



On the
Concept
of Alien

ZOLTÁN GYENGE

L'Harmattan

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On the Concept of Alien

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Introduction

In 2014, even before the start of the mass migrations of the second millennium, I was asked to write a paper on the term “other” for a journal. I approached the subject from the point of view of literature, myth and fine art, without neglecting its philosophical foundations.

Now, however, I feel that these first comments must be supplemented with a great deal more. When it comes to the concept of the same and the other, as well as the alien, the discussion of the question of the same and the differentiated same (=other) becomes unavoidable—and why avoid it? — even though today it has become almost forgotten, unknown to those outside a narrow academic circle.

My article was published at the start of the “wave of immigration,” although I did not write it to reflect on it. As crowds flooded, emotions were almost immediately let loose. At one end was an unconsidered “Willkommenskultur”, on the other was the ideology of not only a wall, but of a (thus far yet) virtual mine barrage. To be fair, neither side felt that their position needed any manner of foundation, but rather it was the beliefs and the powerful emotions—chief among them hate—arising from those beliefs that engaged and engage each other. However, sober and rational thought is indispensable. While *Blaise Pascal* rightly asks: ‘I would like to add to this that there is pity in me „How comes it that a cripple does not offend us, but that a fool does? Because a cripple recognises that we walk straight, whereas a fool declares that it is we who are silly; if it were not so, we should feel pity and not anger.’ (Pascal, 1958. II.80.)

Now, it is important for us to clarify what we are talking about, especially as emotions tend to get out of control when talking about

this issue. This text does not take a position in support of any viewpoint, theory, ideology, etc. Perhaps each has its own truth from its *own perspective*. This text only attempts to explore some basic fundamentals from the perspective of intellectual history, without the need for any kind of finality and acknowledging the possibility (and reserving the right) of being wrong.

Along these lines, this book will discuss these concepts in the following order.

1. The starting point is the concept of the “*same*.” In every respect, “sameness” is the origin of any analysis whose topic is the “other” and the “alien.” It is decidedly interesting that practically no one acknowledges this, though we could really read a little Hegel or else recall that we read that we are familiar with him instead of keeping it a secret. Of course, that is tiring, and it is much simpler and more comfortable to make fundamentalist pronouncements. However, just as there is no same without other, this is also true the other way around. *Omnis determinatio est negatio*—but we could say this the other way around, exchanging the terms “determination” and “negation.” That is to say that all determination is negation, but all negation is also determination. Of course, this is somewhat more complicated than that.
2. This is followed by the “*other*,” partly on the perspective of the “same,” who/which opposes it, even while the “same” is capable of determining itself from the perspective of the “other.”
3. I discuss the “*alien*” in close connection with the previous, though the “alien” is not necessarily identical to the concept of the “other,” as *the “alien” is always the “other,” but the “other” is not always the “alien.”*
4. Although, if sticking to the Hegelian foundations, the examination could end here, this text will continue. I will—nominally—contradict Hegel’s concept of the “Holy Trinity.” That

is because last, but not least, comes the *radical concept* form of the alien, the thing that causes the most passionate debate and aggression, which is the “*enemy*.” In public discourse we often mix the concepts of the “*enemy*” and the “*alien*.” Often when we talk about the “*other*” or the “*alien*,” the term “*enemy*” is there in the background, whether consciously, unconsciously, or consciously but disguised. Since we have already established the connection between the concepts of “*other*” and “*alien*,” then we add that it is no different in this case: *the “enemy” is always the “other,” but the other is not necessarily the “enemy.”*

For these reasons, it is important at this point to bring a certain background to discussing this topic, accepting rather than ignoring that it can very trigger intense, even overwhelming emotions in a person. One thing is certain: this problem will not simply go away. It also seems certain that what we have experienced is just the beginning. On the basis of the Hegelian concepts presented above, we introduce three concepts according to the principle of sublation (*Aufhebung*), as follows:

- ◇ the same
- ◇ the other
- ◇ the difference-abolishing third

But it is highly dubious that the third level could be a kind of synthesis. There are two possible ways for the other, the alien, and especially the enemy to cease to be, according to the moment that brought them into being. These paths are either *reconciliation* or *obliteration*. It is surprising that even Hegel uses the term “to create enemies,” although in his work it appears in the process as a moment and an extreme, and as such disappears. Whether a Hegelian reconciliation (*Versöhnung*) can be effected not only as a possibility within a metaphysical framework but also as a reality

is more than unlikely. As for obliteration? Well, there are without a doubt attempts at obliteration being made, but whether these actually lead to obliteration is a difficult question.

I am convinced that the foundations of the question of the alien can and must be clarified from a philosophical point of view, for which I use only *classical* authors and *original* texts. Everything else (e.g. the secondary literature) follows this, even, say, phenomenological analysis (e.g. Waldenfels: *Topographie des Fremden*).

But let us not get ahead of ourselves. What we will do next is to closely examine a story about Narcissus.¹

¹ The project was supported by the Interdisciplinary Centre for Research Development and Innovation Excellence (IKIKK) of the University of Szeged.

