of the world. The Greeks already only knew it as a tradition and even Plato is only to be considered an interpreter of this doctrine. Hence, after the original meaning was lost early on, it was understood in part too supernaturally and in part too vulgarly. If, instead of shoring it up on the universal grounds of the intellect, [290] the natural course (physical process) of its generation were sought, then this doctrine would have long ago been understood in a more vital way.

The emergence into being of such archetypes or visions is a necessary moment in the great unfolding of life. And while these are certainly not to be

thought of as physical substances or as empty genera, nonetheless neither are they to be thought of as finished and available forms, existing without movement and, so to speak, static. For they are precisely ideas in that they are something eternally becoming and in incessant movement and generation.

The generation of such archetypes is a necessary moment. But these archetypes neither pass away after this moment nor do they abide. Rather, it is the moment itself that abides eternally because each successive moment holds onto or encompasses the preceding moment. And so these archetypes flow from the interior of creative nature, always still as fresh and vital as they were before time. Yet now nature shows herself as thoroughly visionary and it must be so because nature already sees what is in the future in what precedes it. Without this quality, the undeniable suitability in the individual and the whole, its universal and particular technicity, would be utterly incomprehensible.

Indeed, nature reserved for itself to renew constantly each moment in the present time. And it does so through the simplest measures, for nature in the woman draws the spirit of the man to herself and the man, in turn, draws the world spirit to himself. And hence, here that guiding connection and concatenation of members, each independent from the other, is produced, whereby the last becomes capable of being active in the first and the highest becomes capable of being active in the lowest. For no being can begin the course of its existence without immediate divine reinforcement. Each new life commences a new time existing for it that is immediately knotted to eternity. Hence, an eternity immediately precedes each life. And in temporal generation, just as in the first generation, everything external is only a part or a member of a concatenation that goes up to the highest.

The recurrence of that moment in begetting would still render credible the external appearances which are of a decisive [291] crisis (in the meaning of the word assumed by us), wherein each principle is again posited in its freedom and with the severance of the external copula that coerces and dominates people, the most fully voluptuous inner unfolding of all forces commences. Hence, the similarity to death and to magnetic sleep.<sup>72</sup> We are daring to place one of the matters exposed to the greatest desecration in connection with a high and holy relationship. But the horrible degeneracy of a great natural furnishing should not hinder the discernment of its primordial meaning. On the contrary, if ethical theory does not also want to discern something holy in itself in the effects of natural drives that it subjects to a higher law, ethical theory will always miss its goal. For something that is in itself something unholy, something utterly and completely bad and contemptible, will also be something about which most people are indifferent. But a matter known to be meshed with the wheel of the cosmos, nay, with its innermost and highest relationships, also demands in itself holy awe.

Everything divine is human and everything human is divine. This principle of the old Hypocrites, grasped from the deepest life, was and is still now

the key to the greatest discoveries in the realm of God and nature.<sup>73</sup> For this reason we sought to consider the last-mentioned phenomenon particularly in the present relationship (in the incontestably highest relationship of which it is capable).

It has become self-evident that the whole state, inwardly most vital, is based on the reciprocal freedom and independence of the parts, which nonetheless at the same time form a continuous succession from the deepest to the highest, similar to that ladder reaching from heaven to earth that one of the patriarchs saw in a dream.<sup>74</sup> If the potency of the beginning was not free from the higher potency, then it could not express an attracting effect to the higher potency, holding up to the higher potency its inherent possibilities as if in a mirror. In turn, if the intermediary potency could not have been withdrawn from the highest potency, then it was impossible for the intermediary potency to have become the reproach or counterprojection in which the highest potency discerned its own innermost thoughts. If that pure spirit, the [292] the actual self and supreme I of the whole being, had grown together with the highest potency and was not free from eternal Being, then eternal Being could not have become the mirror in which the pure spirit beheld the wonders of the coming world. If the freedom of the parts with respect to each other were sublimated, then this contemplative life, this inner clarity, would be sublimated right away.

Two different and, in a certain respect, opposed states, share human life. The waking person and the sleeping person are inwardly altogether the same person. None of the inner forces that are in effect in the waking state are lost in sleep. It is already evident from this that it is not a potency lying in the interior of the organism but rather a potency in an external relationship to the organism whose presence or absence determines the alternation of those states. All forces of the person during the waking state are apparently governed by a unity that holds them together, by something that, so to speak, communally expresses them (or is their exponent). But if this link is dissolved (however this might happen), then each force retreats back into itself and each tool now seems to be active for itself and in its own world. A voluntary sympathy enters the place of the externally binding unity and while the whole is outwardly as if dead and inactive, inwardly the freest play and circulation of forces seems to unfold.

If in the usual course of life the effect of that external potency waxes and wanes in regular alternation, then in unusual states an extraordinary sublimation of it appears possible in which the power is bestowed upon one person in relationship to another such that the one has an unleashing and liberating effect on the other. Probably what liberates subordinated nature becomes nature's higher principle ( $A^2$ ) against which nature sinks. A relationship that in the beginning was only weak and indecisive develops more and more as the relationship is continued. For the effect here is also reciprocal. In the relationship in

which one of them sinks (to  $A = B$ ), the other of them is intensified to  $A^2$ . Only this could be the reason for that altogether peculiar [293] and pernicious weakening that the hypnotist<sup>75</sup> experiences through prolonged practice. The development of visionary talent in general and of the relationship to the spiritual world that appeared in many who practiced this therapy accords with the same explanation.

As soon as that relationship is developed, that cision (crisis) and liberation of all forces—that deformation (disorganization) as its first discoverers with the correct instinct called it—comes into subordinated nature.

If each organic and human being is subjected to pain, in the physical as well as in the psychic sense, exclusively by virtue of the domination of those exponents of external life, then it is certainly comprehensible how total painlessness and that feeling of bliss that accompany that just-mentioned crisis emerge with the sublimation of those exponents. It is likewise comprehensible how the sudden and momentary sublimation of those exponents showers one with the highest voluptuousness.

The external appearance of this crisis is sleep, about whose nature we would never have received adequate tidings without those experiments [of magnetic sleep]. For many reasons it seems to me as if the so-called magnetic sleep were distinguished far too much from usual sleep. Because we are conscious of only a little or almost nothing of the inner processes of usual sleep, we can also not know if the inner processes of magnetic sleep are not altogether similar or the same. Likewise, in magnetic sleep, no memory crosses over to the waking state and we would have little or no science of magnetic sleep without the special relationship of the hypnotized to the hypnotist.

It is well known that the inner processes of magnetic sleep are also not always the same. There are degrees of that inner life of which we as a rule just perceive the lowest degree, seldom perceive the intermediary degree, and probably never perceive the third degree. Should we undertake to indicate the possible rungs of this ladder, it would occur approximately as follows.

The lowest rung would be where the crisis is posited or where the material of human nature is liberated. Here the [294] soul, which dwells within matter but which is otherwise bound to the higher life and which forms everything and heals everything, can unfold itself freely. Here emerges the free circulation between the soul and what is higher, that spiritual being, that universal medicine of nature and of the cause of health, the tincture<sup>76</sup> by which harsh nature is always mollified. Each subordinated nature, whose guiding connection with its higher principle is interrupted, is sick. But it is precisely this guidance that is always restored, at least for awhile, by magnetic sleep. Either what has been unnaturally intensified by this magic, and has sunk into deeper sleep, is returned to its potency (and hence, to its potentiality with respect to the higher principle) or the life that has been excessively weakened and oppressed by the higher

principle becomes free for a moment and breathes again. In both cases, the healing force of that sleep rests on the restoration of the interrupted guidance between the higher and the lower principles.

The second degree would be where what is spiritual in the person would become free in relationship to the soul and would draw the soul to it in order to show it, as if in a mirror, the things hidden in the soul's interior and what lies still wrapped up in the soul itself (pertaining to what is future and eternal in the person). This degree would incontestably be the highest degree already known in magnetic sleep, namely, where what has been posited into crisis is utterly dead to the outside world and is completely cut off from the material world and where, precisely by virtue of this, the signs of a higher relationship present themselves.

Finally, we would have to search for the third degree in the relationships that lie utterly outside customarily human relationships, and, in the current context, it is better to be silent about them than to speak of them.

But if gradations of magnetic sleep take place, and if, in turn, degrees of depth and interiority are distinguished in usual sleep, then it is impossible to know to what degrees of magnetic sleep even usual sleep elevates itself.

Already the ancients distinguished two kinds of dreams, of which only one of them was regarded as sent by God. But as diverse as the dreams may be, depending on the person and the circumstances, it [295] is certain that dreams of higher degrees of interiority would be just like the visions of magnetic sleep, of which there remain no memory when the person has woken up. We more surely assume that dreams are a continual (constant) phenomenon of sleep and yet that we do not remember most of them because we are already aware that only a general memory of their having been remains of many dreams and that other dreams are held onto only in the moment of waking (and sometimes remaining not even then). It is utterly probable that the more external dreams are often reflections of more profound and more interior dreams and that these deeper dreams, even if clouded and confused by the intermediary through which they travel, nonetheless reach us.

At the same time, if one wanted to have a look at a retroactive application to something earlier, then one could look at the possibility that the person would have a similar power with respect to other things that they have with respect to other persons. Then, if one could again liberate the interior of corporeal things, one would best produce that true and actual crisis that our chemistry still futilely strives to bring about and one would introduce a series of utterly different phenomena than the customary experiments.

Yet we scarcely dared to touch upon these great mysteries so cursorily because all of the identified phenomena are connected on all sides and branch out in such diverse ways. If someday we succeed in continuing this history up to the time and manifold conditions in and under which human life consists, then we

will certainly find many ways to expand and amend our thoughts or to present them in a higher light.

Hence, only one question should be allowed such that the fundamental thought might gain clarity. Why do all higher doctrines call so unanimously to the person to separate themselves from themselves and give them to understand that they would thereby be capable of everything and active in all things—why other than because one only thereby [296] produced that Jacob's ladder of heavenly forces in themselves? "Being posited in oneself" [*das In-sich-gesetzt-seyn*] hinders the person. "Being posited outside of oneself" [*das Außer-sich-gesetzt-werden*] helps one, as our language magnificently indicates.<sup>77</sup> And so then we see, to stick now only with spiritual production, how the inner freedom and independence of the mental forces also conditions all spiritual creation and how all diffident people, insofar as they are as such, become ever more incompetent at spiritual production. And only one who knows how to maintain that divine duality in unity and unity in duality is blessed with that sportive desire and levelheaded freedom of creation that mutually require and condition each other.

The Orient has discerned that sportive desire in the original life of God.<sup>78</sup> They expressively call it wisdom, presenting this as a gleam of eternal light and as an immaculate mirror of divine force and (on account of the passive qualities) an image of its generosity. It is astonishing how they ascribe to this being in general more of a passive than an active nature. For this reason, they do not call this being spirit, or Word (or *Logos*), things with which *wisdom* was later often and incorrectly confused. Rather, a feminine name was attributed to this being. This meant that, with respect to the higher being, it is simply something passive and receptive.

In the book regarded as divine, and which truly is divine, which introduces wisdom as speaking,<sup>vi</sup> wisdom is compared to a *child*. For a child is called selfless when—in the earliest years certainly—all of the inner forces reciprocally excite each other in natural effect and fair interplay. But no will, no character, and no unity that holds them together and governs them, present themselves. In the same way, what is initially external to God is in itself a merely passive, unexpressed unity and is without will. Hence, that creating or generating of images is only sport or desire.

[297]Wisdom *played*—not on the earth, for there was no earth yet—on God's earth, on what is ground and soil to God. But God's exquisite desire was already in this early time that creature that, because it was the first link between nature and the spirit world, actually mediated the propagation of the attracting movement into the highest movement. The human is actually the combinatory

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vi. *Proverbs*: 8.

point of the entire cosmos, and, in as much, one can say that everything was actually beheld in the human.

### C) THE UNIVERSAL SOUL IN ITS RELATIONSHIP TO GOD AND THE COMPORTMENT OF GOD WITH RESPECT TO BEING

It would be superfluous to recall that, in the above passage, wisdom was understood as that universal soul that dwells within nature and within the spirit world and, again, wavering above both worlds, as the guiding concatenation of universal sensitivity between the highest and the lowest. Hence, in such an early age, the soul played, as if in a youthful dream of a golden age, what would someday be. Yet, just as the age of innocence does not remain, and just as the games of childhood, in which future life envisages itself in a preparatory fashion, are transient, so, too, that blessed dream of the gods could not last. All merely embryonic life is in itself full of yearning and desires to be elevated out of the mute and inactive unity and into the expressed and acting unity. In this way we see nature yearning. In this way the earth so ardently sucks the force of heaven to itself. In this way the seed strives toward light and air in order to gather a spirit for itself. In this way flowers sway in the rays of the sun in order to shine the rays back as fiery spirit and as color. Hence, the higher that sportive life unfolds itself, the more inwardly it calls to the invisible so that the invisible may accept it, draw it to itself, and discern it as its own. And the wisdom that ascends and descends, as if on a scale, the concatenation of beings, laments forlornly the fate of its creatures and that the children of its desire do not abide, but rather that they are in perpetual struggle and that they again pass away in the struggle.

Hence, this constantly repeated movement of eternal nature, always beginning again, can be regarded as an incessant theurgy.<sup>79</sup> The meaning and goal of all theurgy is nothing other than to draw the Godhead down to what is lower (*coelo deducere numen*), to [298] produce the guiding concatenation, so to speak, through which the Godhead would be able to act in nature.

We have already seen how the movement that ascends from below propagated itself in the soul of the whole (A<sup>3</sup>) in which the intermediate principle (A<sup>2</sup>) draws the movement to itself and thereby withdraws it from the highest. Incontestably, only when what is immediate Being to the pure Godhead is withdrawn from it does the Godhead feel Being as such. This resembles how we have what seems inseparably one with us. We have it as if we did not have it. But if it is taken away from us, then we feel it for the time as something that is ours. But it does not follow from this that the Godhead becomes capable of or is at all coerced to manifest itself or to draw Being to itself. If this were the case, then the Godhead would not be eternal freedom.<sup>vii</sup>

Until now, the Godhead without nature was regarded as will that does not will.<sup>80</sup> And it could always be seen as such since the Godhead in any case comports itself as such with regard to Being. But precisely *because* the Godhead is the highest purity, and without sublimation of this purity, it necessarily comports itself in an antipodal fashion with regard to others (with regard to Being). Hence, the next requirement is now to make this clear.

There is no becoming in the pure Godhead. It remains what it is in itself. But precisely in this abiding the Godhead is necessarily of two different kinds with respect to external Being. For insofar as the Godhead in itself neither has being nor does not have being, the Godhead negates all external Being through the Godhead's essence and nature. Admittedly, the Godhead does this at first only in a silent fashion. But if some such Being supervenes upon the Godhead, and if it seemed discernible to the Godhead, then it necessarily does this in an explicit and active fashion. The Godhead is always the No to all external Being. It is only because the Godhead is now active in such a way that it makes external Being. Just the relationship, in which the Godhead appears as what it is, is given. This relation is a becoming, but not a becoming with respect to the Godhead, but rather exclusively in relationship to Being. Any becoming whatsoever is to be assumed of [299] the pure Godhead only in relationship (*σχετικῶς*,<sup>81</sup> as the ancient theologians say), not absolutely or with respect to the Godhead itself.

Hence, immediately with the relationship of external Being to the Godhead, without change or alteration in the Godhead itself, the Godhead in this relationship is a consuming No, an eternally wrathful force that tolerates no Being outside of itself. This consequently also admits of an inverse formulation. This wrathful force is not merely a quality, principle, or part of the Godhead. It is, rather, the entire Godhead, insofar as it consists of itself and is the most essential Being. For it is self-evident that this essential Being is something inaccessible to everything else, an irresistible ferocity, a fire in which nothing can live. Because the Godhead, in itself neither having being nor not having being, is, with respect to external Being, *necessarily* a consuming No, it must therefore also, presupposing this, necessarily be an eternal Yes, reinforcing Love, the essence of all essences. Indeed, it is so without the same originary necessity that it is the No, but this presupposed, it is nonetheless necessary (for otherwise the Godhead would be—not the will that does not will, but—the will wanting nothing, the negating will, and hence, a determinate will). The Godhead is the Yes without change or alteration in itself, not because its purity is sublimated,

vii. These words were on the margin as a comment for the purpose of further elaboration: "Here absolutely belongs an explanation concerning Being, present existence, existence [*Seyn, Daseyn, Existenz*]." Incidentally, several similar notations are found in the manuscript.—ED. [K. F. A. Schelling]

but rather precisely because the Godhead is this highest purity and freedom. The Godhead is this without any movement, in the deepest silence, immediately by virtue of itself. In turn, this Love is consequently not a quality, a part, or a mere principle of the Godhead. Rather, it is the *Godhead itself*, whole and undivided.

But precisely because the Godhead is whole and undivided, the eternal Yes and the eternal No, the Godhead is again neither one nor the other, but the unity of both. This is not an actual trinity of separately located principles, but here the Godhead *is* as the One, and precisely because it is the One, it is both the No and the Yes and the unity of both.

In this Yes and that No lies that repulsion and attraction that we earlier required as necessary for consciousness. As the No, the Godhead is a fire that attracts and draws into itself. But as the Yes, the Godhead is the cause of that loving restraint by which the [300] duality is maintained in a unity. And in this attracting and repelling, the Godhead intensifies itself into the unity of both, that is, into the highest consciousness.

Precisely because the Godhead is eternal freedom, it can only comport itself with respect to Being as the No, as the Yes, and as the unity of both. For it must be explicitly recalled that these distinctions are not distinctions of the essence, but only of the comportment, of the relationship of the one essence with respect to Being. But also inversely, only because the Godhead comports with Being in this way is it eternal freedom. Were the Godhead merely a Yes or a No, it would have to assume Being in one way or another, either affirming it or negating it. The Godhead is the highest freedom precisely because it is both of these, and both of these in an equally essential fashion. All of this had to be so that thereby a necessary ground of the world would never be found and so that it would become manifestly that all that is comes exclusively from the most utterly free divine will.

Hence, the turning point between necessity and freedom is also here. Until this point, the progression of life was a necessary one. If it advances from now on, this is only by virtue of a free and divine decision. The Godhead can silently persevere in that balance between attraction and repulsion. Nothing necessitates that the Godhead sublimate the balance or emerge out of itself in one way or another.

Hence, if the Godhead assumed Being and actively revealed itself through Being (which we must discern as actually having happened), then the decision for that could only come from the highest freedom.

## C

## THE ACTUAL ASSUMPTION OF BEING (= REVELATION = BIRTH) BY GOD

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### A) ITS POSSIBILITY

But posited that the Godhead really assumed Being, then how and in what fashion could the Godhead have done so? Was the Godhead to draw Being into itself, negating it as something independent of and external to the Godhead? Or was the Godhead to affirm Being as something independent of the Godhead? In neither case would the Godhead have revealed itself as what it is, namely, as equally an eternal Yes and No. And yet if the Godhead freely decided to reveal itself, the goal of its revelation could be nothing other than to reveal itself as that which was free to reveal itself and free not to reveal itself, as eternal freedom itself.

Hence, it was impossible that the Godhead became active as the eternal No [301] if it did not become active as the eternal Yes, and vice versa. And yet it is precisely as impossible that one and the same thing can have being as Yes and as No. It is absolutely necessary that the Godhead should decide either to be one and then not to be the other or to be this and then not to be that.

Hence, here is the highest conceivable contradiction. This is not going to be reconciled, for instance, by claiming that God is already subordinate by nature as one or the other of the two (as the Yes or as the No) and hence, with respect to the other, could assume the relationship of the non-active one. For God is at the same time essentially both of them. Hence, God must also be absolutely active as both of them.

How is one to reconcile this contradiction? Incontestably, only through a closer determination of it. If God, active as the eternal No, has being (exists),

then God cannot also be active as the eternal Yes. Or with more brevity and also in order to use here the already customary designation, albeit in a higher case: If B has being, then A cannot have being, namely, it cannot have the *same* being that B has; that is, according to this assumption, A cannot be what is presupposed or prior. But it does not prevent A from having being as what is posterior. The converse also holds. If A has being (what has not been decided up until now, what is only assumed, and, hence, in case A has being), then B cannot have the *same* being, namely, as having being at first and now. It is not hindered from having being as something posterior and future.

Yet it is insufficient that if B or A has being, then A or B can have being. Rather, because God is both equally essentially, the relationship must be of the kind in which God is posited as one of them and then is precisely and necessarily thereby also posited as the other. Hence, expressed more generally, the contradictory relationship is resolved through the relationship of the ground by which God has being as the No and the Yes, but one of them as prior, as ground, and the other as posterior, as grounded.

As such, it always remains that if one of them has being, then the [302] other cannot have the *same* being. That is, it remains that both exclude each other with respect to time, or that God as the Yes and God as the No cannot have being *at the same time*. We express it intentionally in this way for the relationship cannot be of the kind such that if the posterior, say A, has being, then the posterior, hence, B, would be sublimated, or simply ceased to have being. Rather, it always and necessarily abides as having the being *of its time*. If A is posited, then B must simply still persist *as the prior*, and hence, in such a way, that they are nonetheless, at the same time, *in different times*. For different times (a concept that, like many others, has gotten lost in modern philosophy) can certainly be, as different, at the same time, nay, to speak more accurately, they are necessarily at the same time. Past time is not sublimated time. What has past certainly cannot be as something present, but it must be as something past at the same time with the present. What is future is certainly not something that has being now, but it is a future being at the same time with the present. And it is equally inconsistent to think of past being, as well as future being, as utterly without being.

Hence, the contradiction only breaks with eternity when it is in its highest intensity and, instead of a single eternity, posits a succession of eternities (eons) or times. But this succession of eternities is precisely what we, by and large, call time. Hence, eternity opens up into time in this decision.

Such a decision was impossible in that earlier contradiction in what was initially necessary in God. For then there was no essence that was free to be utterly one of the beings (e.g., B) and not to be the other being. There was blind necessity and all forces were already in effect. There, it depended on bringing the forces, which were reciprocally repressing and excluding each other in an incessant circulation, from succession to simultaneity. This was only possible

when they sank together to the expressible, to totality, with respect to something higher. In contrast, the talk is here of the highest self [303] of the Godhead, which can never become Being with respect to something else. This self can only have being and be active in each of its forms (if one is to permit this expression), as the Yes and as the No and as the unity of both. Given the decisive contradiction between the Yes and the No, this self is thinkable only because of the concept of different times. Hence, here it depends much more on the simultaneity among the different forms being sublimated and transformed into a succession.

So much for what would have to occur should a decision ensue. But the "How?" has not yet been explained.

Indeed, in general and without yet having developed the deeper grounds, the beginning or what was first, whether it be God as the eternal Yes or as the eternal No, is without doubt. For here the talk is of the birth of God in accord with the highest self or insofar as God is eternal freedom. Indeed, it is precisely *as this freedom* that God is the eternal No of all external Being, albeit that God is as such not freely but rather necessarily. Again, this negation of external Being is something necessary of or in freedom itself. But it is not what is necessary of God that should actually be born but rather the free aspect of God (i.e., of eternal freedom). Hence, what is necessary can only comport itself as the ground of this birth and thereby as something preceding it. What is necessary proved itself everywhere to be the first (*Prius*) and freedom to be what follows. Or, to say the same thing in other words, freedom appears everywhere victorious over necessity. Were God first of all the Yes of external Being and then the No, then, on the contrary, what is necessary would be victorious over what is free. This would be an utterly retrograde process. But with the opposite sequence, there would be a progression from darkness into light and from death into life.

Hence, in the same act in which God decided on revelation, it was simultaneously decided that God as the eternal No should be the ground of the existence of the eternal Yes. It was precisely at the same time thereby determined that God as the eternal negation of external Being should be surmountable by Love.

[304] But it is inconceivable that there could be compulsion anywhere in the Godhead. Everything must rest on the highest voluntarism. Hence, God, to the extent that God is the eternal No, cannot be overwhelmed. God can only be overcome by the Good such that God yields to Love and makes Himself into Love's ground. We must imagine the course in this way, although this cannot be conceived as actually having happened in this way. For God as the Yes, as the No, and as the unity of both, is still one. There are not separate personalities. Hence, one can think that everything occurred just as if in a lightning flash,<sup>82</sup> for it is epitomized as a happening without actually (*explicite*) being something that happened. This resolution [*Ent-Schließung*],<sup>83</sup> coming out of



the innermost unity, is only comparable to that incomprehensible primordial act in which the freedom of a person is decided for the first time. We say that the person who doubts whether they should be utterly one thing or the other is without character. We say that a decisive person, in whom something definitely expressive of the entire being is revealed, has character. And yet it is recognized that no one has chosen the character following reasoning or reflection. One did not consult oneself. Likewise, everyone assesses this character as a work of freedom, as, so to speak, an eternal (incessant, constant) deed. Consequently, the universal ethical judgment discerns a freedom in each person that is in itself ground, in itself destiny and necessity. But most people are frightened precisely by this abyssal freedom in the same way that they are frightened by the necessity to be utterly one thing or another. And where they see a flash of freedom, they turn away from it as if from an utterly injurious flash of lightning and they feel prostrated by freedom as an appearance that comes from the ineffable, from eternal freedom, from where there is no ground whatsoever.

This is absolute freedom, which is not freedom for a particular deed, and which is the faculty to be utterly one or the other of contradictories.

It must have been discerned in one and the same inseparable act that, if God wanted to reveal Itself, it could reveal Itself only as the eternal No, [305] as the eternal Yes, and as the unity of both. In the same act it was discerned that this revelation could only occur in accordance with times or in a succession. And precisely that which would have to be posited as the beginning is that which was overcome, namely, what is necessary of the freedom of God, the No of all external Being, and all revelation so far (for there is no beginning without overcoming). All of this was contained in one and the same resolution, the freest and the most irresistible at the same time, by a miracle of eternal freedom, which is ground only of itself and hence, is its own necessity.

This much may be said of the course of the great decision in which God as the eternal No, the eternal stringency and necessity, was posited as the beginning of its own revelation.

## B) ITS ACTUALITY

(α) *precedence of the negating or enclosing will (= God active as nature, whereby God posits in the state of possibility)*

From now on begins the history of the actualization, or the real revelations, of God.<sup>84</sup> The eternal Being, where God for the first time comes to have being in relationship to eternal nature, we called an eternal birth. But in this birth, God

was not posited as having being, but rather as that which neither has nor does not have being, as pure capacity to be [*Seynkönnen*], as eternal freedom with respect to Being, as that which, if ever actual, would have the ground and beginning of its actuality exclusively within itself, and if ever commencing, would not be a necessary and eternal commencement, but rather one that begins freely.

There would be no real history of the world without a free beginning. Those who could not understand the free beginning also could not find the access to real history.

To look at the entire history of the world as a progressive revelation of God is now a customary thought. But how did the Godhead come to that? Or how did it start to reveal itself?

The answer that God is, in accordance with its nature, a consequently necessarily self-revelatory being (*ens manifestativum sui*) has brevity but is not succinct. It is hard to think of the world as something coerced when the common feeling has always been to look at it as the work of pleasure and of the highest voluntarism. But since we already only regard what is exuberantly free in the person as their real [306] self, we will not make an utterly necessary being out of God and we will also consider what is incomprehensibly free in God as God's real self. But the talk is precisely of the revelation of this highest self of the Godhead. Now, something that is free is free precisely in that it does not have to reveal itself. To reveal is to be active, just as everything that is active is a revealing. But the free must be free to remain within mere capacity or to cross over into deed. If it were to cross over necessarily, then it would not do so as what it really is, namely, as the free.

But others proceed from the starting point that God is spirit and the most supremely pure being. But as to how this spirit could have revealed itself, they must admittedly confess to know nothing. Rather, they make a virtue out of ignorance, just as they did for necessity. The reason for this not knowing is clear. For if the Godhead is to be eternal freedom, to actualize itself, to manifest, then actual Being or self-actualizing cannot already be posited with the eternal capacity for Being or self-actualizing. There must be something between possibility and deed if it is to be a free deed. Even the most vulgar intellect grasps this. But in pure eternity in which they think God, there is no distance, no before and after, no earlier and no later. Hence, even the mere thought that there must be something between actuality and possibility loses meaning for those who want to discern nothing but the pure Godhead.

Were the Godhead eternally actual (in the adequately determined meaning of "externally revealed"), then it would not be the power to actualize itself. But since the Godhead can only actualize itself from out of its free eternity, there must be something between free eternity and the deed of actualization that separates the deed from eternity so that eternity remains free and inviolable. This something can only be time, but not time within eternity itself, but



rather time coexisting with eternity. This time outside of eternity is that movement of eternal nature where eternal nature, ascending from the lowest, always attains the highest, and, from [307] the highest, always retreats anew in order to ascend again. Only in this movement does eternal nature discern itself as eternity. The Godhead counts and gauges in this clockwork—not its own eternity (for this is always whole, consummate, indivisible, beyond all time and no more eternal in the succession of all times than in the moment), but rather just the moments of the constant repetition of its eternity, that is, of time itself, which, as Pindar already says, is only the simulacrum of eternity.<sup>85</sup> For eternity must not be thought as those moments of time *taken together*, but rather as coexisting with each single moment so that eternity again sees only its (whole, immeasurable) self in each single one.

There is a question that is so natural that it is already raised in childhood: What kept God busy before God created the world? But examined more exactly, all thoughts pass away, if creation is to be a free deed, with the necessary concept of a *duration* of that unexpressed state. Since eternity, in itself or by itself, has no duration and only has duration in relationship to time, that eternity before the world immediately vanishes into nothing, or what likewise says as much, it vanishes into a mere moment. Teachers usually help themselves out by avoiding this question. But it is precisely the leaving of such questions unanswered, questions that, as we mentioned, already strike the child, that is the cause of universal skepticism. If they knew the Scriptures, they would certainly find the answer, since the Scriptures tell in what cozy proximity wisdom already was in and around God in those primordial times. As such, wisdom was God's favorite and found herself in the sweetest feeling of bliss, but was also the cause of God's joy, since at that time He beheld, in advance and through Her, the entire future history, the great image of the world and all of the events in nature and in the realm of spirits.<sup>86</sup>

That resolution of God, to reveal His highest Self according to times, came out of the purest freedom. Precisely for this reason God retains the power to determine the, so to speak, time and hour of this revelation and to begin, solely in accord with His pleasure, what was entirely the work of His freest will. The doctrine that God created the world in [308] time is a pillar of genuine faith. The labor of this present work would be adequately rewarded had it only made this thought comprehensible and intelligible. For since there is no time in God itself, how should God create the world in time if there is not a time outside of God? Or how would a determination of this time be possible if there is not already, before creation, a movement outside of God, according to whose repetition time is measured?

God, in accordance with His highest self, is not manifest. God manifests Himself. He is not actual. He becomes actual. It is precisely by this that God may appear as the most supremely free being. Hence, something else emerges

between free eternity and the deed, something that has a root that is independent from eternity and which is something commencing (finite), albeit eternally so. Thereby, there may eternally be something through which God could draw nigh to creatures and communicate Himself to them. Thereby, pure eternity may always remain free with respect to Being. And Being may never appear as an emanation from the eternal capacity-to-be and hence, there may be a distinction between God and his Being.

In science, as in life, people everywhere are governed more by words than by clear concepts. Hence, on the one hand, they explain God in an indeterminate fashion as a necessary being and, on the other hand, they get worked up over a nature being ascribed to God. They would thereby like to give the appearance that they are saving God's freedom. How little they understand, or, moreover, how they understand nothing of this whatsoever, is illuminated by the preceding. For without a nature, the freedom in God could not be separated from the deed and hence, would not be actual freedom. Hence, they quash, as is proper, the system of universal necessity and yet they appear just as eager to quash any succession in God, although, if there is no succession, only a single system remains, namely that everything is simultaneous with and necessary to the divine being. In this way, as one notices that they also do in life, they reject, like the blind, precisely that which they most eagerly seek (without understanding it) and are drawn exactly to that which they really wanted to flee.

Whoever has followed the preceding attentively must [309] have perceived by themselves how, in the Highest's assumption of Being or life, the same succession, in turn, took place that had taken place between the principles of eternal nature. For here, too, what is first emerging into Being (what is assuming Being) is a negating, stringently necessary will which makes itself into the ground of something higher. The latter, although not actually free (because it is the pure will of Love), is nonetheless a levelheaded will. Finally, something conscious and free rises above both, something that, in the highest sense, is spirit, just as the soul was the third principle in eternal nature.

We could thus look at this succession of revelation as a succession of potencies that run through Being to its consummation. From now on it will be necessary to make the following distinction. The forces in Being, insofar as they have ceased to exclude each other and have become explicit, have also ceased to be potencies, and hence, we will therefore in the future call them principles. As potencies, opposites necessarily exclude each other. And just as it is impossible for a number to have different powers at the same time, but is certainly possible that the number is posited to the second power, then in a further succession is elevated to the third power, so, too, that of Being that has being [*das Seyende des Seyns*] can only be something singular at the same time, such as, negating force, but this does not hinder that which has being in the same Being from being something else in a successive time, nay, from being exactly the opposite of

what it was formerly. Hence, from now on we shall now denote that which has being in each single time with the name of a potency.

Indeed, that correspondence between the objective and subjective life of a being cannot in general be striking. What a being [*Wesen*] is inwardly or in accordance with Being [*Seyn*], it must again be so manifestly, or in accordance with that which has being [*Seyende*]. These same forces that in simultaneity constitute its inner present existence [*Daseyn*], these same forces (not in accord with number but certainly in accord with their nature), emerging in a succession, are again the potencies of a being's life or becoming. They are what are determinative of the periods or times of its development.

The interior of each organic being rests in and consists of three [310] main forces: the first (in order to give a brief example) through which it is in itself and constantly brings itself forward; the second through which it strives toward the outside; the third through which it, so to speak, unites the nature of both. Each of these is necessary for the inner Being of the whole. If any one of them were taken away, the whole would be sublimated. But this whole is not an abiding Being. The being [*Wesen*] posited as Being [*Seyn*] presents itself immediately as something that has being [*ein Seyendes*]. But since the same forces are in that which has being that are in Being and since that which has being can only be something singular in each time, these same forces that are in effect within (the same forces in accordance with their nature) emerge outwardly with decision. Hence, in the succession they become the potencies of the being's life periods, just as they were in simultaneity the principles of its steadfast Being. This is the meaning when, for example, it is said that in the first time of life the vegetative soul rules, in the following time the mobile soul rules, and, finally, the sensate soul rules. The same thing is meant when it is said that, for example, (for what reason we will not investigate) the primordial time in the life of the earth was the magnetic. From this it converted to the electric time, although it is recognized that all of these forces were required for the inner continuance of the earth at all times.

Hence, the succession of potencies (this word taken in the meaning already determined) also comports itself as a succession of times. Only this law is capable of elucidating the organism of times.

Only through this law is the proper sovereignty of the antithesis first presented and in such a way that it is as absolute as unity. Unity remains dominant in Being (albeit mitigated into interrelation), but in that which has being both the insuperable freedom of the antithesis appears as well as the way in which the antithesis again subordinates unity to itself.

The eternal only exists through its will. Only through a free resolution does the eternal make itself into that which of Being has being. But granted this, the eternal was bound with regard to the succession of its revelation, although it just as much did not have to reveal itself. The decision to reveal itself and to posit itself superably as the eternal No was one and the same decision.

Hence, just as this decision is a [311] work of the highest freedom, it is also a work of the highest Love. That which is preceding in revelation is in no way that which is in itself subordinate, but it is posited as such. That which succeeds the subordinate is not itself something actual and divine but is voluntarily discerned as the higher with respect to the subordinate. Priority is in inverse proportion to superiority. To mix up these concepts is only possible in the blindness of judgment that distinguishes our times.

Here one can again plug in the customary concepts. According to the general doctrine, creation is externalization through self-relinquishment<sup>87</sup> and descent. The eternal does not make into the beginning what is in itself superable and humble in the eternal. Rather, the eternal makes into the beginning what it voluntarily beholds, what it wants to behold. In this way, the eternal is the most supremely powerful and innermost force. This force would be insuperable were it to remain inward, but it becomes superable when the eternal makes itself through force into that which of Being has being.

The negating, contracting will must precede into revelation so that there is something that shores up and carries upward the grace of the divine being, without which grace would not be capable of revealing itself. There must be Might before there is Leniency and Stringency before Gentleness. There is first Wrath, then Love. Only with Love does the wrathful actually become God.

In the nocturnal vision where the Lord passed by the prophet, a mighty storm first came which rent the mountains and shattered the rocks. After this came an earthquake, and then finally a fire. But the Lord himself was in none of these, but rather was in a soft murmur that followed.<sup>88</sup> Likewise, Power, Violence, and Stringency must come first in the revelation of the eternal so that the eternal itself can first appear as the Eternal Itself in the soft wafting of Love.

All evolution presupposes involution. In attraction, the beginning and the contracting force are the real original force and root force of all life. Each life begins from contraction. For why does everything proceed from the small to the large and from the narrow to the wide, since it could be the reverse if it were only a matter of mere progression?

[312] Darkness and closure are characteristic of primordial time. The farther we go back into the past, the more powerful the contraction. This is the way it is with the mountains of the primordial world and this is the way it also is with the oldest formations of the human spirit. This same character of closure approaches us in the mute seriousness of the Egyptians and in the gigantic monuments of the Indians that seem to have been built for no particular time but rather for eternity. Nay, it even comes to us in the silent greatness of the sublime peace of the most ancient Hellenic works which, albeit mitigated, still carry in themselves the force of that distinguished age of the world.

Hence, from this point forward, we step onto the path of times. The contradiction is decided by the exuberant deed similar to the one in which a person

decides to be utterly one thing or another. From this point forward, God is exclusively singular. God is only negation with respect to Being. As this negating force, God is a fire that draws Being into itself and hence makes what is drawn in completely one with this force. It was totality and unity, but now both are fused into a single being. What is attracted or withdrawn is eternal nature, the totality. What attracts or draws is singular. Hence, the whole can be designated in the following illustration:

$$\left( \frac{A^3}{A^2 = (A = B)} \right) B$$

This is the One and the Many (ἐν καὶ πᾶν)<sup>89</sup> in intimate connection. With this, however, it should not be overlooked that the One, or the inwardly drawing potency with respect to nature, is a supremely spiritual force, nay, that it is pure spirit, although it is not acting with freedom and considerateness. For the negating force that is God by virtue of His purity and with respect to Being is as such, as was already indicated, not in accordance with God's freedom, but rather in accordance with the necessity of God's nature. In that original state of nondivorce, where there was one and the same thing, which was the eternal Yes and the eternal No as one and the same thing, and where above both of them there was levelheaded spirit, there, too, that stringency and necessity of the divine being was elevated to considerateness and to consciousness. Now, because God had decided simply to be the No, God emerged into His blind, dark nature, which was concealed within Him and which could only become manifest through the cision. So now had the [313] life, which in the preceding moment had been elevated to freedom and considerateness, therefore retreated back to the level of blind necessity? But how does this sinking back hang together with the asserted impossibility of any regressive movement? Certainly, whoever solves this question will no doubt understand how to solve a good many other questions, including ones in the history of nature and in the history of humanity. As often as life enters into a new epoch, it is necessary that it again make a new beginning. As such, it is unavoidable that this beginning or this first level of the new epoch, when compared with what was ultimate or supreme in the preceding epoch, would appear as a retrograde step. When one potency is compared with another potency, the proceeding potency appears lower than the preceding potency, because the preceding potency necessarily appears as a higher potency in its time than the proceeding potency does in its time. But when one time is compared with another time and one epoch is compared with another epoch, the proceeding one appears decisively higher. Hence, such seeming regressions are necessary in the history of life.

There is something in the contemporary unity that is connected with nature in a way that it was not connected with nature in the preceding unity, namely, the being of that most supremely pure spirit. However, this spirit acts

as an obsession and craving that draws inwardly, that is, as nature (albeit as more than the inner and blind force of nature). And hence, it again makes the beginning of a higher life for itself.

If we can only conceive of God as the most utterly supreme freedom and considerateness, then this spirit, albeit the purest, yet only active as nature, certainly cannot be called God. Were it (B) God, then the entire unity would comport itself as the now consummately actualized God.

If this unity is not God, then what is it?

We have indicated how the pure Godhead is indivisibly the eternal Yes and the eternal No and the free unity of both. From this it automatically followed that the Godhead can be the eternal No = B only insofar as the Godhead is, as such, at the same time the ground of Itself as the eternal Yes. Then from this the reverse also necessarily follows. As B or the eternal No, it is the Godhead only insofar as it is at the same time A, that is, that it posits Itself as the eternal Yes. This here is the same relationship that [314] is in God according to the Christian doctrine. For the first personality is only God as the father, or insofar as the personality is the father, that is, insofar as the son at the same time is. And hence, in turn, the second personality is only God insofar as the personality is the son, or, insofar as the father also is.

But now, that is, in precisely the moment that we are emphasizing, the negating force = B is in no way that which is positing A. Certainly we know, from the course of the earlier attained insights, that God is only negating force with respect to Being in order to make a ground for Itself as eternal Love. But this negating force does not know itself and hence, also does not know its own relationship. It does not know the freedom of the decision, by virtue of which it alone is what is active. It had to be so. So that there would be a true beginning, this higher life had to sink back down into unconsciousness of itself. There is a law in humanity: there is an incessant primordial deed that precedes each and every single action and through which one is actually Oneself. Yet this primordial deed sinks down into unfathomable depths with respect to the consciousness that elevates itself above it. Thereby, this primordial deed becomes a beginning that can never be sublimated, a root of reality that cannot be reached through anything. In the same way, in the decision, that primordial deed of divine life also eradicates consciousness of itself, so that what was posited as ground in divine life can only be disclosed again in the succession through a higher revelation. Only in this way is there a true beginning, a beginning that never ceases to be a beginning. The decision that would make any kind of act into a true beginning may not be brought before consciousness. It may not be *recalled*, which rightly means as much as taking it back. Whoever reserves it to themselves again and again to bring a decision to light never makes a beginning. Hence, character is the fundamental condition for all morality [*Sittlichkeit*].<sup>90</sup> Lack of character is in itself immorality.

The following is also true: the beginning does not know itself as such. Which really means: it may not know itself as a beginning. In the very beginning, nothing is or discerns itself as merely ground or beginning. Whatever is a beginning must also not behold itself as a beginning, but rather as an essence (something that has being for its sake), in order to be a true beginning.

[315] Hence, that force of negation, as the force within which only God is active, also does not discern itself as ground, as the positing of the eternal Yes. Not only does the negating force not posit A, it must determinately negate A (and consequently also negate the higher unity, which is spirit). It must exclude A and utterly displace A out of the present. Within the negating force there is that wrathful force that tolerates nothing. This is the force that the jealous Jewish God expressed toward other gods. The negating force must remain in this exclusion and forlornness until its time is fulfilled. It must maintain itself with full power precisely so that life may thereby be elevated to the highest glory.

We said that the negating force represses the will of Love and the will of the spirit, but only by displacing them from the present. It posits these as not *having being* [*nicht seyend*], but hence in no way as non-being [*nichtseyend*]. Rather, they are posited as future and certainly, as such, also as having (merely concealed) being.

Hence, this force of negation is that which posits the eternal Yes only in accordance with possibility but not yet in accordance with actuality, that is, this force is God in accordance with possibility but not in accordance with actuality. Consequently, the whole unity is also not yet the actual or actualized God.

Then what is this unity? Answer: it is the eternal embryo of God that is not yet an actual god, but rather is only a god with respect to its forces. This unity is therefore the state of possibility (of potentiality) in which God has voluntarily posited itself. This state must necessarily come before the actual (revealed in actuality) God so that there may be a becoming, a succession, a gradualness, in this revelation or birth of God into actuality.

Hence, perhaps some people will say that so long as this is the case, there is no God whatsoever. Certainly not! For God is already the whole God with respect to the possibility (of becoming manifest). The now active negating potency is the force (i.e., the possibility) of positing the affirming potency. This affirming potency, just like the higher unity, is certainly not posited as having being but as not *having being* (as future). Now, no one will want to maintain that what is as something possible or with respect to mere possibility is therefore nothing whatsoever. It certainly *is*, but just in the state of possibility. Here the [316] distinction presented earlier between the Being that has no being and non-Being<sup>91</sup> must only be asserted in the higher instance. "Therefore, God is not," can mean two things. "God is not *existing* [*existierend*]." This is being granted and maintained. "God is not at all, or God is absolutely not existing." This is being denied. For God is precisely in that God does not *have being*. God is only as not having

being, in the state of involution (*implicite, in statu involutionis*), which is a transport (intermediary) of real revelation. At least those who, following the words of Scripture, ascribed to God the power to withdraw even from the ordered course of things in order to conceal His countenance,<sup>92</sup> that is, His real self, ought not consider this unworthy of the Godhead. Hence, the Godhead again retreats into a state of involution for awhile in order to act, in certain cases, as mere nature rather than in accordance with His innermost self and heart.

The talk here is not at all of the essential Being of God (of His Being outside of and beyond nature), but rather only of the existence, that is, the external revelation in our use of the term, of the Godhead, which was already posited as having being through its relationship to eternal nature. For us to repeat this seems almost unnecessary for it is clearly enough and even explicitly explained through the course of the whole of history up until this point.

Even for the most anxious person, nothing difficult or tricky whatsoever can lie in this whole matter if one just keenly grasps these concepts, and each of their supplementary determinations, and thinks them through for oneself. To this certainly belong pure intentions, serious conation, and honest effort. These are certainly hardly to be expected in times where, on the one hand, the convenient doctrine that one would be able to know nothing has broken the habit of almost all more precise thinking, and, on the other hand, those who strive for something higher, for a matter that consists, in part, of the most subtle and most delicate delimitations, believe they can content themselves with the mere materials of ideas that were amassed from all over the place, even though such a belief has certainly led, in part, to monstrosities.

The more important all of the above presented views are, the [317] more we will still try to illuminate them from another angle.

To wit, the question can emerge as to what then is really negated by that negating force? Incontestably, only that which was posited by the preceding moment, the independence of Being, the apartness and the withdrawal of the forces. But surely that free movement of nature certainly cannot now be made regressive by this negating force. Hence, the attracting force negates only what is already posited in another regard. Indifference, the state of nondivorce, is also here, but it is active indifference. It is not an indifference free from all difference but rather it is an indifference negating difference. But it is only the state of divorce and reciprocal freedom that are negated and hence, that which has its state of divorce negated is affirmed as something nondivorced. And that force, which is the newness of all freedom, is what is affirming of the whole in non-freedom. However, since that force can only negate what is there, it recognizes the state of divorce through negation and it affirms it by negating it.

First and foremost, it is thereby clear how the negating force assumes Being for itself precisely through negation. The negating force posits that which is its own precisely in negation.

But just as the state of divorce is again posited through the negation of the state of divorce, so, likewise, everything that would be posited in an actual or evolved fashion (*explicite*) without negation must only be posited in an involved fashion (*implicite*) through negation.

Incontestably, if the Godhead assumed Being and if, at the same time, the state of divorce were to persist, this would be the most evolved and most fully expressed existence. For a spirit attains the plenitude of its existence when it has a living soul ( $A^3$ ) as its immediate subject. Again, this soul has its ectype in an external spiritual-corporeal being. This free relationship is not now affirmed but rather negated. Yet is precisely thereby posited in a negated or involved fashion. We can therefore say that the unity indicated above is, at least in an involved fashion, the first actual existence of God. But does not [318] every existence presuppose contraction, precisely because it is existence? Is there any kind of existence that was not an existence first in involution? Is there any kind of free life that was not delivered from a negated state? Hence, we may then certainly maintain that that whole unity, because it is only a new and second beginning, is thus only a new and higher nature that is nonetheless still utterly different in kind (*toto genere*) from the first one. Actually, there is now only a single being of which the attracting potency is what is spiritual and what is attracted or drawn in is, respectively, what is corporeal. That spiritual potency penetrates, like an active obsession or craving, the whole of eternal nature, and once *naturata*,<sup>93</sup> the spiritual potency by itself is no longer separable from nature. The forces of eternal nature are its forces in which it senses Itself as in its tools. The whole is something veritably indivisible (*Individuum*). Still, we should not forget the original distinction concerning this unity. For that negating potency is in itself pure spirit and it always comports itself before eternal nature as that which has being does to Being. Indeed, this spirit acts as nature because it is unconscious. That is why it cannot be called intelligent in the real meaning of the word, although it is not thus altogether unintelligent and absolutely without intellect. It is a substantial spirit that has become substance. It does not have an intellect. Rather, it is itself essentially intellect, only it is not a conscious intellect that steps back upon itself (reflected intellect), but rather a blind, unconscious, necessary, and, so to speak, instinctual intellect.

Hence, the negating will, because it is this kind of force and from this kind of independence and omnipotence, draws together the being, mute until now, in all of its principles and forces. But through this it is immediately elevated out of the passive unity and into the active unity and, for the first time, all of the forces of Being are not only brought into one, but they are also equally active in one and the same being. For posited under one and the same potency, the principles necessarily come to have a common denominator among themselves (they become equipotent). That subordination of one under the other is

sublimated. Each falls into its own life and a binding, coercive unity emerges in lieu of the preceding voluntary affection.

( $\beta$ ) *consequence of this emergence of God as negating will*

aa) construction of the cosmos

[319] These principles were mutually comforted in that subordination of one under the other only because one became, so to speak, medicine for the other. Hence, each principle was also only calmed in itself through that organization where one force comported itself to the other force as ground or as that which does not have being. Since the principles, as well as each force, are all elevated to an equal efficacy, a reciprocal impassivity and revulsion necessarily emerges between all of them so that, barely brought together, they want to separate again.

We saw in the person where, after a mood takes hold of one, one assumes all of the colors of that mood. Sweetness is inverted into bitterness, gentleness into ire, and love into hate, because a root of bitterness lies even in sweetness and a root of hatred lies in love and, although concealed, it is necessary for its support. In the same way, when Stringency is the governing principle, the negating force also stressed itself in the mildly discharging principle ( $A^2$ ). And in the originary self-enclosing principle ( $A = B$ ), the negating force elevated itself out of its depths and concealment so that consequently only hostile forces encounter each other in both. But since unity no longer has the antithesis outside of itself, but rather is united with it and it can no longer go out as the free, silent unity, it, so to speak, feels as if it were dying.

Here is the first source of bitterness which is, nay, must be, the interior of all life, and which immediately erupts whenever it is not soothed. For love is coerced into hatred and the silent and gentle spirit cannot act, but rather is oppressed by the enmity in which all of the forces are transposed by the necessity of life. From here comes the profound discontent that lies in all life and without which there is no actuality. This is the poison of life that needs to be overcome, yet without which life would pass away.

For when the forces, now contracted into active Being, get a taste of their bitterness, they desire, both as a whole and as individual principles, to go out again from the stringent unity and each desires to be in their own nature. This is the [320] grim fate of all life. It first desires delimitation and to go from breadth to narrowness in order to become perceptible to itself. Thereafter, when it is in narrowness and has felt it, life desires to go back again into breadth and would like to turn right back into the silent nothingness in which it was before. And yet it cannot, because it would have to renounce again its self-incurred life. And just as soon as it would have returned, from out of this state it would have yearned again, and through this yearning it would incur anew something that has being.

Hence, in the whole and in the particulars, the gathering together of forces by that spirit that draws into itself immediately effects the forces' conation to separate. And, indeed, the more active each of the forces has become, that is, the more they are brought into narrowness, all the more do they separate. Hence, the contraction gives rise to its exact opposite, and gives rise to nothing less than to incessant excitement, the orgasm of all forces. But scarcely do they draw nigh again to the embryonic state and feel their communal life, then does yearning<sup>94</sup> awaken anew. And yet they cannot leave the longing for actuality and again they fall prey to the contracting potency.

Hence, there is not a persisting life here but, moreover, a constant alternating of expansion and contraction. And the above indicated unity (the whole of this moment) is nothing but the first pulsation, the, so to speak, beating heart of the Godhead, which, in incessant systole and diastole,<sup>95</sup> seeks rest, but does not find it. There is anew a spontaneous movement that happens again and again automatically and which cannot cease by itself. For through each contraction, the forces again become active and the contracting will gives way to their desire for expansion. But scarcely does the will feel the cision and the commencing inefficacy when it is scared and fears that it would lose existence and hence, contracts anew.

Hence, for the second time, life is posited into the moment of spontaneous movement by another movement that is completely different and higher than the first one.

With this we grasp that that which has being, together with its Being in this [321] moment, is the supremely contradictory being [*Wesen*].<sup>96</sup> We grasp that the first existence is the contradiction itself and, inversely, that the first actuality can only persist in contradiction. All life must pass through the fire of contradiction. Contradiction is the power mechanism and what is innermost of life. From this it follows that, as an old book says, all deeds under the sun are full of trouble and everything languishes in toil, yet does not become tired, and all forces incessantly struggle against each other.<sup>97</sup> Were there only unity and everything were in peace, then, forsooth, nothing would want to stir itself and everything would sink into listlessness. Now, however, everything ardently strives to get out of unrest and to attain rest.

The contradiction that we have here conceived is the fountain of eternal life. The construction of this contradiction is the highest task of science. Hence, the objection that the philosopher would start science with a contradiction means just as much to the philosopher as it would mean to remind the tragic poet, after hearing the introduction of the work, that, after such a beginning, the work could only come to a horrible ending, and to cruel deeds and bloody events. This was precisely the poet's intent when they set out.

Hence, we, too, do not shun the contradiction. In fact, to the extent to which we are capable, we seek to grasp it well, even in its details.

Through the attracting potency, the whole, or the system of forces, which constitutes initial nature ( $A = B$ ), becomes something gathered together. Yet it cannot be described as such, because in the gathering together it becomes an inherent contradiction and hence, does not persist at rest for a single moment. For even the two opposed forces in initial nature are brought to a common denomination by the inspiring potency. The force that should have been the resting ground out of which the being (A) would arise is one that is elevated from out of the depths and which intensified that which does not have being (B) into that which does have being. Hence, scarcely has that which has been gathered together felt the common denomination and the conflict of forces when it [322] wants to separate, for the forces in this relationship are reciprocally impassive. But because it is held together by the might of the attracting potency and because this potency immediately elevates the negating force out of the depths, whereas the affirming being (A) seeks to subordinate the negating force to itself and to posit it back into potentiality, only the endeavor (*nisus*) of the conation to separate remains. A rotary movement must emerge into being from this endeavor. But the attracting force does not cease acting. Finally, it so happens that when the forces have become more and more spiritualized, in the highest degree of revulsion, for they absolutely cannot either separate or abide, something of an intermediary nature occurs. Matter, as if posited in a self-lacerating rage, shatters into individual and independent centers that, because they are also still held and driven by averse forces, likewise move about their own axes.<sup>viii</sup>

It is futile to attempt to explain the diversity in nature by the peaceful eismplasy<sup>98</sup> of various forces. Everything that becomes can only become in discontent. And just as anxiety is the fundamental sensation of every living creature, so, too, everything that lives is only conceived and born in violent struggle. Who could believe that nature could have created the many different wonderful products in this terrifying external confusion and chaotic internal mixture, where nothing is easily found all by itself, but rather penetrated by and ingrown with other things, in peace and quiet? How could it have been created in any other way than in the most violent revulsion? Are not most of the products of inorganic nature manifestly the children of anxiety, of terror, nay, of despair?<sup>ix</sup> And so we also see in the individual cases in which we, to some extent, are permitted

viii. The whole, B, because it is one with being, lacerates itself, as one in discontent says, "I would like to tear myself to pieces." [*Ich möchte mich selbst zerreißen.*] (Marginal note.)

ix. Compare this with the second section of *The Philosophy of Mythology*, II/2, 582.—ED. [The passage reads: "All quality in nature only has meaning insofar as it is itself originally sensation. The qualities of things cannot be explained mechanically and externally. They can only be explained by the original impressions that the being of nature itself obtains in creation. Who can imagine that sulfur, that stinking scent of gasses and volatile metals, or the inexplicable bitterness of the ocean, are only consequences of simply accidental chemical mixtures? Are not those substances manifestly the children of terror, of anxiety, of discontent, of despair?"]



to be witnesses of an original creation, that the first foundation of future humans is only formed in deadly struggle, terrifying discontent, and anxiety that often extends to despair. [323] If this happens in individuals and in the small, could it be any different in the large, in the creation of the first parts of the world system?

It is conspicuous that, in the whole of nature, each single particular nature commences with the rotation about its own axis and hence, manifestly with a state of inner revulsion. In the greatest things as in the smallest things, in the orbit of planets as in the partly rotary movements of that world, discernible only with the aided eye, that Linnaeus presciently calls "the chaos of the animal world,"<sup>99</sup> the annular drive shows itself as the first form of life separated into its own self. It is just as if everything that isolates itself in itself, and hence, away from the whole, would immediately thereby have to fall prey to the inner struggle. At least this remark would shed light on the forces of the annular drive as belonging to the oldest potencies, which were active in the first creation and which are not, as the prevailing opinion now has it, forces that later externally and accidentally supplemented what came to be.

Now, insofar as the existence of such individual rotary wholes simply depends on the elevating and inspiring of the negating force, these wholes are the works of a veritable elevating and creating force, which transposes the wholes from not having being into having being. Hence, these wholes are to be viewed as the first creatures.

If that negative force's inspiring could wane in the wholes, then they would immediately sink back into universal Being. Hence, that inspiring is an elevation into selfhood for the wholes. From now on, that inspired force is the root of their ipseity in that they have their own ground (their own B or selfish principle) that is independent of the universal ground of nature.

But even now, intensified into selfhood (into Being-in-itself), these wholes are still retained by the attracting force. Yet, precisely because they are now selfish and because they have their own point of foundation (center of gravity) within themselves, they strive, precisely by dint of this selfhood, to evade the pressure of the attracting power. Hence, they strive to distance themselves on all sides from the center of force and to become themselves away from it. [324] Hence, the highest turgor of the whole emerges here, since each particular thing seeks to withdraw itself from the universal center and eccentrically seeks its own center of gravity or foundational point.

With that first cision of primordial forces, where they sank to Being with respect to what is higher, it was already remarked how everything emerges more and more out of the nonfigural and into the figural.<sup>100</sup> For the first time, there was an above and a below. Yet that setting into opposition of the forces just resulted in a spiritual opposition (*expansum*),<sup>101</sup> albeit an impotent one that really just expressed the absence of a gathering, actual (real), relationship endowing, force. *Space* first emerges when that delimiting force supervenes, making *actual*

the place or locus to which each potency is really entitled by virtue of its nature, although this entitlement had been as such only in a *possible* fashion. Extension (*extensio*) already presupposes the space positing force and is best explained by that appearance that we call turgescence in the members of organic beings.<sup>102</sup>

According to the representation of space that currently prevails, it is a void that indifferently spilled out from all sides into the indefinite and into which individual things are merely placed. But the true being of space, or expressed more exactly, the force that really posits space, is that universal, primordial force that contracts the whole. Were there no such force, or were it able to cease, then there would be neither place nor space. Hence, space cannot be indifferent but rather is organically in the whole and in the particulars. Whoever could maintain an internal indifference of space, in which one point would be like the other and there would not be a true above and below, nor right and left, nor back and front, must not have considered the miracle of that ordering and placing force in the organic. For the location of each essential member is a necessary location. Each member in this whole can only be in this place. Likewise, this person must have considered just as little how, for instance, in the graduated process of the organic being, each part changes its locus with the meaning and dignity that it wins or loses in the higher creature. Should such a force only dwell in a particular organic body, but not dwell in the greater whole? Impossible! Space is not indifferent. There is a true above and below. There is a heaven [325] that is veritably above the earth. There is a spirit world that is, properly understood, beyond nature. As they were for our fathers, these are representations that again make the holism more valuable than an indifferent expansion without a final goal of consummation and without a true conclusion and a meaningful end. For uncontainment is everywhere also imperfection. Containment is the real consummation of every work. These representations were not lost, as one might think, by the doctrine of the honorable Copernicus, but only by the spiritless system of gravitation in later times.

That divine force that gathers together the whole does not merely include nature. It also includes the spirit world and the soul that dwells beyond both nature and the spirit world. Hence, these receive a spatial relationship through this combination. Also, the belief in a place, in a dwelling place, of the spirits, again receives meaning and truth.

That everything would, as much as is possible, become figural and be brought into visible, corporeal, form, is the final intention. As the ancients expressed it, corporeality is the goal of the ways of God (*finis viarum Dei*), who wants to reveal Himself spatially, or in a place, as well as temporally.

It already simply follows from the containment, the external finitude,<sup>x</sup> not only of visible nature, but of the cosmos, that there is a force contracting the

x. But hence not finite in *space*. For space is precisely the expansion, happening from the inside out, of the contracting force. (Written in the margin.)

cosmos from the outside toward the inside and by which the cosmos first became spatial. Hence, this force, since it encompasses and includes the whole, is the force that really posits objectives and boundaries, as it is expressed in the already cited passage:<sup>xi</sup> "When he circumscribed the depths with his circle." And the expression, "Heaven and earth are the expansion of divine might," certainly does not just refer to the attracting power lying in nature, but to the force of negation that gathers the whole. But the Eternal can only be finite to Itself. Only the Eternal Itself can [326] comprehend and circumscribe its own Being. Hence, the finitude of the world on the outside contains a consummate infinity on the inside.

The whole spatially extended cosmos is nothing but the swelling heart of the Godhead that continues, retained by invisible forces, in a continuous pulsation or in an alternation of expansion and contraction.

Particular things are at first created by the elevation of that which does not have being. By dint of the selfhood aroused in them, these things now necessarily strive to get away from the attracting force, from the universal center. Hence, turgor follows from this. Turgor is the eccentric evasion from all sides, which becomes more violent the more the principle of selfhood is inflamed within things. But in the relationship in which things move away from the attracting force, they also feel the awoken principle of selfhood in them pass away as well as their own life, which rested solely on the continuous solicitation (calling forth) of that very same principle. Hence, they again fall prey to the negating force and find themselves anew in the severity of the attracting potency. But with each new attraction, they are also inflamed to an ever higher selfhood. For that dark force in them can, precisely because it is force (*intensum*),<sup>103</sup> be brought to ever higher degrees of tension.

This process must progress in this way up until the point where the forces of Being begin to keep the balance of that which has being. The equipollence of what is attracted with what attracts is finally produced through persistent intensification. This is the objective and end of the process. God itself must feel the utter depths and the terrifying forces of its own Being. It is even dialectically evident that that in which the pure Godhead itself acts just as nature is equivalent to eternal nature. Hence, here is the moment where, according to Plato, God can be thought of as in a struggle with wild, unruly matter or nature.<sup>104</sup> But the God for which this can be said is only the possible God, or God insofar as God is just nature and hence, not actually God.

Seen this way, the objective of this process is therefore only an alternating [327] movement (*motus alternus*), an eternal inhalation and re-exhalation. It is a systole and diastole that must be the beginning of spiritual life just as much as it is the first moment of all natural life. For if, in the present moment,

xi. *Proverbs* 8:27. [Cited at 296]

what is in itself natural became natural for the first time, then, conversely, this moment is for eternal nature precisely the first echelon of a spiritual life to which this nature should be raised. Hence, here still lies, so to speak, the heart of nature, bare and open, just like the heart in animal life (which, in its highest cultivation, only has that square =  $\diamond$  as its fundamental form, and which also expresses the primordial form of each celestial body). The animal heart first lies there, externally visible, and is brought back more and more toward the inside, until it is covered over in the following stages of formation. In all of the animal order, the heart is moved forward more and more from the right side, toward the center, until it is ultimately brought all the way to the left side, that is, until it is posited as past. In animal life, blood still retains that primeval movement. Spirit, and the better will, all too often struggle with blood, this wild, unbridled matter, lacerated into globules (it already appeared probable to several natural scientists that, in the progression of each globule, they moved at the same time about their axes). Nature, yearning for rest, seems to seek nothing more ardently than to escape from that necessary and alternating movement that emerges from the connected principles' reciprocal intolerance for each other. This is a goal that nature first reaches through the ineffably great miracle of articulation, through the keeping apart of averse forces in the system of expanding and bending muscles, which still retain a single side of the rotary movement, but which, akin to a divining rod that is obedient to the will, only strike either inwardly or outwardly.

In this constant alternation of going out and coming back, expansion and contraction, matter is more and more prepared to become the external figure of the indwelling spirit which, since it cannot produce utter unity (the negation of all multiplicity), attempts to act architectonically in order to assert unity in this multiplicity and hence, to produce a system. [328] At its first genesis, the structure of the universe clearly enough shows the presence of an inner, spiritual potency. But the contribution and auxiliary influence of an unreasonable (irrational) principle that could only be delimited, but never overwhelmed, is just as unmistakable. Hence, the organic laws of the structure of the universe are hardly fathomable with such simple relationships as have been hitherto attempted. And in no case can these organic laws be developed just out of concepts. Rather, they can only be developed out of actuality itself.

But an abiding configuration is not possible in the present moment. For in precise proportion to the extent that the whole is brought to the highest unfolding, the orgasm of forces increases in all of its parts so that the attracting force itself finally trembles for its existence and fears that chaos, which is already present in the particulars, is present in the whole.

For along with the elevation of the principle of selfhood, which was designated for rest and potentiality, the passive qualities of matter are sublimated more and more. As indicated, these are qualities that depend precisely on the



attenuation and suppression of that force which, when actuated (activated) or spiritualized, is a consuming fire. When what was only supposed to be a dormant fire in an organic member is elevated into act, it becomes temporarily inflamed. We still see fire break forth from any violently compressed matter. Electrical fire in lightning is incontestably something that is only released through violent pressure. Compressible materials (gasses), which together are capable of producing a flame, are ignited by mere pressure. Any pressure, even the lightest one, calls forth electrical fire, so that it is hard to doubt that, with the right amount of compression, all matter would be capable of going up in flames. So, too, in the primordial state, matter, with the increasing orgasm, must be transposed more and more into the state of a fiery dissolution.

All natural scientists have always believed that they had to base their explanations of the gradual development of the earth, nay, of all of visible nature, upon the presupposition of a state of dissolution. But in our time, [329] when all similes and metaphors are gotten from chemistry, one is content with a conception of liquid dissolution, similar to the dissolution of metals in acids—as if liquidity were overall something ultimate with which one could stop, as if it were an absolute state that does not require further explanation. But we believe that we can prove in yet another way that the oldest state of all matter and of all celestial bodies in particular, is a state of electrical dissolution. For that twofold fire actually appears in electricity. This twofold fire is what is really internal to all matter. It is the radiating fire (+ E) as well as the negating fire (- E) that draws into itself and serves as the ground for the radiating fire. For it was just as erroneous to seek the ground of this electricity in a simple lack as it was to assume, as does the contemporary view known as dualism, two equally positive, albeit mutually opposed, electricities. One of the two electricities is actually of a negating, inwardly drawing, nature. Yet because of this, it is certainly just as little utterly nothing (simple privation) as the attracting fundamental force in nature is a simple lack. The previously mentioned electrical conduction experiments with the voltaic pile,<sup>105</sup> experiments that are too little heeded by the great mass of natural scientists, provide a decisive proof that matter is capable of an electrical spiritualization and dissolution in which matter is not just un-receptive to natural chemical affinities, but in which it also discards all other corporeal qualities.

We still now see those enigmatic members of the planetary whole, comets, in this state of fiery electrical dissolution. Comets are, as I expressed myself earlier but would now like to say, celestial bodies in becoming and are still unreconciled. They are, so to speak, living witnesses of that primordial time, since nothing prevents the earlier time from migrating through later time via particular phenomena. Or, conversely, nothing prevents a later time from having emerged earlier in some parts of the universe than in others. In all ages, human feeling has only regarded comets with a shudder as, so to speak, har-

bingers of the recurrence of a past age, of universal destruction, of the dissolution of things again into chaos. Evidently, the individual center of gravity (the separate life) in a comet is [330] not reconciled with the universal center of gravity. This is demonstrated by the directions and positions of their paths, which deviate from those of the settled planets. Although the paths of planets do not, in any case, go back and forth in a straight line as Kepler surmised, they are only curved a little compared with the eccentricity of the comet's path. Comets are eccentric to such a degree that their movement can be regarded as a simple systole and diastole. But precisely in their approach to the sun and their retreat again from the sun, the comets show such metamorphoses and alternations that they simply can only be explained by alternating expansions and contractions. Until now, in all of the important comets, it has been perceived how, with the approach to the sun, and hence, in the highest rut of all forces, the contours of the nucleus on the side turned toward the sun disappears more and more. The nucleus finally dissolves altogether, what one calls its nebula swells out in like proportion, and the tail elongates itself. In one of the most remarkable longhaired stars<sup>106</sup> of the year 1769, after its return from the sun (in November of that year), the nebula was more perspicuous so that the nucleus could be seen more clearly. But the appearance of the whole was so transformed that one of its observers<sup>xii</sup> brought those verses by Virgil about Hector to bear upon it:

... quantum mutatus ab illo!  
Squalentem barbam et concretos sanguine crines,  
Vulneraque illa gerens, quae circum plurima—solem  
Acceptit ...

(*Aen.* II, 274 seq.)<sup>107</sup>

This dwindling and waning at the comet's return from the sun can only be the effect of the recommencing diastole and the comet's approach to the state of materiality. Since this was first written down (in the year 1811), the more exact observations of the comet found in the skies at that time have become well known. There were many things that were remarkable about this comet. It had a double tail. It had a greater brightness on the northern (inspired) side. But [331] the monstrous rapidity of its transformations was especially remarkable, so much so that one was nearly compelled to conclude that it already consisted of an alternation of expansion and contraction in its approach to the sun. In the short time of a second, the light in the field of vision of the

xii. Lambert's *Beiträge*, part III, pp. 234, 207. [Schelling is referring to Johann Heinrich Lambert's *Beiträge zum Gebrauche der Mathematik und deren Anwendung*, first published in Berlin in 1765.]

comet finder could extend itself by two and a half degrees, which would have to amount to almost a million geographical miles in true extension. This was a phenomenon that the splendid observer (Schröter) felt pressed to conclude was similar to the electrical or galvanic primordial force.

In the foregoing presentation, we have attained what must always be our main foreseeable goal in the endeavor to determine exactly the times in accordance with which and in which everything gradually came to be. In view of nature, we discern that the first time was really the time of the creation of the stars as such. But who, whenever they have viewed this incomprehensible whole with the right senses, has not always felt that the great and terrifying forces, through which the whole first came to be, and through which it is now still kept in existence, go far beyond all of the forces of the later time? A much softer force, the will of a gentler time, has produced plants and animals. These may be called works of nature insofar as the artistic wisdom dwelling in the universe itself is understood by this. But the stars far surpass all of the forces of formative nature. They are works of God. Taken by themselves (without the succeeding time), they are works of wrath, of the paternal and most ancient force.

*In the beginning God created heaven and earth.*<sup>108</sup> In these simple words, the oldest book in the world expresses itself concerning this time when it determines it by separating and distinguishing it from the following time. Although they have often been misinterpreted, nay, intentionally misjudged, these words are invaluable to someone who understands them. In this passage, "In the beginning" cannot be taken to mean anything other than "in the first time," "in the most supremely ancient time." The next passage indicates that this time was to be sharply distinguished from the following time: *And the earth was*—certainly not before creation, and hence, taken more exactly, "the earth became in creation" or [332] "the earth became after creation"—*chaotic and void*. It is clear that the narration wanted to designate this chaos and voidance as something placed between that creation that happened *in the beginning* and the subsequent creation.

This verse separates this time from the following time as above as well as with words. Why, if nothing more is intimated in these words than that the creation already described is one and the same as the subsequent creation, does the verse say here, "Elohim (that which has being, that which was Elohim or the universe of forces) *created (bara)*"? Why does it not straight away speak in the fashion that is always characteristic of the following verses and say, "In the beginning Elohim said, 'Let there be heaven and earth.'"? Or why does it not say, "God *made*," as is said (verse 16) of the two great lights, the sun and the moon? God would not have even needed to make these lights if the creation at verse 1 was already a *making*. Either all exegesis is deceitful, or this production in the beginning that is called a "creating" is different than the later production, which is a "speaking." That this word is just used in the beginning is a decisive

proof that the holy Book wanted to isolate the very first creation, whose history it concludes with these few words, and whose first outcome is intimated by the following words, from the subsequent creation. The first creation was isolated as something that persists for itself (as the creation of its own time).

The trouble exerted by moderns to debase, where possible, the force of that word (*bara*) to the meaning of a mere "forming" is incomprehensible. (One of them tries to explain it with the word "*exasciare*."<sup>109</sup>) Even the etymology of the word has been obscured by such shallow explanation. We do not want to exclude any of the possible comparisons. The following can be made: *bar*, "son," the old German word "*bären (gebären)*," the Greek βαρέω, the Latin *parare* and *parere*.<sup>110</sup> There are also possible comparisons with the meaning of "out of," "away from home," "foreign," which befit the word *bar* in the words derived from it in the great many Eastern dialects. In the final relationship, the verb *bara* really meant to "act out of oneself" or to "act with Being itself (unconsciously)." But, despite all of these various meanings, the common link is perhaps found when, following the [333] original identity and constant confusion of the verbs in *a* and *ab*, one seeks out the fundamental meaning of "*bara*" in "*barah*," from which *berith* derives. Just as in German "*Bund*" [bond, covenant] and "*Bündnis*" [alliance] derive from "*Binden*" [to bind], and in Latin "*contractus*" [contraction] derives from "*contrahere*" [to draw together, to contract], so, too, does "*berith*" derive from "*barah*" and hence, in the same way means "contraction," "attraction" (Hence, "*to consume, to eat*," II Samuel 12:17<sup>111</sup>).<sup>xiii</sup> Every external relationship of God with humans, nay, with the whole of nature (c.f., Genesis 9:12)<sup>112</sup> is a covenant (*berith*). The furnishing of nature with alternating days and nights is a covenant of Jehovah with the day and the night (*Jeremiah* 33:20). The relationship of the father to his son (*bar*) is a covenant. And the new covenant, ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη, means the same thing as a new creation (καινὴ, κτίσις).

But whoever wants to discern altogether the force of the word should read the passage: "I, Jehovah, who *forms* light and *creates* darkness, *makes* the good and *creates* evil ('*bore*' both times)."<sup>xiv</sup> There is no one who will maintain that God freely and consciously created darkness and evil. But, since the word that designates a conscious production stands in such an obvious antithesis with the word for creation (*bara*), the latter word can only mean unfree, unconscious creating with which, as with a production of substance, there is no intellect and just power and might. (This demonstrates precisely that the creating at verse 1 was not an utterly completed creating.) To clarify this thought, one might remember the old distinction: God is the cause of the substantial

xiii. N.B., Numbers 16:30: "*Jm beriah jifra Jehovah*," i.e., "if the LORD moves the primordial forces."

xiv. Isaiah 45:7.

(material) aspect of sin but not the formal aspect of it. That this word just means the lowest degree of creating (just the involuntary degree) is utterly obvious from another passage in the same book (*Isaiah* 43:7) where a graduated succession among creating, forming, and making is unmistakably designated with the same words.<sup>113</sup>

Hence, if the concept of a first, unfree, and, at the same time, [334] chaotic creating does not confirm the prevailing representations, then the concept finds its attestation in the word *bara* and in the words in the Scriptures that are immediately following, where the earth (to which the account retires right after the first words) “became chaotic and void [*wüst und leer ward*]” after that creation. This is the way Luther translated it. Yet these words in the original language at the same time commonly connote, according to their roots, expressions of wonder and astonishment. Hence, I do not know if this might not hint at those opposed states that we still perceive in comets, since a monstrous expansion is just as much an object of astonishment as is a sudden sinking or shrinking of that which has expanded.

By the way, should everything in this presentation not be utterly intelligible, then one might want to consider that the state described here is a past state, utterly distinct from the present state that one has involuntarily placed as the basis of reflection. The past state is not comprehensible from the present state. Rather, the past state lies at the basis of the present state.

bb) hint at the simultaneously happening activation of the spirit world

Perhaps the events in the spirit world should now be described. But it seems more praiseworthy to acknowledge the limits of human powers. We are content to remark that, in general, the course can only be the same as the one in nature, but with a single difference. The negating force, which is external in nature, is internal in the spiritual being. That is why one can say that in nature, the negating force is elevated and led inward, and that in the spirit world, the negating force is drawn outward and lowered. Just as nature is spiritualized in attraction, the principle of the spirit world is embodied. What is contraction in one is expansion in the other and vice versa. Here, too, the principle of selfhood in the spirits that tear themselves away from the conflict of fiery forces and become, so to speak, individual vortices, is so intensified by the ongoing effect of attraction that in the end it keeps the attracting potency in balance. Here the process also stays in an alternating movement of systole and diastole, since the integrating force can no longer manage the awoken forces of Being and [335] is alternating vanquishing and being vanquished. In view of the spirit world, this time is the time of the first creation—albeit chaotic and arrested in mere commencement—of those primordial spirits, which are to the spirit world just what stars are to nature.

cc) relationship of this activation to that which has being itself  
( = to the pure Godhead)

Yet it is now time to turn our attention to that which actually has being, whose interior, no less than its exterior, must suffer and be lacerated by contradiction just as the interior of an organic being also suffers the violent and unruly movements of that being.

We only provisionally remark that that which actually has being is precisely that spirit that draws in and to itself and which brings the whole being [*Wesen*] under its power. That is why what was the highest of what has being in eternal nature (A<sup>3</sup>) is now for that spirit the copula of its interrelation with what is subordinate. Hence, both are as one in the present process and that universal soul is to be viewed just as the immediate subject (or, in the now familiar language, just as the objective side of that spirit).

Pain is something universal and necessary in all life, the unavoidable transition point to freedom. We remember growing pains in the physical as well as the moral sense. We will not shun presenting even that primordial being (the first possibility of God externally manifesting) in the state of suffering that comes from growth. Suffering is universal, not only with respect to humanity, but also with respect to the creator. It is the path to glory. God leads human nature down no other path than that down which God Himself must pass. Participating in everything blind, dark, and suffering of God's nature is necessary in order to elevate God to the highest consciousness. Every single being must get to know their own depths and this is impossible without suffering. All pain comes only from Being. Because all living things must first involve themselves in Being and break out of the darkness to transfiguration, so, too, in its revelation, the divine being must first assume nature and, as such, suffer it, before it can celebrate the triumph of its liberation.

[336] But in order to represent everything as naturally as possible, the moments also have to be distinguished here. The acting potency does not express itself immediately with full power but rather as a faint attracting, like that which precedes the arousal from a deep slumber. With increasing might, the forces in Being are aroused to dull and blind action. Powerful and, because the gentle unity of the spirit is alien to Being, formless, births arise. No longer in that state of interiority or clairvoyance nor enraptured by blessed visions that portend the future, what exists in this conflict struggles as if in grave dreams which arise out of the past because they arise out of Being. Anxiety is the governing affect that corresponds to the conflict of directions in Being, since it does not know whether to go in or out. Meanwhile, the orgasm of forces increases more and more and lets the contracting force fear utter cision and complete dissolution. But while the contracting force releases its life and, so to speak, discerns itself as already past, the higher form of its being and the silent

purity of spirit rise before it like lightning. But this purity, in contrast to the blindly contracting will, is the essential unity in which freedom, the intellect, and differentiation dwell. Hence, the will, while contracting, would like to grasp the lightning flash of freedom and make it its own in order to thereby become a freely creating and conscious will. It would then get out of loathing and, overcoming the conflict of forces, communicate to its creations the essential unity that is intellect, spirit, and beauty. But the blind will cannot grasp gentle freedom. Rather, freedom is for the will an overwhelming and incomprehensible spirit and that is why the will is frightened by the appearances of spirit. The will no doubt feels that the spirit is the will's true being and, despite the spirit's gentleness, that it is stronger than the will in its severity. At the sight of that spirit, the will becomes as if insensate and seeks blindly to grasp spirit and to copy it inwardly in what the will produces, as if it [337] could somehow keep a firm hold on spirit. But the will only acts as if with an alien intellect over which it has no command. This intellect is an intermediary between the utter night of consciousness and levelheaded spirit.

Everything stems from these enlightenments that, for instance, is something intelligible and ordered in the structure of the universe, by virtue of which the universe actually appears to be the external figure of an indwelling spirit. The fundamental force of all initial and original creating must be an unconscious and necessary force since no personality actually leaves its mark. As in human works, the higher the force of actuality was discerned, the more impersonally did they appear. When inspiration appears in poetic and other kinds of works, a blind force must also appear in them. For only a blind force is capable of inspiration. All conscious creation presupposes an unconscious creating. Conscious creating is just the unfolding and setting into opposition of unconscious creating.

The ancients did not speak in vain of a divine and holy madness.<sup>114</sup> We even see nature, in the process of its free unfolding, becoming, in proportion to its approach to spirit, ever more, so to speak, frenzied. No doubt, all things of nature are found in an insensate state. But we see those creatures that belong to the time of the last struggle between cision and unification, consciousness and unconsciousness, and that immediately precede humanity among the creations of nature, walking about in a state similar to drunkenness.<sup>xv</sup> Panthers or

xv. Cf., *The Philosophy of Mythology*, II/2, 427.—ED. [The passage reads: "But from the beginning there is something at the basis of nature that *really* should not be and it is necessary that this principle would most violently ignite when its overcoming is most proximate. In general, whenever all things find themselves in an insensate state, we see that highest class of animals walking about as if in a state of constant madness, in which, at first sight, unspiritual nature gets spiritual nature. The indignation and the wrath with which the rapacious animal lacerates even a weak and utterly inoffensive creature, is the wrath at its own death, the principle which feels its ruin, the final flaring up of its fury."]

tigers do not pull the carriage of Dionysus in vain. For this wild frenzy of inspiration in which nature found itself when it was in view of the being was celebrated in the nature worship of prescient ancient peoples by the drunken festivals of Bacchic orgies.<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, that inner self-laceration of nature, that wheel of initial birth spinning about itself as if mad, and the terrible forces of the annular drive operating within this wheel, are depicted in other frightful splendors of the primeval customs of polytheistic worship by acts of self-flaying rage. One such act was auto-castration (which was done in order to [338] express either the unbearable quality of the oppressive force or its cessation as a procreative potency).<sup>116</sup> There was also the carrying about of the dismembered parts of a lacerated God, or the insensate, raving dances, or the shocking procession of the mother of all gods on the carriage with iron wheels, accompanied by the din of a coarse music that is partly deafening and partly lacerating. For nothing is more similar to that inner madness than music, which, through the incessant eccentric relinquishing and re-attracting of tones, most clearly imitates that primordial movement. Music itself is a turning wheel that, going out from a single point, always, through all excesses, spins back again to the beginning.

That the self-lacerating madness is still now what is innermost in all things is the greatest attestation of this description. Only when it is governed and, so to speak, verified [*zugutgesprochen*], through the light of a higher intellect, is it the real force of nature and of all its products. Since Aristotle it is even customary to say of people that nothing great can be accomplished without a touch of madness. In place of this, we would like to say: nothing great can be accomplished without a constant solicitation of madness, which should always be overcome, but should never be utterly lacking. One might do well to assess people as follows. One could say that there is a kind of person in which there is no madness whatsoever. These would be the uncreative people incapable of procreation, the ones that call themselves sober spirits. These are the so-called intellectuals [*Verstandesmenschen*] whose works and deeds are nothing but cold intellectual works and intellectual deeds. Some people in philosophy have misunderstood this expression in utterly strange ways. For because they heard it said of intellectuals that they are, so to speak, low and inferior, and because they themselves did not want to be like this, they good-naturedly opposed reason [*Vernunft*] to intellect instead of opposing reason to madness. But where there is no madness, there is also certainly no proper, active, living intellect (and consequently there is just the dead intellect, dead intellectuals). For in what does the intellect prove itself than in the coping with and governance and regulation of madness? Hence, the utter lack of [339] madness leads to another extreme, to imbecility (idiocy), which is an absolute lack of all madness. But there are two other kinds of persons in which there really is madness. There is one kind of person that governs madness and precisely in

this overwhelming shows the highest force of the intellect. The other kind of person is governed by madness and is someone who really is mad. One cannot say, strictly speaking, that madness originates in them. It only comes forth as something that is always there (for without continuous solicitation of it, there would be no consciousness) and that is not now suppressed and governed by a higher force.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE DOCTRINE OF PANTHEISM DEVELOPED HERE

### *The necessity of a higher realism Spinoza; Fichte and the Philosophy of Nature*

In the description of that primordial state, we just focused on the universal fate of a nature that evolves itself out of its own powers and utterly for itself. For a person helps another person and even God helps a person. But nothing can help the first nature in its terrible loneliness. It must struggle through this state alone and for itself.

Hence, this would be the description, albeit a weak one, of that primordial state of the totality and unity. Now, those who have recently talked so much about pantheism may now see what it really is.<sup>117</sup> For most people who speak of the One and the Many only see the Many therein. They have not even once noticed that there is a One, a subject, therein. But by the Many they understand that selfless totality that the initial nature is. This group also includes those who eternally reiterate the assurance of the harmony and wonderfully blessed unity of the cosmos, something that already long ago became a burden to any sensible person. Both groups would no doubt find real pantheism to be horrifying. But were they capable of penetrating the exterior surface of things, they would see that the true prime matter of all life and existence is precisely what is horrifying.

But others find the true archetype of pantheism in the doctrine of Spinoza. Spinoza deserves serious consideration. Far be it from us to deny in Spinoza that for which he was our teacher and predecessor. Perhaps, of all the modern philosophers, there was in Spinoza a [340] dark feeling of that primordial time of which we have attempted to conceptualize so precisely.

Spinoza knows that powerful balance of the primordial forces that he opposes to one another as the extended primordial force (hence, no doubt originally contracting?) and the thinking primordial force (no doubt, on account of the antithesis, extending, expanding?). But he only knows the balance, but not the conflict that emerges out of the equipollence. Both forces are juxtaposed in inactivity, without reciprocal excitation or intensification. Hence, the duality is

lost in favor of the unity. Consequently, his substance, or the common being of both essences, persists in an eternal, immobile, inactive parity. Again, the unity is itself a pure Being that never transfigures itself into that which has being and never actively (*in actu*) comes forth. Because of the assumed antithesis, he can only be regarded as a realist, although he is this in a higher sense than Leibniz is an idealist. Instead of the living conflict between the unity and duality of both the so-called attributes and substance being the main object, Spinoza only occupies himself with them as both opposed, indeed, with each for itself, without their unity coming to language as the active, living copula of both substance and attribute. Hence the lack of life and progression in his system.

Have those who thought that they could really compare the unity maintained by us with the Spinozistic unity never even noticed the concept of potencies, which already includes the concept of progression and movement within it?<sup>118</sup>

Yet if one considers the camps into which philosophy has severed itself before and after Spinoza, and how all concepts have fallen apart, one cannot avoid discerning in Spinoza the only heir to true science in all of modernity. For this reason, it was no wonder that each new powerful movement first had to go back to Spinoza and again had to proceed from him.

Descartes, the founder of modern philosophy, lacerated the world into body and spirit and hence, the unity was lost in favor of duality. [341] Spinoza had unified them into a single, albeit dead, substance and had lost duality in favor of unity. After this, if unity and duality themselves were not brought into a living antithesis and thereby again brought to unity, philosophy, with each step, had to find itself more and more in one-sidedness. It would do so until in our time it arrived at two diverging and ultimate directions that admitted of no further analysis.

Leibniz was anti-dualist in a completely different sense than Spinoza. He was the first to undertake the utter demolition of Being and to transform everything into representation, so that even God was just the highest power of representation [*Vorstellkraft*] of the cosmos. Leibniz had a unity, but it was not a two-sided unity. Rather it was just a one-sided unity. While at the same time, he still retained the entire content of the earlier systems in what alone remained of the Ideal, insofar as he denied the actual existence of bodies as such, yet still let them remain as a power of representation that is independent of our knowing and thinking.

In the history of science, hylozoism, especially that of Giordano Bruno, which was resurrected at just about this same time, may be viewed as identical to the first appearance of Idealism, Leibnizian Intellectualism. Like Leibniz, it, too, just retained a single aspect of Spinoza's duality, albeit the opposite aspect. However, to the extent that hylozoism viewed matter as in itself living, something spiritual was at least conceived under or in this Being.

But spirit could not remain in the direction that the spirit of this modern age had taken at one time. For the analysis was to be driven still further. There was still something spiritual, an inner life, that hylozoism left alone in Being, in matter. It still remained to transform matter into something absolutely dead, into mere exteriority without any interiority, into a mere conglomeration of parts that again were distinguished by nothing interior but rather by mere figure. And living nature, thinking, and all of the mechanics of human concepts, feelings, and actions, were to be derived from this kind of matter. This was a doctrine in which [342] the people who hatched it laid down the truest and most telling expression of themselves.

Another direction remained: to withdraw from the Ideal, which intellectualism had left alone, the Real that had once been conceived under the Ideal. According to Leibniz, matter, bodies, were indeed confused, but they were still living and independent powers of representation. Why this excess if everything is first of all just a power of representation? Why not satisfy oneself with the power of representation with which we are immediately certain, that is, with the human power of representation? No doubt, when German idealism emerged in its highest intensification with Fichte, the fundamental thought of the I, that is, of a living unity of that which has being and Being, aroused the hope of an elevated Spinozism that led to what is vital. But that the spirit of the age would have it differently was expressed all too quickly in a manifest way audible to the people. Only the person or the human race [*Geschlecht*] is there, namely as the power of representation.

However, this idealism that has appeared among us is just the expressed mystery of the entire direction that has been for a long time more and more prevailing in other sciences, in the arts, and in public life. What was the endeavor of all modern theology other than a gradual idealization and emptying of Christianity? Character, competence, and force are getting less and less in both life and public opinion, but so-called "humanity," for which the above qualities would have to serve as ground, counted for everything. Likewise, this age could only avail itself of a God from whose concept all power and force had been removed. This is a God whose highest force or expression of life consists in thinking or knowing and which, besides this, is nothing but an empty schematizing of itself. This is a world that is still just an image, nay, an image of an image, a nothing of nothing, a shadow of a shadow. These are people who are nothing but images, just dreams of shadows. This is a people that, in the good-natured endeavor toward so-called Enlightenment, really arrived at the dissolution of everything in itself into thoughts. But, along with the darkness, they lost all might and that (let the right word stand here) [343] barbaric principle that, when overcome but not annihilated, is the foundation of all greatness and beauty. In the way that we saw them all together, these are all no doubt the necessarily simultaneous phenomena.

How charitable it is to know a principle amid the motility and slackness of thinking that is neither to be dissolved by the *menstruum*<sup>119</sup> of the sharpest concept nor to go up in smoke in the fire of spiritual thinking! Without this principle which resists thinking, the world would actually already be dissolved into nothing. Only this insuperable center preserves the world against the storms of the never-resting spirit. In fact, this principle is the eternal force of God. In the first existence, there must be a principle that resists revelation, for only such a principle can become the ground of revelation. If there is a force that effects a revelation, must there not also be a force that counteracts it? How else would there be freedom? An irrational principle is at work in the first existence which resists confrontation and which is hence, contrary to the creature. This principle is the real might in God, just as in the supreme gravity of tragedy it is Might and Violence, servants of Zeus, that chain the philanthropic Prometheus to the crag around the roaring sea.<sup>120</sup> It is necessary to acknowledge this as the personality of God, as the Being in itself and for itself of God. Already in the language of ancient philosophy, personality is explained as the ultimate act or the ultimate potency by which an intelligent being exists in an incommunicable fashion. This is the principle that, instead of confusing God with the creature, as was believed, eternally divides God from the creature. Everything can be communicated to the creature except for one thing. The creature cannot have the immortal ground of life in itself. The creature cannot be of and through itself.

It cannot be said that such a principle would be unworthy of the divine nature in itself. This is the principle by dint of which God is He Himself as He Himself, the unique one, the one cut off from everything else. That this principle as an active principle would be unworthy of the divine nature contains a false presupposition. For as an active principle, it precedes the principle of the existing God. In existing, this active principle is overcome. But were it ever to emerge [344] into act, then it would first have to be settled whether this was through the divine will.

If one paid attention to its greater age, then Realism undoubtedly has the advantage over Idealism. Whoever does not acknowledge the priority of Realism wants evolution without the involution that preceded it. They want the bloom and the fruit that comes from it without the hard covering that enclosed it. Just as *Being* is the force and the might of the eternal itself, Realism is the force and might of every philosophical system. And it is likewise valid in this connection that the *fear* of God is the beginning of wisdom.<sup>121</sup>

Every single system acknowledges that the force of contraction is the real and actual beginning of every thing. The greatest glory of development is not expected from what easily unfolds. It is expected from what has been excluded and which only decides to unfold with opposition. Yet many do not want to acknowledge that ancient and holy force of Being and they would like to banish it straightaway from the beginning, before it, overcome in itself, gives way to Love.

What is valid for Realism is also valid for Pantheism. Just as Realism had the advantage of seniority over all other views up until now, the incontestable priority befits pantheism before it befits its antithesis, idealism and dualism. We could say that pantheism is the earlier and older system in divine revelation itself. But this pantheistic system of primeval times, this primordial state of universal unity and universal closure, is precisely what is ever more to be repressed and posited as past by the following time.

## GERMAN-ENGLISH LEXICON

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Abbildung, die depiction  
 Abdruck, der imprint  
 Abgezogenheit, die withdrawal  
 Abgrund, der abyss  
 Abscheu, der abjection  
 abschließen, sich to isolate itself  
 Absonderung, die dislocation  
 Abstoßung, die repulsion [as opposed to attraction or *Anziehung*]  
 aktivieren to activate [*betätigen*, to actuate]  
 Alleinheitslehre, die the doctrine of pantheism  
 Allheit, die totality [the *πάν* of *ἐν καὶ πάν*]  
 Andere, das the Other  
 Angst, die anxiety  
 Anlage, die structure  
 Antrieb, der impetus  
 Anziehung, die attraction, drawing toward [as opposed to repulsion or *Abstoßung*]  
 Äquipollenz, die equipollence [equivalence]  
 äquipotent equipotent [equivalent]  
 aufdrängen, sich to impose itself  
 aufheben to sublimate [to bring under a limit, sublate]  
 Auflösung, die dissolution  
 aufschließen to unlock, to disclose  
 Ausbildung, die cultivation, development  
 Ausbreitung, die outstretching, expansion



Ausdehnung, die extension [*extensio*], expansion  
 auseinanderlegen to set apart  
 Auseinandersetzung, die confrontation, setting into opposition  
 Auseinanderwollen, das the conation to separate  
 Ausfluß, der emanation  
 ausschließen to exclude, to lock out  
 Außer-sich-gesetzt-werden, das being posited outside of oneself [*Ekstase*, ecstasy]  
 Aussprechende, das the pronouncing, the expressive  
 Aussprechliche, das the pronounceable, the expressible, the effable  
 Band, das the link, the copula  
 begeistern to inspirit  
 Begierde, die craving, desire [*Sehnsucht*]  
 Begriff, der concept  
 Bekräftigung, die reinforcement  
 bemächtigen to bring something under one's power  
 Bemühung, die effort [*nisus*, *die Bestrebung*]  
 Beraubung, die privation [*privatio*, *steresis*]  
 Beruhigung, die soothing  
 Beschränkung, die delimitation  
 Beschlossenheit, die containment [outward finitude]  
 beseelen to animate, to ensoul  
 Besonnenheit, die levelheadedness, considerateness  
 Bestand, der continuance  
 Bestehen, das existence  
 Bestreben, das endeavor [in the sense of effort, *nisus*, *die Bemühung*]  
 betätigen to actuate [*aktivieren*, activate]  
 Bewußtlosigkeit, die unconsciousness  
 Bewußtseyn, das consciousness, being conscious  
 Bewußtwerden, das the dawning of consciousness  
 Bezauberung, die bewitchment  
 Bezug, der relationship [*das Verhältnis*]  
 Bild, das image  
 Bildlichkeit, die figurativeness  
 Bildung, die formation  
 Blick, der glimpse

Blödsinn, der imbecility  
 contrahieren to contract [*zusammenziehen*] [from the Latin for "drawing together" and "diminishing"]  
 darstellen to present  
 Darstellung, die presentation  
 Dasein, das (present) existence [to be there]  
 Dauer, die duration  
 Doppelheit, die doubling  
 Drang, der urge  
 Drangsal, die the distress of pining  
 Dunstkreis, der nebula [of a comet; the gases (the coma), which surround the nucleus]  
 Egoität, die egoity [neologism for the force of selfhood, *das In-sich-gesetzt-seyn*]  
 Eigenheit, die being its own, ipseity  
 eigentlich actual, real, proper, authentic  
 eigentümlich specific to itself, characteristic  
 einerlei one and the same, of the same kind  
 Einerleiheit, die identity, being one and the same  
 Einheit, die unity [the *ἓν* of *ἓν καὶ πᾶν*]  
 einschließen to contract, to include  
 Einschließung, die contraction [involution, *die Einwicklung*]  
 Einwicklung, die involution [*die Involution*, *die Einschließung*, becoming implicit, the opposite of *Entwicklung*], *einziehen*, to contract, to draw in  
 empfinden to sense, to feel [to intuit sensuously]  
 empfindlich sensate  
 Empfindung, die sensation, feeling, affect  
 Endlichkeit, die finitude  
 Engel des Angesichts, der the angel of the countenance  
 Entartung, die degeneracy  
 Entäußerung, die externalization through self-relinquishment [and thereby self-actualization]  
 Entformung, die deformation [disorganization]  
 Entgegensetzung, die opposition, the setting or positing in opposition with one another  
 sich entscheiden to decide [*decidere*: to cut off, to cut away, to cut short, to terminate]  
 Entscheidung, die decision [the cutting off, the sundering]  
 Entschliessung, die resolution [dis-closing or opening up decisively]  
 Entschluß, der decision

**entstehen** to emerge (into being), to originate  
**Entstehung, die** genesis, emergence into being  
**entstellen** to distort  
**entstreben** to strive to get away  
**entwerden** to become away, to move away from  
**Entwicklung, die** development, evolution, growth [becoming explicit] [as opposed to *Einwicklung*]  
**Entzückung, die** ecstasy, rapture  
**Entzweiung, die** bifurcation [a doubling into mutually oppositional forces]  
**Erinnerung, die** recollection  
**erkennen** to discern, to know  
**Erkenntnis, die** knowledge  
**Erleuchtung, die** enlightenment [inspiration]  
**erscheinen** to appear  
**Erzeugung, die** generation [giving birth]  
**sich festsetzen** to take root, to place themselves fast  
**Folge, die** succession  
**Fortgang, der** course, progression  
**Fortschreitung, die** progression  
**Freiwilligkeit, die** voluntarism  
**fremd** alien  
**Fülle, die** plenitude  
**Ganze, das** the whole [the *Wesen* as both *Einheit* and *Allheit*, *ἐν καὶ πᾶν*, the system of forces]  
**Gebilde, das** creation, form, construction, organization, idol  
**Gegenbild, das** ectype [εἰκτύπος- out of a prior type, hence in relationship to the *Vorbild* or prototype]  
**gegenbildlich** ectypal  
**Gegensatz, der** the antithesis, the antipodal positioning [that which has been set forth oppositionally, the counterproposition]  
**Gegenwurf, der** counterprojection  
**Geist, der** spirit  
**Geistigkeit, die** spirituality  
**Gelassenheit, die** releasement [composure]  
**Gemütkräfte, die** the powers of the mind  
**Geschiedenheit, die** state of divorce

**Gesetz, das** law [that which has been posited]  
**Gesicht, das** vision [in the sense of "having a vision"]  
**Gestalt, die** form, figure [τύπος, εἶδος]  
**Gestaltung, die** configuration [creation]  
**Gewalt, die** power, violence  
**das Gleichgültige** indifference, equivalence [of equal validity and potency][*Indifferenz*]  
**Gleichheit, die** parity  
**Gleichnamigkeit, die** common denomination  
**Gleichnis, das** allegory  
**Gleichwichtigkeit, die** equivalence [having equal potency or valence, equipollence]  
**Glied, das** part, member  
**Gliederung, die** organization  
**Gottheit, die** the Godhead  
**Grund, der** ground, reason  
**Grundlage, die** foundation [*Unterlage, Subjekt*]  
**Grundsatz, der** principle  
**Grundstoff, der** prime matter  
**Heilkraft, die** the healing force  
**hemmen** to inhibit  
**Hemmung, die** inhibition  
**Herrlichkeit, die** glory, lordship  
**Hervorbringung, die** production [a bringing forth]  
**Hoheit, die** sovereignty  
**Huld, die** grace  
**Ineinsbildung, die** eisemplasy [Coleridge's coinage; the esemplastic, the *εἰς ἐν πλάττειν*, *die Einbildungskraft*]  
**Inexistenz, die** inexistence  
**Innigkeit, die** interiority  
**In-sich-gesetzt-seyn, das** being posited in oneself [*Seinheit, Selbstheit*, ipseity, *Egoität*]  
**Involution, die** involution [*die Einwicklung, die Einschließung*]  
**Keim, der** embryo  
**Kette, die** concatenation  
**Können, das** capacity [*Kraft, Macht*]  
**Kraft, die** force, power [*potentia, δύναμις*]  
**Krisis, die** crisis [κρίσις, cision, *Scheidung*]

Kunde, die tidings  
 Leiblichkeit, die corporeality  
 leiden to be passive, to undergo, to suffer [in contrast to active or effective]  
 Lichtwesen, das the being of light  
 Liebe, die Love  
 Lust, die desire  
 Macht, die power [*Kraft, Potenz*]  
 Magic, die magic [*der Zauber*]  
 Mannigfaltigkeit, die the manifold, diversity  
 Maß, das the standard, measure  
 Mensch, der person  
 Milde, die leniency  
 Nachahmung, die imitation [*imitatio, μίμησις*]  
 Nachbild, das copy  
 Natur, die nature  
 Neigung, die inclination  
 nicht Seyende, das what does not have being  
 nicht seyend not having being  
 nichtseyend non-being  
 Nichtwollen, das no conation  
 Offenbarung, die revelation  
 Ort, der place  
 Persönlichkeit, die personality  
 Potenz, die potency [that which has being in each single time] [*Kraft, Macht, Stärke*]  
 Prinzip, das principle [an explicit potency] [*Grundsatz, principium, ἀρχή*]  
 Sache, die the matter  
 Sanftmut, die gentleness  
 Satz, der proposition, principle  
 Schärfe, die severity  
 Schauen, das vision  
 Scheidung, die cision [the cut, *Krisis*]  
 Schein, der semblance  
 Scheinbild, das simulacrum [apparent image]  
 Scheu, die awe  
 Schranke, die limit

schweben to waver  
 Seele, die soul  
 seelenartig soul-like  
 Sehnsucht, die yearning [*Verlangen*]  
 Seinheit, die ipseity [*Selbstheit, das In-sich-Seyn*]  
 Selbstheit, die selfhood [*das In-sich-Seyn, ipseity, egoity*]  
 setzen to posit, to place, to put forth  
 seyend having being  
 Seyende als das Seyende that which has being as that which has being, that which has being as such, [having being qua having being]  
 seyend zu seyn to be that which has being  
 Seyn (das) Being  
 Seynkönnen, das the capacity to be  
 Sinn, der sense, meaning  
 sittlich ethical, moral [in the strict sense of mores, customs]  
 Sittlichkeit, die morality [in the strict sense of mores, customs]  
 Spannung, die tension, excitement  
 Spur, die trace  
 Staffel, die echelon  
 Stärke, die might [in the sense of power, force]  
 Stelle, die locus  
 Stimmung, die mood  
 Stockung, die a stoppage [a clotting or congestion of the circulation]  
 Streit, der struggle  
 Strenge, die stringency  
 Stufenfolge, die graduated process  
 stufenweise piecemeal, graduated  
 Subjekt, das subject [*die Unterlage*, that which is cast or placed—in the sense of the Latin *jacere*—underneath; hence in the sense of *subjectum*, that which has been subjugated, captured]  
 Suchen, das striving  
 Sucht, die obsession  
 Sympathie, die sympathy  
 Technicismus, der technicity  
 That, die act, deed [*actus*]  
 Tinktur, die tincture

Trieb, der drive  
 Turgor, der turgor [turgidity, *Turgescenz*, swelling]  
 Typus, der figure [Latin for "figure, image"]  
 Übergang, der transition  
 überschwenglich exuberantly  
 Überseyende, das that which is beyond having being [τὸ ὑπερόν]  
 Uhrwerk, das clockwork  
 umgekehrt inverted [turned the other way around]  
 Umlauf, der circulation  
 Umtrieb, der annular drive  
 Unaussprechlichkeit, die inexpressibility, ineffability  
 Unbedingte, das the unconditioned, the absolute  
 Unbeslossenheit, die uncontainment [lack of external finitude]  
 unbeschränkt absolute, unlimited  
 Unbeweglichkeit, die immovability  
 Unentschiedenheit, die indecisiveness  
 Ungeschiedenheit, die state of nondivorce  
 Unleidlichkeit, die impassivity, intolerance  
 Unmut, der discontent  
 Unterlage, die substratum [*Subjekt*, basis, ὑποκειμένων]  
 Unterscheidung, die differentiation  
 Unterschied, der differentiation, distinction  
 unvernünftig disabled  
 Unverständliche, das the incomprehensible  
 unvordenklich unprethinkable  
 Unwirksamkeit, die inactivity (ineffectiveness)  
 Uranfang, der primordial beginning  
 Urbild, das archetype  
 Urdrang, der primordial urge  
 Urkunde die document  
 Urlebendige, das what is primordially living  
 Urquelle, die primordial source  
 Urstoff, der prime matter [*prima materia*]  
 Urteil, das judgment

Urthat, die primordial act  
 Urwesen, das primordial being  
 verborgen hidden, concealed  
 verdrängen to repress, to displace  
 Verdrossenheit, die listlessness  
 Vergangenheit, die the past  
 vergeisten to spiritualize  
 Verhältnis, das relationship, proportion [*der Bezug*]  
 Verhängnis, das grim fate  
 Verkehr, der circulation  
 verkehrt inverted, topsy-turvy  
 Verklärung, die transfiguration  
 verkörpern to incarnate, to embody  
 Verlangen, das longing, pining, desire [*Sehnsucht*]  
 verleblichen to embody [the assumption of form]  
 Vermögen, das faculty  
 Verneinung, die negation  
 Vernunft, die reason  
 verschieben to defer  
 Verschließung, die restriction, closing off  
 Verslossenheit, die closure  
 versetzen transpose  
 Versöhnung, die reconciliation  
 Verstand, der intellect, comprehension  
 verwandeln transform  
 Verwirklichung, die actualization  
 Vierzahl, die the fourfold, the *tetractys* [of Pythagoras]  
 Vorbild, das prototype [in relationship to what follows from it, namely, the *Gegenbild* or ectype]  
 vorhanden available, existing  
 Vorstellungskraft, die power of representation  
 Vorstellung, die representation  
 Vorwurf, der project  
 Vorzeit, die prehistoric time

**Weltall, das** the cosmos [the universe]  
**Weltbau, der** the structure of the universe  
**Weltganze, das** holism, the universe  
**Welt-Geist, der** the world spirit  
**Weltkörper, der** celestial body  
**Wesen, das** the being, essence [*ens*]  
**Wesenheit, die** essentiality  
**Wesenlichkeit, die** essentiality  
**Widerspiel, das** the counterplay  
**Widerstreit, der** conflict  
**widerwärtig** averse  
**Widerwärtigkeit, die** loathing, aversion  
**Widerwille, der** revulsion  
**Wiederbewußtwerden, das** anamnesis [becoming conscious again]  
**Wiederholung, die** repetition [*Nachahmung, imitatio, μιμησις*]  
**wirken** to be active, to effect  
**Wirklichkeit, die** reality  
**Wirkung, die** effect, act [something done]  
**Wirkungslosigkeit, die** inefficacy, inactivity  
**Wissenschaft, die** science, knowledge [*scientia*]  
**Wollen, das** conation [wanting]  
**Wollust, die** voluptuousness [*voluptas*]  
**Wonne, die** bliss  
**Wunder, der** miracle  
**Würde, die** dignity  
**Zauber, der** magic [*die Magie*]  
**zerreißen** to lacerate, to tear to pieces  
**zersetzen** to decompose  
**zum Seyenden des Seyns** to that which of Being has being  
**zumal** at the same time [*gleichzeitig, auf einmal*]  
**Zuneigung, die** affection [inclination toward x]  
**Zusammengehörigkeit, die** belonging together [of two oppositional forces in a third]  
**Zusammenhang, der** connection, interrelation  
**zusammennehmen** to gather together  
**Zusammenseyn, das** the togetherness of being

**Zusammenziehung, die** contraction, pulling together [*Contrahiren, Einwicklung, Einschließung*]  
**Zwang, der** compulsion [necessary force]  
**zweckmässig** suitable  
**zweierlei** of two different kinds  
**Zweiheit, die** duality

## ENGLISH-GERMAN LEXICON

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abjection	<i>Abscheu, der</i>
absolute,	<i>unbedingt, unbeschränkt,</i>
abyss	<i>Abgrund, der</i>
act	<i>Wirkung, die; actus; That, die</i>
activate, to	<i>aktivieren</i>
act, to	<i>wirken</i>
actual	<i>wirklich</i>
actuality	<i>Wirklichkeit, die</i>
actualization	<i>Verwirklichung, die</i>
actuate, to	<i>betätigen</i>
alien	<i>fremd</i>
allegory	<i>Gleichnis, das</i>
anamnesis	<i>Wiederbewußtwerden, das</i>
angel of the countenance, the	<i>Engel des Angesichts, der</i>
animate	<i>beseelen</i>
annular drive	<i>Umtrieb, der</i>
antithesis	<i>Gegensatz, der</i>
anxiety	<i>Angst, die</i>
appear, to	<i>erscheinen</i>
archetype	<i>Urbild, das</i>
at the same time	<i>zumal, gleichzeitig</i>
attraction	<i>Anziehung, die</i>
available	<i>vorhanden</i>
averse	<i>widerwärtig</i>

aversion *Widerwärtigkeit, die*  
 awe *Scheu, die*  
 Being *Seyn, das*  
 being, a *Wesen, das*  
 being, the *Wesen, das*  
 bewitchment *Bezauberung, die*  
 bifurcation *Entzweiung, die*  
 bliss *Wonne, die*  
 bring something under one's own power, to *bemächtigen*  
 capacity *Können, das*  
 capacity to be, the *Seynkönnen, das*  
 celestial body *Weltkörper, der*  
 circulation *Verkehr, der; Umlauf, der*  
 cision *Scheidung, die*  
 clockwork *Uhrwerk, das*  
 closure *Verschlossenheit, die*  
 common denomination *Gleichnamigkeit, die*  
 compulsion *Zwang, der*  
 conation *Wollen, das*  
 conation to separate, the *Auseinanderwollen, das*  
 concatenation *Kette, die*  
 concealed *verborgen*  
 concept *Begriff, der*  
 configuration *Gestaltung, die*  
 conflict *Widerstreit, der*  
 confrontation *Auseinandersetzung, die*  
 connection *Zusammenhang, der*  
 consciousness *Bewußtseyn, das*  
 consciousness, the dawning of *Bewußtwerden, das*  
 containment *Beschlossenheit, die*  
 continuance *Bestand, der*  
 contract, to *contrahiren, einziehen, einschließen, zusammenziehen*  
 contraction *Zusammenziehung, die; Einschließung, die*  
 copula *Band, das*  
 copy *Nachbild, das*

corporeality *Leiblichkeit, die*  
 cosmos, the *Weltall, das*  
 counter-projection *Gegenwurf, der*  
 counterplay, the *Widerspiel, das*  
 course *Fortgang, der*  
 craving *Begierde, die*  
 creation *Gebilde, das; Erschaffung, die*  
 crisis *Krisis, die*  
 cultivation *Ausbildung, die*  
 decide, to *sich entscheiden*  
 decision *Entscheidung, die; Entschluß, der*  
 decompose *zersetzen*  
 deed *That, die*  
 deformation *Entformung, die*  
 degeneracy *Entartung, die*  
 delimitation *Beschränkung, die*  
 depiction *Abbildung, die*  
 desire *Verlangen, das; Begierde, die*  
 development *Entwicklung, die*  
 differentiation *Unterschied, der; Unterscheidung, die*  
 dignity *Würde, die*  
 disabled *unvermögend*  
 discern *erkennen*  
 discontent *Unmut, der*  
 dislocation *Absonderung, die*  
 dissolution *Auflösung, die*  
 distinction *Unterschied, der*  
 distort, to *entstellen*  
 distress of pining, the *Drangsal, die*  
 diversity *Mannigfaltigkeit, die*  
 divorce, state of *Geschiedenheit, die*  
 document *Urkunde, die*  
 doubling *Doppelheit, die*  
 draw in *einziehen*  
 drive *Trieb, der*



duality *Zweiheit, die*  
 duration *Dauer, die*  
 echelon *Staffel, die*  
 ecstasy *Entzückung, die*  
 ectypal *gegenbildlich*  
 ectype *Gegenbild, das*  
 effable, the *Aussprechliche, das*  
 effect *Wirkung, die*  
 effective, to be *wirken*  
 effort *Bemühung, die*  
 egoity *Egoität, die*  
 eisemplasy *Ineinsbildung, die*  
 emanation *Ausfluß, der*  
 embody, to *verleiblichen, verkörpern*  
 embryo *Keim, der*  
 emerge (into being), to *entstehen*  
 endeavor *Bestreben, das*  
 ensoul, to *beseelen*  
 equipollence *Äquipollenz, die*  
 equipotent *äquipotent*  
 equivalence *Gleichwichtigkeit, die; Indifferenz, die*  
 essentiality *Wesenlichkeit, die; Wesenheit, die*  
 ethical *sittlich*  
 evolution *Entwicklung, die*  
 exclude *ausschließen*  
 existence (present) *Dasein, das; Existenz, die; Bestehen, das*  
 expansion *Ausdehnung, die*  
 expressible *Aussprechliche, das*  
 expressive, the *Aussprechende, das*  
 extension *Ausdehnung, die*  
 exuberantly *überschwenglich*  
 faculty *Vermögen, das*  
 figurativeness *Bildlichkeit, die*  
 figure *Typus, der; Gestalt, die*  
 finitude *Endlichkeit, die*

force *Kraft, die*  
 form *Gestalt, die; Form, die; Gebilde, das*  
 formation *Bildung, die*  
 foundation *Grundlage, die*  
 fourfold, the *Vierzahl, die*  
 gather together, to *zusammennehmen*  
 generation (procreation) *Erzeugung, die*  
 genesis *Entstehung, die*  
 gentleness *Sanftmut, die*  
 glimpse *Blick, der*  
 glory *Herrlichkeit, die*  
 Godhead, the *Gotttheit, die*  
 grace *Huld, die*  
 graduated process *Stufenfolge, die*  
 grim fate *Verhängnis, das*  
 ground *Grund, der*  
 healing force, the *Heilkraft, die*  
 hidden *verborgen*  
 holism *Weltganze, das*  
 image *Bild, das*  
 imitation *Nachahmung, die*  
 impassivity *Unleidlichkeit, die*  
 impetus *Antrieb, der*  
 impose itself, to *aufdrängen, sich*  
 imprint *Abdruck, der*  
 inactivity *Unwirksamkeit, die; Wirkungslosigkeit, die*  
 incarnate, to *verkörpern*  
 inclination *Neigung, die*  
 indecisiveness *Unentschiedenheit, die*  
 indifference *das Gleichgültige; Indifferenz, die*  
 ineffability *Unaussprechlichkeit, die*  
 inefficacy *Wirkungslosigkeit, die*  
 inexistence *Inexistenz, die*  
 inexpressibility *Unaussprechlichkeit, die*  
 inhibit, to *hemmen*

inhibition *Hemmung, die*  
 inspire, to *begeistern*  
 intellect *Verstand, der*  
 interiority *Innigkeit, die*  
 interrelation *Zusammenhang, der*  
 involution *Involution, die; Einwicklung, die*  
 ipseity *Seinheit, die; Eigenheit, die*  
 judgment *Urteil, das*  
 knowledge *Erkenntnis, die*  
 law *Gesetz, das*  
 lacerate *zerreißen*  
 leniency *Milde, die*  
 levelheadedness *Besonnenheit, die*  
 limit *Schranke, die*  
 link *Band, das*  
 loathing *Widerwärtigkeit, die*  
 locus *Stelle, die*  
 longing; pining; desire *Verlangen, das*  
 Love *Liebe, die*  
 magic *Magie, die; Zauber, der*  
 manifold, the *Mannigfaltigkeit, die*  
 might *Stärke, die*  
 mood *Stimmung, die*  
 morality *Sittlichkeit, die*  
 nature *Natur, die*  
 negation *Verneinung, die*  
 no conation *Nichtwollen, das*  
 obsession *Sucht, die*  
 one and the same *einerlei*  
 Other, the *Andere, das*  
 pantheism, the doctrine of *Alleinheitslehre, die*  
 parity *Gleichheit, die*  
 person *Mensch, der*  
 personality *Persönlichkeit, die*  
 piecemeal *stufenweise*

pining *Verlangen, das*  
 place *Ort, der*  
 posit, to *setzen*  
 potency *Potenz, die*  
 power *Macht, die*  
 present, to *darstellen*  
 presentation *Darstellung, die*  
 prime matter *Urstoff, der*  
 primordial being, the *Urwesen, das*  
 primordially living, what is *Urlebendige, das*  
 principle *Grundsatz, der; Prinzip, das*  
 privation *Beraubung, die (στέρησις)*  
 production *Hervorbringung, die; Produktion, die*  
 progression *Fortschreitung, die; Fortgang, der*  
 project *Vorwurf, der*  
 proposition *Satz, der*  
 prototype *Vorbild, das*  
 rapture *Entzückung, die*  
 reason *Vernunft, die*  
 reason, the *Grund, der*  
 recollection *Erinnerung, die*  
 reconciliation *Versöhnung, die*  
 reinforcement *Bekräftigung, die*  
 relationship *Bezug, der; Verhältnis, das*  
 releasement *Gelassenheit, die*  
 repetition *Wiederholung, die*  
 representation *Vorstellung, die*  
 repress *verdrängen*  
 repulsion *Abstoßung, die*  
 resolution *Entschliesßung, die*  
 restriction *Verschließung, die*  
 revelation *Offenbarung, die*  
 revulsion *Widerwille, der*  
 science *Wissenschaft, die*  
 selfhood *Selbstheit, die*

semblance *Schein, der*  
 sensate *empfindlich*  
 sensation *Empfindung, die*  
 sense, to *empfinden*  
 severity *Schärfe, die*  
 soothing *Beruhigung, die*  
 soul *Seele, die*  
 sovereignty *Hohheit, die*  
 spirit *Geist, der*  
 spirituality *Geistigkeit, die*  
 spiritualize *vergeistern*  
 standard *Maß, das*  
 state of nondivorce *Ungeschiedenheit, die*  
 stoppage *Stockung, die*  
 stringency *Strenge, die*  
 structure *Anlage, die*  
 structure of the universe, the *Weltbau, der*  
 struggle *Streit, der*  
 subject *Subjekt, das*  
 sublimate, to *aufheben*  
 substratum *Unterlage, die*  
 succession *Folge, die*  
 suitable *zweckmässig*  
 technicity *Technicismus, der*  
 tension *Spannung, die*  
 togetherness of being, the *Zusammenseyn, das*  
 totality *Allheit, die*  
 trace *Spur, die*  
 transfiguration *Verklärung, die*  
 transpose *versetzen*  
 turgor *Turgor, der*  
 two different kinds, of *zweierlei*  
 unconditioned, the *Unbedingte, das*  
 unconsciousness *Bewußtlosigkeit, die*  
 uncontainment *Ungeschlossenheit, die*

unprethinkable *unvordenklich*  
 urge *Drang, der*  
 violence *Gewalt, die*  
 vision *Gesicht, das; das Schauen*  
 voluntarism *Freiwilligkeit, die*  
 voluptuousness *Wollust, die*  
 waver, to *schweben*  
 what does not have being *nicht Seyend, das*  
 whole, the *Ganze, das*  
 withdrawal *Abgezogenheit, die*  
 world spirit, the *Welt-Geist, der*  
 yearning *Sehnsucht, die*

## APPENDIX: SCHELLING EDITIONS

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### I. STANDARD SCHELLING EDITIONS

*Ausgewählte Schriften*, six volumes. Edited by Manfred Frank. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985.

*Schellings Sämtliche Werke*. Edited by Schelling's son Karl Friedrich August Schelling. Stuttgart-Augsburg: J. G. Cotta, 1856–1861. (Reprinted by the Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft in Darmstadt.)

*Schellings Werke: Nach der Originalausgabe in neuer Anordnung*. Edited by Manfred Schröter. Munich: C. H. Beck. Printed twice: 1927–1959 and 1962–1971.

*Werke: Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe*. Edited by Hans Michael Baumgartner, Wilhelm G. Jacobs, Hermann Krings, Hermann Zeltner. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1976–present.

### II. INDIVIDUAL EDITIONS IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The following is a list, by no means exhaustive, of the works of Schelling available in English translation.

*Ages of the World (1813 draft)*. Translated by Judith Norman. In *The Abyss of Freedom/Ages of the World*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997.

*The Ages of the World (1815 draft)*. Translated by Frederick de Wolfe Bolman Jr. New York: Columbia University Press, 1942. (Reprinted: New York: AMS Press, 1967.)

*Bruno, or On the Natural and the Divine Principle of Things (1802)*. Translated by Michael Vater. Albany: The State University of New York Press, 1984.

*The Endgame of Idealism*. Translated by Thomas Pfau. Albany: The State University of New York Press, 1996. Includes *Die Stuttgarter Privatvorlesungen* (1810).

*Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature: An Introduction to the Study of this Science* (1797). Translated by Errol E. Harris and Peter Heath. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

*On Dante in Relation to Philosophy* (1803). Translated by Elizabeth Rubenstein and David Simpson. In *The Origins of Modern Critical Thought: German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism from Lessing to Hegel*. Edited by David Simpson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, 239–247.

*Of Human Freedom* (1809). There are two English translations. The first is by James Gutmann. La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1936. The second is by Priscilla Hayden-Roy. In *Philosophy of German Idealism*. Edited by Ernst Behler. New York: Continuum, 1987, 217–284.

*On the History of Modern Philosophy* (1827). Translated by Andrew Bowie. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

*On the Nature of Philosophy as Science* (1821). Translated by Marcus Weigelt. In *German Idealist Philosophy*. Edited with an Introduction by Rüdiger Bubner. London and New York: Penguin Books, 1997, 210–243.

*On University Studies* (1803). Translated by E. S. Morgan. Athens, Ohio: The University of Ohio Press, 1966.

*The Philosophy of Art* (1802–04). Edited and translated by Douglas Stott. *The Theory and History of Literature*, volume 58. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1989.

*The Philosophy of Art: An Oration on the Relation between the Plastic Arts and Nature* (1807). Translated by A. Johnson. London: John Chapman, 1845.

*Schelling's Treatise on "The Deities of Samothrace"* (1815). Translated and Introduced by R. F. Brown. Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977.

*The System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800). Translated by Peter Heath. Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 1978.

*The Unconditional in Human Knowledge: Four Early Essays (1794–1796)*. Translated by Fritz Marti. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1980.

## NOTES

### TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

1. Schelling, *Die Stuttgarter Privatvorlesungen* (1810), unedited version, annotated by Miklos Veto (Turin: Bottega d'Ersasmo, 1973), 216. Veto included the noteworthy entries from Schelling's 1810 *Tagebuch* as an appendix. Henceforth SP.

2. Cf. Manfred Schröter, "Die Urfassungen von Schellings *Weltaltern*," *Kritische Studien: Über Schelling und zur Kulturphilosophie* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1971), 89–102, as well as his foreword to *Die Weltalter Fragmente in den Urfassungen von 1811 und 1813* (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung), 1946, vii–xii. Henceforth WA.

3. *The Abyss of Freedom/Ages of the World* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997). Cf. also Zizek's *The Indivisible Remainder: An Essay on Schelling and Related Matters* (London and New York: Verso, 1996).

4. *The Ages of the World* (1815) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942). Reprinted: New York: AMS Press, 1967.

5. The standard pagination follows the original edition edited by Schelling's son (Stuttgart-Augsburg: J. G. Cotta, 1856–1861). It is preserved in the Schröter edition (*Schellings Werke: Nach der Original Ausgabe in neuer Anordnung* [Munich: C. H. Beck. Printed twice: 1927–1959 and 1962–1971]), the Manfred Frank selection (*Ausgewählte Schriften*, six volumes [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985]), as well as in the reprints by the Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft in Darmstadt.

6. For an introduction to Schelling's relevance to contemporary philosophy, cf. Andrew Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy: An Introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

7. Four years prior to the appearance of the *Phenomenology*, one finds the following line in a work by Schelling: "Most people see in the being of the absolute nothing but a pure night and are unable to know anything in it; it dwindles away for them into a mere negation of multiplicity" (I/4, 401). Karl Jaspers was among the first to point this out. Cf. Schelling: *Große und Verhängnis* (1955) (Munich: Piper, 1986), 302. After hearing from Hegel that he was criticizing a misreading of the intellectual intuition and not

Schelling himself, Schelling asked Hegel to state this in the next edition of the *Phenomenology*. The emendation never appeared.

8. "Brief über den Tod Carolines vom 2. Oktober, 1809," ed. Johann Ludwig Döderlein, *Kleine kommentierte Texte I* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1975).

9. *On University Studies*, translated by E. S. Morgan (Athens, Ohio: The Ohio University Press, 1966), 26.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Cf. the *Freiheitsschrift*, I/7, 363, in which the Word expresses light and darkness, vowel and consonant. The latter is in need of the former in order to be heard in the same way that darkness needs light to see itself and silence needs language to hear itself.

12. Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 105.

13. Schelling, *Philosophie der Offenbarung 1841/42*, second, expanded edition, edited and introduced by Manfred Frank (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1993), 115. Henceforth PO. The *italics* belong to Schelling.

14. *Initia Philosophiae Universae* (1820–21), edited with commentary by Horst Fuhrmans (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1969), 24. Henceforth IPU.

15. This comment was made regarding a criticism of Hegel in Schelling's 1832–33 lecture course at the University of Munich, *The Grounding of the Positive Philosophy* [*Grundlegung der positiven Philosophie: Münchener Vorlesung WS 1832/33 und SS 1833*, edited by Horst Fuhrmans (Bonn: H. Bouvier, 1962), 222]. The full quote reads: "What this [Hegel's] argument concerns, it could be conceded, is that everything is in the logical idea and therefore the meaningless [*das Sinnlose*] can exist nowhere. But 1) is a necessary question: Why is there meaning at all, why is there not meaninglessness instead of meaning? 2) The logical represents itself as the negative, as that without which nothing could exist—but as in the sensuous world, for example, where everything can be comprehended in measure and number, yet certainly still not for this reason is this the explanation of the world. The entire world, so to speak, lies caught in reason, but the question is: How did it come into this net? (Therefore there is still in the world something Other and something more than mere reason—even something that strives beyond these boundaries.)"

16. Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety: A Simple Psychologically Orienting Deliberation on the Dogmatic Issue of Hereditary Sin* (1844), edited and translated with Introduction and Notes by Reidar Thomte in collaboration with Albert B. Anderson (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), 88.

17. *Ibid.*, 89.

18. Cf. note no. 83.

19. This was already announced in the 1800 *System of Transcendental Idealism*. Force [*Kraft*] is the dynamic relationship between space (extensity) and time (intensity). It is "extensity determined through intensity [*Extensität bestimmt durch Intensität*]. For the intensity of a force can only be measured by the space in which it can expand without it becoming = 0." Hence, "time only becomes finite through space and space only becomes finite through time." "Intensity and Extensity are reciprocally determined by each other. The object is nothing but fixated, simply present, time, but time is fixated solely

and exclusively by space that is filled and the filling of space is determined solely and exclusively through the magnitude of time [*Zeitgröße*], which itself is not in space, but which is *extensione prior*." *System des transzendentalen Idealismus*, ed. Horst D. Brandt and Peter Müller (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1992), 137–138.

20. Wolfram Högbe made the link between *Die Weltalter* and Dante's *Divina Commedia*. "My thesis is now, said briefly, that in the end this trichotomy of the *Divina Commedia*, and also the quality of the three realms, remained structurally prototypical for the three conceived parts of *Die Weltalter*: The past corresponds to the *Inferno*, the present to the *Purgatorio*, and the future to the *Paradisio*. One could therefore in a certain sense designate *Die Weltalter* as the Divine Comedy of Time . . ." *Prädikation und Genesis: Metaphysik als Fundamentalheuristik im Ausgang von Schellings Die Weltalter* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), 31–32.

21. I/8, 345–424. There is an English translation: *Schelling's Treatise on "The Deities of Samothrace"*, translated and introduced by R. F. Brown (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977).

22. Cf. note no. 64, following.

23. Martin Heidegger, *Schellings Abhandlung Über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit (1809)* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1971), 15. *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, translated by Joan Stambaugh (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985), 13.

24. *The Accursed Share*, translated by Robert Hurley (New York: Zone Books, 1991). *La part maudite* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1967). Henceforth PM.

25. Zizek, *op. cit.*, 15.

26. Leibniz's phrase in the *Monadology* was "*tout est plein*."

27. *Verstellen* is not only to disguise, as in one's voice, but it also suggests obstruction or blocking (freedom restrictively disguised as necessity or silence restrictively disguised as word) as well as displacement. Divine irony is divine *Verstellung*.

28. Friedrich Schlegel, *Dialogue on Poetry and Literary Aphorisms*, translated by Ernst Behler and Roman Struc (University Park: The Pennsylvania State Press, 1968), 82.

29. "Versuch einer Selbstkritik," *Geburt der Tragödie*, in the *Kritische Studienausgabe*, edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag and Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988), 12–13.

30. "The Lilies of the Field and the Birds of the Air: Three Godly Discourses," *Christian Discourses, Etc.*, translated, with an Introduction and Notes, by Walter Lowrie (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971), 350.

31. I am, following Schelling, linking *Scheidung* (literally the cut, the separation, the sundering) with the Greek κλῆσις (a "separating," or a "power discerning or distinguishing" or even "the result of a trial") because the latter derives from κλίνειν (what Schelling elsewhere calls the *Entscheidung*), meaning a "cutting," a "putting asunder," a "separating," and hence, derivatively, a "decision," a "picking out," a "selecting," and a "judgment in the case of a contest or a dispute." This connection is evident, for example, in the relationship between *Scheidungskunst* (the art of discrimination, the art of selecting from competing possibilities) and critical activity (*Kritik*). On a larger scale, the crisis is the cut within the *Wesen* whose equipollent disequilibrium keeps it in motion. In an attempt to suggest some of the above connotations, I am translating *Scheidung* as *cision* and using it as a syn-

onym for *crisis*. The latter term also relates to the work of Franz Anton Mesmer, who spoke of the crisis or "critical sleep." Cf. note no. 64, following.

## THE AGES OF THE WORLD

1. The German reads: *Das Vergangene wird gewußt, das Gegenwärtige wird erkannt, das Zukünftige wird geahndet. Das Gewußte wird erzählt, das Erkannte wird dargestellt, das Geahndete wird geweissagt.*

2. *Wesen* presents one of the most difficult translation challenges in most any work by Schelling. *Das Wesen* is not a present essence, a being present in its integrity. Rather, it holds together *Seyn* [Being] and whatever has being or *das Seyende*. To preserve this delicate but critical distinction, I translate *Seyn* as Being, *das Seyende* as "that which has being," and, in order not to confuse *das Seyende* with *das Wesen*, whenever Schelling uses the latter, I translate it as "being" with either "the" or "a" as the preceding article. For more on this, see my brief remarks concerning this in section V of my Translator's Introduction.

3. Cf. Explication no. 7 to the first set of definitions in Spinoza's *Ethics* (1677): "That thing is said to be free [*liber*] which exists solely from the necessity of its own nature, and is determined to action by itself alone." [Samuel Shirley translation (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1982).]

4. One might notice in the words "lawless" [*gesetzlos*] and "in accordance with law" [*gesetzmäßig*] the critical root *Setzen* which will recur often throughout Schelling's text as freedom's "positing" in forms such as *Gesetz* [law, literally, "having been posited"], *Satz* and *Grundsatz* [foundational posit, originary posit in the sense of an *arche* or a *principium*], *Gegensatz*, *Entgegensetzung*, *Auseinandersetzung*, etc. The movement of *Setzen* is what Schelling called the "theitic" in his early writings.

5. *Mitwissenschaft* is Schelling's literal translation of the Latin *conscientiæ*: knowing or knowledge (*scientia*) in an ancillary and joint fashion (*con*). In this way thinking can be the same (*gleich* but not of the same kind or *einerlei*) as the autopoietic movement of time. By "consciousness," then, I mean to evoke at least three of the senses of the Latin *conscentiæ*: joint knowledge, consciousness, as well as the ethical sense of the conscience.

6. Cf. note no. 31, following.

7. *Wiederbewußtwerden*, the regaining of consciousness, is Schelling's translation of Plato's *anamnesis*, the regaining of an awareness of that which was lost as a necessary condition for the possibility of birth. By consciousness [*Bewußtseyn*], I take Schelling to mean *conscentiæ* or *Mitwissenschaft*.

8. *Scheidungskunst oder Kritik*.

9. Schelling seems to have in mind, *inter alia*, Hegel.

10. I am translating *Schauen* as "vision" of the supramundane, as in, for example, "beatific vision" [*Gottschauen*] or even the "intellectual intuition" [*intellektuelle Anschauung*].

11. "Fürsichtig hüllt wie der kommenden Zeit Ausgang der vergangenen Anfang Gott in dunkle Nacht."

12. "*Seyn ist Seinheit, Eigenheit. . .*" I have chosen ipseity, literally, being of itself, to attempt to render *Seinheit* (literally, "its own-ness"). Ipseity in this sense, then, is particularity (*Eigenheit*), that is, the particular qualities (or "properties") belonging to Being. It is Being solely with respect to what it has, to its qualities, sundered or dislocated from that in which it stands in relationship, but does not have.

13. A truth of fact, as opposed to a truth of reason, is a contingent truth whose opposite could be true. (Cf. *inter alia*, *Monadology*, aphorism no. 33.)

14. Schelling is playing off the literal meaning of *Urteil* (judgment). The copula in the *Urteil* (primordial part) is what holds together all of the *Teilen* (parts).

15. *Gleichwichtigkeit* literally means "of equal importance," but Schelling takes it further to denote the equal force or potency (valence) inhering as the *Wesen*. Hence, the Latinate "equipollence" (literally, "equal power"), which Schelling parenthetically offers as a synonym, should not be taken logically, i.e., that two propositions are deducible one from the other and vice versa. Schelling has just argued with reference to the antithesis [*Gegensatz*] or contradiction that A and B, as opposed, are not derivable from each other. Rather, unrelatable or nonsublimatable, (i.e., neither can utterly subsume the other and neither can be derived from the other) are held together in a third. Hence, Schelling's equipollence is the holding together (without a cohering that would favor one of the other) of unrelatables such that both equally retain their mutually contradictory force.

16. The Zoroastrian potencies were dualistic and hence a prototype for later Judeo-Christian (et al.) dualities. Schelling is referring here to the myth in the Persian (Iranian) *Vendidad* that deals with the creation and reign of two opposing forces, that of *Abura Mazda* (the force of pure goodness) and *Angra Mainyu*, later called *Ahriman* (the force of evil, suffering, destruction). Hence, all of Being is rent by the ongoing struggle between the forces of life and death. Schelling, however, moves to think the belonging together and hence the "indifference" or nonduality of such oppositional forces.

17. Schelling is referring to the discussion in the *Sophist* (esp. 256d-264d) in which the Eleatic Stranger and Theaetetus disobey Parmenides and claim that what is not somehow is.

18. Schelling uses *die Feste*, a nineteenth-century variant of *die Festung*, meaning a fortress or a castle while poetically naming the firmament, to translate the Greek *hestia*. The Greek, named for the eponymous goddess, denoted the fireside or hearth (what Schelling calls *der Heerd*) of the house as well as the sanctuary (hence *die Feste*) where she was worshipped and where a fire constantly burned. The daughter of Kronos and Rhea, she was the goddess of the home and guardian of the hearth. For the Romans she was called Vesta and was a goddess of great importance. The Vestal Virgins attended to the flame in her sanctuary, charged with keeping it perpetually burning. Were the flame to be extinguished, a catastrophe would ensue. When one of the Vestal virgins allowed the sanctuary's flame to wane, the sun reignited it. The hearth is the floor upon which fire, for Schelling, following Heraclitus, a representation of time, is preserved. The hearth, like the wheel, is a representation of fiery time's continuing self-incineration and auto-reproduction.

19. Schelling is referring to Heraclitus's "untiring fire" in Diels, fragment 30: "This ordered universe (κόσμος), which is the same for all, was not created by any one of the gods or of mankind, but it was ever and is and shall be ever-living Fire, kindled in measure and quenched in measure" [Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to The Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970)].



20. Following Bolman, I am assuming that Schelling is referring to *Ezekial*. I presume it is Ezekial's call to be a prophet, when he sees "a storm wind coming from the north, a vast cloud with flashes of fire and brilliant light about it; and within was a radiance like brass, glowing in the heart of the flames" (I: 4). Within the fire, Ezekial saw four winged creatures, appearing "as if fire from burning coals or torches were darting to and fro among them" (I: 13), circulating about. Beside the creatures were "wheels" that "sparkled like topaz" and "were all alike: in form and working they were like a wheel inside a wheel, and when they moved in any of the four directions they never swerved in their course" (I: 15–17). "When the living creatures moved, the wheels moved beside them; when the creatures rose from the ground, the wheels rose; they moved in whatever direction the spirit [or wind] would go" (I: 19–20).

21. The Magi were the Zoroastrian priests. They claimed that fire was the only acceptable representation of the Supreme Being.

22. The Jewish lawgiver is, of course, Moses. "For the LORD your god is a devouring fire, a jealous god" (*Deuteronomy* 4: 24).

23. Schelling seems to be playing on the homonymous relationship between *Suchen*, to strive, to seek, and *Sucht*, obsession, addiction. *Sucht* is the constant and insatiable striving for what one cannot have, an obsession with what is perpetually elusive. *Sehnsucht* is the intermingling of *Suchen* and *Sucht*, an obsessive seeking for that which cannot be found (*Seyn*).

24. This word was inserted by Schelling's son, Karl Friedrich August, when he edited this manuscript for the *Sämtliche Werke* (1856–1861).

25. "... wenn eines das Seyende ist, dann nothwendig die andern nicht seyend seyn müssen."

26. Inserted by Schelling's son.

27. Johann Scheffler (1624–77), known by his pen name Johannes Angelus Silesius (*Der cherubinische Wandersmann*, I: 3).

28. I am trying to bring out with the phrase "no conation" the breakdown and reclamation of the *conatus* insofar as it endeavors not to endeavor or that it wills to be itself precisely by willing not to be itself. The *conatus* becomes obsessed with its alterity.

29. In the *Philosophische Briefe über Dogmatismus und Criticismus*, Schelling linked these two movements, inverted movements toward the same end, to Stoicism and Epicureanism. The former, in attempting to abstract themselves from all sensuality, "became a physicist because their abstraction from all sensuality could only happen in time" (I/1:329). The epicure, inversely, does not strive for independence from the world. Rather, they throw themselves into the arms of the world. The epicure attempts to satisfy the demand of freedom by satisfying all sensuous needs. But the radical physicality of the Epicures led them to become "metaphysicians because their task, the successive satisfaction of all needs to achieve beatitude, was infinite" (I/1:329).

30. *Geist* can be traced back to roots indicating the opening wide of the mouth and hence its relationship to the Latin *spiritus* and *anima* [breath (of a God)] and the Greek *ψυχή*, breath, and *πνευμα*, a blowing, and an even older tradition that includes the Sanskrit *atman*.

31. "Gott sey das Überwirkliche, Überseyende (τὸ ὑπερέον), also über Seyn und Nicht-seyn Erhabene." The *ὑπερέον* is that which is in excess of (*ὑπερ* = *super*) of that which has

being, i.e., of a being or entity (*ὄν*). Note, too, that *das Erhabene* (the sublime) also denotes the elevation or loftiness of this excess.

32. "... als das weder Seyende noch nicht Seyende seyend ist ..."

33. Although this is a rich myth whose variations are found variously in the ancient world, perhaps most appropriate to Schelling's study, the bursting of the world-egg (the egg of the cosmos) is one of the Orphic accounts for the birth of the "phanic" Dionysus, the bisexual god whose *φάνη* or torchlight (his celebration included a procession of torches) self-impregnated and gave birth to Nyx, the night. Chronos (Time), most primordial for the Orphics, created the cosmic egg, and, when this split open, Phanes-Dionysus, "two-fold, egg-born" emerged. See "The Orphic Creation Myth," *Primal Creation Myths*, edited by Barbara C. Sproul (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), 169. As the *Weltalter* continues, Dionysus emerges as a symbol of the ongoing poem of cosmic time. If one follows Aristophanes (who is perhaps following Epimenides the Cretan) in *The Birds* (693 ff.), Night gave birth to a "wind-sown egg" (a result of nocturnal self-impregnation which breathed life into the cosmic egg). Out of the egg emerged Eros, another symbol for Schelling of time. See W. C. K. Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 92–102. Time as the origin of the cosmos is already found in early Zoroastrian myths.

34. "... zum Seyn, zum bloß Aussprechlichen werden. ..."

35. "... das Aussprechende, Seyende zu Seyn. ..."

36. "die Bleib- und Wohnstätte" The *Psalm* reads, "Lord, thou hast been our refuge [mayon] from generation to generation."

37. The two expressions read in German: "Die Natur entziehe sich dem Anblick und verberge ihre Geheimnisse." "Nur durch eine höhere Macht gedrungen entlasse sie alles, was wird, aus der ursprünglichen Verborgenheit."

38. Schelling is referring to one of the stories that Diotima once told Socrates and that Socrates recalls in the *Symposium* (203b–204b). At the birth of Aphrodite, the gods held a feast (a *Gastmahl*—which was the original German translation of the *Symposium*). Present among the guests was Poros [*πόρος*] (literally, "way," "passage," "resource," which Schelling glosses as *Reichthum* and *Überfluß*, wealth and excess). Poros got drunk on nectar and sleepily headed to Zeus's garden where he fell asleep. Penia [*πενία*] ("poverty" or "need") had shown up, as was her wont, at the feast to beg and when she saw Poros asleep, she devised a way to free herself from her poverty: she would sleep with Poros and have his child. After this "wedding" of sorts, she became pregnant and gave birth to Eros, who was "neither mortal nor immortal," "neither ignorant nor wise," neither destitute nor rich for "anything he finds his way to always slips away" (203e). [Nehamas and Woodruff translation (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1989)]. Penia (negation) is the A<sup>1</sup>, Poros (affirmation, excess) is the A<sup>2</sup>, and their illegitimate offspring is Eros (A<sup>3</sup>). In a remark, itself excerpted from another manuscript, in the third lecture of the 1842 *Philosophie der Mythologie*, Schelling appended a discussion of the "effusive Being in the second potency," which "therefore brings the proper Being of the other [the first] to silence so that it remains as *potentia pura*, as a pure Can (*reines Können*), not demanding to go over into the Being of its own," with the following footnote: "In the unity 1 and 2 are the eternal sufficiency [*Genüge*]: together they both represent, so to speak, Poverty and Excess out of whose liaison that famous Platonic poem [*Dichtung*] let Eros come forth" (II/2, 50). Again, Eros's poverty is the source of his wealth. In the *Philosophische Einleitung in die*

*Philosophie der Mythologie* (between 1847–52), for example, Schelling claimed that “All commencement lays in lack [*Mangel*], the deepest potency, everything is hinged upon that which does not have being, and this is the hunger for Being” (II/1, 294).

39. The receptacle [*Behältniß*] also alludes to Plato’s description of the  $\chi\acute{o}\rho\alpha$  in the *Timaeus*.

40. *Widerwärtigkeit* and *Angst*: the former suggests an incapacity or unwillingness (the *wider*) to abide (*zu warten*) by something and hence loathing, disgust, abhorrence. What then does it desire to abide by? It does not know, and hence its anxiety. These were terms used by Jakob Böhme.

41. I am translating *Ur-Sache* with the inclusive conjunction “cause and primordial matter” because by hyphenating the normal word for “cause” (*die Ursache*), Schelling is able to emphasize its temporal sense of *prius*, of an *a priori* support of the elements.

42. The rather awkward “state of nondivorce” translates *Ungeschiedenheit*, the noun form of “not separated” or “not divorced.”

43. I am somewhat freely translating *das Gebildete* as “idol” not only to catch some of the Mosaic sense of the fire that annihilates all idols before it, but also to play on the relationship between the literal sense of *das Gebildete* as the “having been shaped or formed” and the roots of “idol” in the Greek *eidolon* and *eidos*, the (seeming) outer shape or form of something.

44. “wird ein Zumal, ein mit- und durcheinander-Bestehen”

45. At *Genesis* 1:2, God completed creation of heaven and earth on the sixth day and declared the seventh to be holy “because on that day he ceased from all the work he had set himself to do.” After this rest, God began to fill the earth with life.

46. Schelling already linked the *wissenschaftlich* to the *geschichtlich* in the Introduction (the first full paragraph at 205): “Can the recollection of the primordial beginning of things ever again become so vital that knowledge, which, according to its matter and the meaning of the word, is history, could also be history according to its external form?” The Kluge traces *Wissen* back to roots suggesting: “I found” or “I found out” or “I discovered.”

47. The “*Er*” (the “*He*”) is derived from the fact that one says “*der Gott*,” and not from the fact that God must be said to have a gender. Schelling claims that reason and feeling demand a personal god and not an abstract God.

48. Cf. 205 and 254 (standard pagination) where Schelling links the *Wissenschaftliche* with the *Geschichtliche* and the *Historische*.

49. The passage in the *Letter to the Hebrews* reads: “The argument becomes still clearer, if the new priest who arises is one like Melchizedek, owing his priesthood not to a system of earth-bound rules but to the power of a life that cannot be destroyed.”

50. “*ein seyend-Seyn (Existenz)*”

51. Schelling is emphasizing the literal connotation of *das Bewußtseyn*, i.e., to be (*Seyn*) aware or conscious, to be known (clearly). The past tense of the archaic and no longer current *bewissen* (to know clearly) takes on added significance in light of both Schelling’s insistence on the historicity of *Wissen* and the current discussion of the past.

52. An allusion to the Egyptian theogonic circularity, which Schelling finds again in Moses’s vision of Yahweh as the burning bush, is already mentioned by Kant in a

footnote in section 49 of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (“*Von den Vermögen des Gemüts*”): “Perhaps there has never been something more sublime said or a thought expressed more sublimely than that inscription over the Temple of Isis (of Mother Nature): ‘I am everything that there is, that there was, and that there will be, and no mortal has lifted my veil’” (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 171). Schelling returned to this inscription at the Temple of Sais in the eighteenth lecture of the 1842 *Philosophie der Mythologie*: “. . . [H]ence this is now posited in consciousness: 1) the God that was, 2) the God that is, 3) the God that will be, i.e., that will not only be one time, but that will eternally be, i.e., that which *should* eternally that which is eternally to be born.” Schelling works this out particularly in the triadic unity of Osiris, Typhon, and Horos (II/2, 383). The inscription at Sais was Schelling’s originally projected opening lines to *Die Weltalter*: “I am that which was, which is, and which will be and no mortal has lifted [*aufgehoben*] my veil”—thusly, according to some narratives, the intimated primordial being [*geahndete Urwesen*] once addressed wayfarers from under the veil of the image of Isis in the Temple at Sais.” *Die Weltalter: Fragmente In den Urfassungen von 1811 und 1813*, edited by Manfred Schröter (Munich: C. H. Beck’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1946), 187.

53. *Exodus* 3:14.

54. “*der ewig seyend seyn mußte*”

55. “It [the created universe] was made the victim of frustration because God subjected it.” The  $\text{o}\ddot{\upsilon}\chi\ \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\omicron\upsilon\sigma\alpha$  is the lack or negation or frustration of voluntary acts.

56. *Herrlichkeit* is a now obsolete term for lordship and sovereignty, although its primary connotation is still that of glory or splendor (as in *die Herrlichkeit Gottes*). I have opted for the more obscure lordship to emphasize the contrast between the slavery (*Knechtschaft*) of subjugation and the freedom of lordship. The glory of such lordship can also be heard.

57. *Actus*, what Schelling translates as *Wirkung*, is the past participle of the Latin *agere* (to drive, to do). *Actus* in this sense suggests something done or something driven in a particular way. When freedom does not come to act (*actus*), it does not come to pass, it does not happen, it does not actualize itself. It remains a force or  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\nu}\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  (*potentia*, *Potentialität*) or possibility (*Möglichkeit*) irreducible to actuality. It is always still to happen, *ein unendlicher Mangel an Seyn*.

58. *Timaeus* 29d–30a: “Let us, then, state for what reason [ $\alpha\iota\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$ ] becoming and this universe were framed by him who framed them. He was good [ $\alpha\rho\alpha\theta\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ ]; and in the good no jealousy in any matter can ever arise. So, being without jealousy, he desired that all things should come as near as possible to being like himself. That this is the supremely valid principle of becoming and of the order of the world, we shall most surely be right to accept from men of understanding. Desiring, then, that all things should be good and, so far as might be, nothing imperfect, the god took over all that is visible—not at rest, but in discordant and unordered motion—and brought it from disorder into order, since he judged that order was in every way the better.” [I have used the Francis M. Cornford translation, *Plato’s Cosmology* (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1957).]

59. Cf. the *Freedom* essay: “For the eternal spirit articulates the unity or the Word in nature. But the articulated (real) word is only in the unity of light and darkness (vowel and consonant)” (Suhrkamp edition, 58). This also invokes a discussion that takes place in several Platonic dialogues, including the *Theatetus* 202a–203e, the *Cratylus* 424c, and

the *Sophist* 253 a–d. In these passages, Socrates argues that consonants (literally, “with sound”) need a vowel (“its own sound”) to be heard. In this sense it might also be worth noting that Jakob Böhme, whose influence on Schelling was substantial, characterized the Fall as the loss of the capacity to hear the *Natursprache*, the language of nature.

60. The tetragrammaton, from the Greek meaning “four letters,” are the four consonants (in the Roman alphabet YHWH) to designate Elohim. Note that these are “silent letters” and hence cannot be pronounced without a vowel. The four Hebrew consonants appear in the next few lines.

61. The oath is handed down by Sextus Empiricus as one of the *acusmata* (“things heard”). The text reads: “And by way of indicating this the Pythagoreans are accustomed sometimes to say ‘All things are like number,’ and sometimes to swear this most potent oath: ‘Nay, by him that gave to us the *tetractys*, which contains the fount and root of ever-flowing nature.’” Cf. Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, second edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 233–234.

62. This is a term from Luther’s translation of the Bible. These are the messengers that bring one to a mediating face to face [*Angesicht zu Angesicht*] with the all-consuming fire of the Godhead.

63. Schelling is connecting various uses of the cognate *Stehen*. Literally, one may not remain standing (*stehen bleiben*) by what has already come to a stand (*ein Zustand* or state of affairs) because what has come to a stand does not even for one moment stand still (no *Stillstand*).

64. *Magnetischer Schlaf* [magnetic sleep] or what we now call “hypnosis” most dramatically came to the attention of the German world through the writings and experiments of Franz Anton Mesmer (1733–1815). It was Mesmer who called hypnotic sleep, what he called “animal magnetism,” a crisis. In his 1799 *Mémoire de F.A. Mesmer, docteur en médecine, sur ses découvertes*, there is the following discussion of the relationship between sleep and crisis: “One can say that in the state of ‘sleep,’ man experiences his connections with all of Nature. Just as we would be incapable of having any idea of the knowledge of the most learned man if he did not speak or could not be understood, I admit that it would be difficult to prove the existence of this phenomenon, were it not for those individuals who, during their sleep and through the effect of an illness or a ‘crisis,’ retain the faculty to convey to us, as much as by their actions as by their expressions, what takes place in them . . . The state of *crisis* to which I refer, being intermediate between wakefulness and perfect sleep, is capable of being drawn more or less to one or the other.” [*Mesmerism: A Translation of the Original Scientific and Medical Writings of F.A. Mesmer*, translated and compiled by George Bloch (Los Altos, California: William Kaufmann, Inc., 1980), 123–124.] In his 1779 *Mémoire sur la Découverte du Magnétisme animal*, Mesmer listed twenty-seven theses concerning his discovery of magnetic (or “critical”) sleep, claiming at thesis 24 that the work of the physician is to bring about “beneficial crises” (Bloch, 69). This crisis re-attunes the animal body with heavenly bodies. Proposition 1: “There exists a mutual influence between the Heavenly bodies, the Earth, and Animate Bodies.” Proposition 2: “A universally distributed and continuous fluid, which is quite without vacuum and of an incomparably rarefied nature, and which by its nature is capable of receiving, propagating and communicating all the impressions of movement, is the means of this influence.” Proposition 10: “The property of the animal body which brings it under the influence of the heavenly bodies, and the reciprocal action occurring among those who are surrounded by it, shown by its analogy with the

Magnet, induced me to term it ANIMAL MAGNETISM” (Bloch, 67–68). Schelling, for his part, returned to a discussion of sleep in his discussion of the “absolute contemplation and interiority [*Verinnigung*]” of Yoga in his discussion of Indian mythology in the *Philosophie der Mythologie*. Schelling denied that Yoga produced an annihilation [*Vernichtung*] of the self, and claimed that it could be compared, in some respects to sleep. “For sleep is also not an annihilation, and who can really know what pleasures the soul is capable of in sleep and out of which sources that balm flows with which a healthy sleep refreshes the spirit? That we do not remember these pleasures cannot prove the absence of them. Rather it only proves that these pleasures, like the events of magnetic sleep, are not capable of transmission into a waking state by memory” (II/2, 574).

65. “. . . die Gleichgültigkeit des Zusammenseyns aufgehoben. . . .”

66. *Gegenwurf* is an obscure and extremely difficult word to render. The general sense is that each order knows itself in contradistinction to what it is not. It sees itself only through having lost or betrayed itself such that the other half mirrors the other back to itself. One discerns one’s ownmost through the foreign.

67. E.g., “The glory of the lord looked to the Israelites like a devouring fire on the mountain-top” (*Exodus* 24:17).

68. This is a reference to the English physicist and chemist Sir Humphry Davy (1778–1829) whose electrochemical researches (*Überführungsversuchen*) at the Royal Institute in London isolated sodium and potassium in 1807 and magnesium, barium, boron, and calcium the following year. See I/9, 440.

69. Schelling is playing on the relationship between *heilen*, to heal, and *heilig*, holy. The Cartesian duality (actually, Schelling uses a much stronger word, *Zwiespalt*, or conflict) is both *heillos*, literally, unholy, but hinting at an absence of *heilen*, and *unheilbar*, not admitting of healing, incurable, terminable. The unholy is a terminal illness. Holiness is the font of health.

70. Humans are both *mithandelnde*, or co-active, co-operative (*acting* in an ancillary fashion) and *mitleidende*, or co-passive, undergoing or experiencing, conjoined with the “great process.” They are simultaneously subject and object of the movement, forming something akin to the middle voice.

71. *Magie*, or magic, is a word with long roots in German, old English (*mag*), Greek (μαγικός), fit for a magician, magus, from Μάγος, magus, magician, witch), and finally from the Persian (Zoroastrian) word *magus*, or priest and interpreter of dreams. (Schelling mentions the Zoroastrian magi at 230.) More literally the root denotes a “being able” or a “having power.” Schelling was quite aware of this and mentions the (etymological) connection between *Magie* and *Möglichkeit*, even tracing the former beyond the Persian to the Sanskrit *maya*, the veil of illusion. See, for example, Schelling’s reading of Hindu mythology at II/2, 482 (the 1842 *Philosophie der Mythologie*): “This possibility is precisely *Maya* = *Magie* = *Möglichkeit* . . . The world comes into being through a momentary self-forgetting, through a kind of sheer distraction of the creator.” *Maya* spins webs but is not subject to what she spins. “From the German *Mögen* comes our German *Möglichkeit* [possibility], *Macht* [power], just as in many dialects: *ich mag nicht* means “I cannot” [*ich kann nicht*]. Magic, and also the Indian *maya*, therefore means nothing other than *Macht*, *Möglichkeit*. And, indeed, the entire being [*Wesen*] of this can [*Können*] which still rests in conation is—magic” (II/2, 150). Schelling noted that August Schlegel, in his translation of the *Bhagavadgita* into Latin, “had added the

word *magia* in parentheses to the word 'maya.'" Humboldt had done the same in his Latin translation (II/2, 149). And finally, Jakob Böhme had used the word *magia* quite dramatically and in a fashion that resembles Schelling's deployment of the word: "Magic is the mother of eternity, of the essence of all essence, for it makes itself and is understood in desire. It is in itself nothing but a will. . . . Real magic is not an essence but rather the desiring spirit of essence. It is an insubstantial matrix, but it reveals itself in essence. Magic is spirit and essence is its body and yet both of them are only one, just like body and soul are only one person." *Sex puncta mystica in Mysterium Pansophicum*, edited and elucidated by Gerhard Wehr (Freiburg: Auum Verlag, 1980), 157–158.

72. Hypnosis or Mesmeric sleep. Cf. note no. 64.

73. Schelling admired a similar formulation of this insight in the work of Hamann: "And in a similarly consoling fashion, one of the greatest German writers, Hamann, says, 'The analogy of the divine is the great key to the human understanding'" (IPU, 5).

74. "He [Jacob] dreamt that he saw a ladder, which rested on the ground with its top reaching to heaven, and angels of God were going up and down upon it" (*Genesis* 28:12).

75. "der den Schlaf Wirkende" or literally the one who effects the [Mesmeric] sleep. Cf. note no. 64.

76. This is a term that the *philosophus teutonicus*, the Görlitz shoemaker Jakob Böhme, used.

77. The contrast is between "egoity" or "ipseity" (see the earlier discussion at 210 as well as the 1809 *Freedom* essay) and "ecstasy." The German more or less replicates the literal meaning of ecstasy, literally, a standing outside of oneself. Cf. for example, the 1821 Erlangen lecture course *Über die Natur der Philosophie als Wissenschaft* that Horst Fuhrmans edited as *Initia Philosophiae Universae*, 39: "Earlier one could have used the term *ecstasy* [*Ekstase*] for that relationship. Namely, our I is posited *outside* of itself, that is, outside of its place." This Schelling called *Selbstaufgebenheit*, the renunciation of the alleged superior position of the ego. See also Jean-François Courtine, "La subjectivité: Fondation et extase de la raison," *Extase de la raison: Essais sur Schelling* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1990), 151–167.

78. Schelling seems to be alluding to the *Upanishads* and to the Advaita Vedanta tradition of Vedic commentary. Here, creation is not the unfolding of a master plan, but the movement of *lila* or play.

79. Theurgy (the work or ἔργον of God or Θεός) was the Neoplatonic set of practices, rejected by the Medieval church and temporarily practiced again during the Renaissance, for invoking and directing the intervention of beneficent spirits. Although rejected by Plotinus and eventually Porphyry (under the sway of Plotinus), its adherents included Iamblicus and Proclus.

80. "als Wille, der nicht will" and hence also a will that does not want (that does not want even nothing or not to will), a will without conation.

81. The relationship in which the Godhead "holds itself back" from Being. The Godhead relates to Being by virtue of its withdrawal from it.

82. Cf. Heraclitus, fragment 64: "Lightning steers all things."

83. Schelling is taking the word for resolution, or decisive action [*die Entschliebung*], and playing with its more literal meanings. The *Ent-Schliebung* [ent, the sep-

aration from something, and *schließen*, to close] is literally a dis-closing, a de-cisive opening up, the lightning flash of divine self-differentiation.

84. This is the project of the positive philosophy that proceeds decensively, unlike the negative philosophy, which ascends toward the A<sup>3</sup>. Positive philosophy is the history of the A<sup>3</sup> (the eternal No, the eternal Yes, and the unity of both) as it manifests with greatest intensity as the fourth moment (the A<sup>4</sup>), proliferating differentially in space and time (culture and history). This is the project of the *Philosophy of Mythology and Revelation*.

85. Cf. for example, Pindar's Eighth *Pythian Ode*, lines 135–136, in the translation by Friedrich Hölderlin: "Tagwesen. Was aber ist einer? Was aber ist einer nicht? / Der Schatten Traum, sind Menschen. . . ." ["The essence of day. But what is one? But what is one not? The shadow dream, are people . . ."] Schelling uses the phrase *Scheinbild*, apparent image, simulacrum.

86. E.g., *Proverbs* 3:19, "In wisdom God founded the earth."

87. The word is *Entäußerung*, which connotes self-realization through self-relinquishment. It also suggests the interior becoming exterior and hence becoming itself by letting go of itself (its interiority).

88. This is the nocturnal vision of Elijah at 1 *Kings* 19:11–12. "For the LORD was passing by: a great and strong wind came rending mountains and shattering rocks before him, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a low murmuring sound."

89. This is a much used phrase in Greek philosophy (e.g., Heraclitus, fragment 10 [from Aristotle's *de mundo*): "... out of all things [πάντα] there comes a unity [ἓν], and out of a unity all things," and fragment 50: "Listening not to me but to the Logos it is wise to agree that all things are one [ἓν πάντα εἶναι].") [Kirk and Raven, *op. cit.*, 190 and 187 respectively] Hölderlin, Schelling, and Hegel, among others, often used it. The phrase received great notoriety in the so-called *Pantheismstreit* when Jacobi claimed that Lessing once told him that he was a Spinozist and hence pantheist: "Hen kai Pan! Anderes wusste er nichts." (F. H. Jacobi, *Über die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn* [Breslau: Gottl., Löwe, 1785]) (For a good discussion of the relationship between Jacobi and Schelling on this issue, see Sandkaulen-Bock, Birgit, *Ausgang von Unbedingten: Über den Anfang in der Philosophie Schellings* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1990), esp. 13–18.) The manner in which all things πάντα, *die Allheit* are of a whole (*eine Ganzheit*) and hence singular (ἓν or *eine Einheit*) drew Schelling to Spinoza (and to the volatile Pantheism controversy) and hence to the struggle to think the whole without, as Jacobi feared, sacrificing freedom to the necessities inherent in the system. How does one have both freedom *and* system, that fiery contradiction of a "system of freedom," without sacrificing freedom to the necessities imposed by the system (the ἓν or *Einheit*)? For Schelling, the third term (the καὶ) which holds together freedom *and* necessity (system), the many *and* the one, difference *and* identity, eternity *and* succession, is time, which expresses itself mimetically (through *Wiederholung*) and hence as the third moment (*das Ganze*), which continues to express itself differentially as the fourth moment (e.g., as ages of the world).

90. Schelling, like Hegel, distinguishes *Sittlichkeit* from (Kantian) *Moralität* in that the latter assumes superhistorical, extratemporal commands. *Sittlichkeit* is historical, ensconced in an age of the world. It is an epoch's *Sitten*, its character, its mores, and its customs.

91. This was the distinction that Schelling attributed to Plutarch at 221. It is the distinction between *non-Being* [*nicht Seyn*, *μὴ εἶναι*] and the Being that has no being [*nicht seyend Seyn*, *μὴ ὄν εἶναι*], between what is not at all and what is not yet.

92. Following Bolman, this seems to be a reference to the *Psalms*, e.g., 13:1, "How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?" and 27:8-9, "'Come,' my heart has said, 'seek his face.' I will seek thy face, O LORD; do not hide it from me . . ."

93. I am using the Latin *naturata* to translate *vernaturt* because I am taking this to be an allusion to Spinoza's distinction between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*, or "nature naturing" and "nature natured." The spiritual potency, or nature naturing, penetrates the whole of eternal nature so that it becomes natured (*naturata* or *vernaturt*).

94. Again, the word for "yearning" here is *Sehnsucht*, a word made famous not only by Schelling, but by almost all of the Romantics. It is non-object oriented desire, desire that moves beyond itself, but not because it is oriented toward any object in particular. It is an obsession, *eine Sucht*, with the movement of *Sehnen* (longing or pining) itself.

95. This is the (rhythmic) contraction (systole) and expansion (diastole) of the heart and hence both movements together make life possible.

96. Hence, the highest or supremely contradictory being (the *Wesen*) is both *das Seyende* (that which has being) its *Seyn* or Being in this moment. (It is both what has being and what paradoxically has being by not having being in the alternation of contraction and expansion, systole and diastole.)

97. Following Bolman, the "old book" seems to be *The Book of Ecclesiastes*, where there is a lengthy discussion of labor: "What does man gain from all his labor here under the sun? Generations come and generations go, while the earth endures forever" (1:3-4). "So I came to hate life, since everything that was done here under the sun was a trouble to me; for all is emptiness and chasing the wind" (2:17), etc.

98. This was a neologism coined by Samuel Taylor Coleridge to handle Schelling's term *Ineinsbildung*, a term that both Coleridge and Schelling understood as synonymous with the movement of the (transcendental or productive) imagination or *Einbildungskraft*. Coleridge located this term in, *inter alia*, Schelling's *Darlegung des wahren Verhältnisses der Naturphilosophie zu der verbesserten Fichteschen Lehre* (1806): "Ist das Band die lebendige In-Eins-Bildung des Einen mit dem Vielen" [The copula is the living formation into one—*eisemplasy*—of the one with the many]. As Coleridge puts it: "I constructed it [the word 'eismplastic'] myself from the Greek words, εἰς ἓν πλάττειν, i.e., to shape into one; because, having to convey a new sense, I thought that a new term would both aid the recollection of my meaning, and prevent its being confounded with the usual import of the word, imagination." Coleridge also experimented with a Latinized version with the word "coadunate" [*co-ad-unare*—to make one with]. Cf. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* (1817 edition), edited by James Engell and W. Jackson Bate (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), esp. 168-170. The editors have also provided a very informative footnote beginning at p. 168 that traces the origins of Coleridge's coinage of these terms.

99. Carolus Linnaeus (1707-1778), or Carl von Linné, was a Swedish taxonomist and botanist. His most influential work was *The System of Nature*, which was first published in 1735.

100. Schelling discussed this at 253.

101. More literally, the *Auseinandersetzung* (the setting into opposition, the confrontation) resulted in a spiritual *Auseinander* (separation, apartness, opposition). This separation was an *expansum*, an unfolding or spreading out, of the forces. There is not yet the delimiting force that makes possible extension or *Ausdehnung*.

102. If it is not already obvious, Schelling is alluding to the swelling of sexual organs. *Das Glied* (literally, "member") denotes in German, as it does in English, the penis.

103. *Intensum*, intensity, marks a stretching or an extending as in a bow. Hence, the tension (*die Spannung*) becomes ever ore intense, taut.

104. Schelling is referring to the *Timaeus* where at 30a Timaeus contends: "Desiring, then, that all things should be good and, as much as possible [κατὰ δύναμιν], nothing imperfect, the Demiurge took over all that is visible—not at rest, but in discordant and unruly [πλημμελὸς καὶ ἀτάκτως] motion—and brought it from the unruly to the ruly, since he judged that the ruly was in every way the better." [I have used, with my own emendations, the Cornford translation, *Plato's Cosmology* (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1957).] This matter, this "*wilde unbotmäßige Materie*" as Schelling phrased it, is the *χώρα*. While still a student at the Tübingen Stift, Schelling had already written an important essay on the *Timaeus* (1794) [Edited by Harmut Buchner with a contribution by Hermann Krings (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1994).]

105. These are the electrochemical experiments by Sir Humphry Davy mentioned at 282. A voltaic pile (*elektrische Säule*) is also called a "galvanic pile."

106. Schelling here used the etymological variant of comet (*Haarstern*), reflecting its origin in the Greek ἀστὴρ κομήτης, "long-haired flame."

107. *The Aeneid of Virgil*, book II, 274. The full passage in the Allen Mandelbaum verse translation reads: "... how different he was from Hector back from battle, putting on Achilles' spoils, or Hector when he flung his Phrygian firebrands at Dardan prowess! His beard unkempt, his hair was thick with blood, he bore the many wounds he had received around his homeland's walls." (New York: Bantam Books, 1961.) One might notice that a comet is etymologically a "long-haired star" and hence the change in Hector's hair is a metaphor for the dramatic change in the comet itself.

108. This, of course, is the opening line of the *Book of Genesis*.

109. *Exasciare* denotes that which has been properly planned and properly executed.

110. The Hebrew *bar*, son, derives from *bara*. The verbs *bären* and *gebären* (the latter is the high German variant of the former) mean "to give birth to," as does the related Germanic root in English ("to bear" a child). The Greek βαρέω means "to weigh down" and the Latin *parare* is "to prepare," or "to provide," or "to gather" and *parere* is "to appear" or "to obey" or "to yield to."

111. "The older men of his household tried to get him to rise from the ground, but he refused and would eat no food with them" [*italics mine*].

112. "God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant which I establish between myself and you . . .'"

113. "Bring everyone who is called by my name, all whom I have created, whom I have formed, all whom I have made for my glory."

114. This, for example, is discussed in Plato's *Phaedrus*, in which four kinds of madness are discerned, the final being "divine madness." "The best things we have come

from madness, when it is given as a gift of the god" (244a). [Nehamas and Woodruff translation (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1995).]

115. Schelling discussed the relationship of turgidity to the orgy in the sixteenth lecture of the *Philosophy of Mythology*: "The entrance of this moment [the resistance to the liberating God is becoming weaker and weaker] is designated through the repeated appearance of a feminine Godhead and announced itself emotionally through the appearances of the wild, non-composed enthusiasm of the *orgy*" [II/2, 351].

116. Cf. the 1809 *Freedom* essay: "But where the ideal principle really acts forcefully to a high degree, but cannot find the reconciling and mediating basis, it begets a bleak and wild enthusiasm that breaks out in self-laceration or, in the case of the priests of the Phrygian goddess, in auto-castration, which in Philosophy is brought about by the renunciation of reason and science" (I/7, 356–357.). The Phrygian goddess to whom Schelling is here alluding and to whom he alludes in "the shocking procession of the mother of all gods" is the earth goddess Cybele. She required that her priests, presumably in atonement for the infidelity of her lover Atys, castrate themselves. They celebrated her with wild dissonant music, insane behavior, and crazed shrieking. The cult of Cybele later evolved, upon its absorption into the Greek world, into the cult of Demeter celebrated as the Eleusinian mysteries

117. This is the *ἐν καὶ πᾶν* of the so-called *Pantheismusstreit* or Pantheism Controversy.

118. Schelling is referring, *inter alia*, to F. H. Jacobi. Although early on Schelling had looked to Jacobi as a strong voice, critical of the dogmatism of the closed, rational, fatalistic system (in which everything follows of necessity from a rationally discernible first principle, excluding the possibility of freedom), Jacobi had applied the same critique to Schelling's system of freedom, most particularly to the 1809 *Freedom* essay. For Jacobi, the very idea of systematic thought committed one to fatalism. In Jacobi's 1811 *Von den göttlichen Dingen und ihrer Offenbarung*, Schelling was reduced to the one-sided realism of Spinozistic pantheism, and hence as unable to articulate a freedom that is not usurped by the movement of the system. Schelling's last published work, the 1812 *Denkmal der Schrift von den göttlichen Dingen* (I/8 19–136) argued strongly against Jacobi's misreading. That Jacobi's critique was unfounded should already have been evident from the discussion of Spinoza in the *Freedom* essay.

119. In alchemy, the *menstruum* was the solvent by which one transfigured something into gold. It was the so-called "philosopher's stone" of which gold was a degradation and lead was an even further degradation. It was pure prime matter, Schelling's so-called "gold of gold."

120. In *Prometheus Bound* by Aeschylus, Might and Violence were the *daimons* who chained Prometheus to the crag at Caucasus. Violence was a *muta persona*.

121. Cf. *Proverbs* 1:7: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools scorn wisdom and discipline," and *Proverbs* 9:10: "The first step to wisdom is the fear of the LORD, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." Kant also alluded to this in the *Critique of Judgment* when he claimed that "the virtuous person fears God without being afraid of God." Kant, *op. cit.*, section 28 ["*So fürchtet der Tugendhafte Gott, ohne sich vor ihm zu fürchten*"].

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