I. Same

In a philosophical sense, there is no other without a same, and the same can have no content without the other. I cannot make a judgment about an other without simultaneously making a judgment about myself. *Nolens volens*. This is true whether I want it or not, whether I am conscious of it or not. Judgment – like anger – passes judgment the other and the same. This is reminiscent what Seneca writes in *De Ira*, that anger comes with a judgment on the one who is angry, not just on the person one is angry at. In his wise words: “non expedit omnia videre, omnia audire”. It means: “it is better not to see or to hear everything: many causes of offence may pass by us, most of which are disregarded by the man who ignores them. Would you not be irascible? then be not inquisitive.” (Seneca 1900, III.11.1.) Let us vow to do this. Let us try to follow this principle. It is worthwhile, even if it is difficult. (Besides, I believe that in our crazy world a stoical mindset is the only one that makes the world around us bearable.) At the same time, we do not mean judgment in the ethical sense. For now.

The above are conveyed by the fundamental laws of classical, traditional logic:

1. The law of identity
2. The law of contradiction
3. The law of the excluded third
4. The law of sufficient reason

According to the law of identity, everything must be identical to itself, which is to say that a thought about a thing must be

identical with the thing itself and cannot be substituted with another thought. Sameness, though, is without content without a separation. Let us think of the Pelasgian creation myth (I will mention another example later).

In the beginning, Eurynome, The Goddess of All Things (same), rose naked from Chaos, but found nothing substantial for her feet to rest upon, and therefore divided the sea from the sky (other), dancing lonely upon its waves. She danced towards the south, and the wind set in motion behind her seemed something new (other) and apart with which to begin a work of creation (new same). Wheeling about, she caught hold of this north wind, rubbed it between her hands, and behold! the great serpent Ophion. Eurynome danced to warm herself, wildly and more wildly, until Ophion, grown lustful, coiled about those divine limbs and was moved to couple with her. Now, the North Wind, who is also called Boreas, fertilizes; which is why mares often turn their hind-quarters to the wind and breed foals without aid of a stallion. So Eurynome was likewise got with child. (Graves 1960. p.18)²

This is a very early example of the dialectic of sameness and otherness, and of the fact that the Greeks suspected something that should come as no surprise to us: it is wise to listen to them. The philosophers I discuss, and love did. (Even if there are some who would say that the celebration of Greek culture is latent racism, as they find the exclusion of African and Asian philosophy from the history of European philosophy xenophobic and call it the Eurocentric “whitewashing” of philosophy.³)

² The Pelasgian Creation Myth (The terms in brackets are my own observations.)

³ Ex. Peter K. J. Park: *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy*. Racism in the Formation of the Philosophical Canon, 1780–1830. As we shall see, the term “race” had an entirely different meaning in the 18th century than it does today. Of course, in order to understand this, we should not just write but also read, and we have to understand what we read. Whether we like it or not, the history of philosophy, which is tied to the history of European

Foundations

Let us start with *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel*. His respect for the Greeks was firmly rooted in him at a young age when he was studying in Tübingen. After completing high school in Stuttgart in 1788, he enrolled in the Tübingen Stift, which was more like a barracks than a university at the time. Also arriving were *Friedrich Hölderlin*, who would go on to be a great German poet, and a little later *Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling*, who was five years younger than them. The latter had only just turned 16 when he started university with special permission (Gyenge 2005.). Their effect on each other is immeasurable, which is thoroughly demonstrated by a manuscript from this period (*Das älteste Systemprogramm des deutschen Idealismus*, *The Oldest Systematic Program of German Idealism*) whose author is indeterminable. It is either Hegel, Schelling, or Hölderlin. Or all three, at the same time or one after the other. Or who knows? It can never be determined conclusively now, although there are different theories on the subject. Even I have written in support of one, but now I find the theory of multiple authorship likely (Gyenge 2005, pp.239-242.)⁴. If we take it as such, Hölderlin's effect can be identified in large part by his enthusiastic love

culture, starts with the Greeks. This does not mean that the wisdom of the Far East is not interesting, but there is no direct connection between the two. It is entirely obvious that the Buddha, despite being roughly his contemporary, had no effect on Heraclitus, who knew nothing about him. This is why it is the utmost primitive ignorance to accuse Hegel or Kant of racism. Please examine the tradition spanning Seneca through St. Thomas Aquinas to Leibniz and Heidegger, in which the point of reference is always Greek philosophy. The entire European philosophy was born on the islands and the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and was strengthened in a grove in the vicinity of Athens.

- 4 I supported the argument behind Schelling's authorship (as did Manfred Frank). I did this because at the time I was still interested in the science, and I thought the best way to be worthy of its greatness was by constructing an own theory: as senseless and convoluted as possible, something nobody would understand, not even ourselves most of the time, only let it be new when compared with what came before.)

and respect for the Greeks. Of course, we should also not forget that in the Tübingen period (the 1790s) that the unity philosophy (*Einheitsphilosophie*) centered on the Greek “ἓν καὶ Πᾶν” (one and /or all), which has Heraclitus (DK.B.50.)⁵ as its foundation gets caught up in the crossfire of the increasingly bitter debate. The monists (ex. Schelling) and dualists (ex. Jacobi) came into conflict. This is also somewhere latently in the background of the debate about pantheism.

In Hegelian philosophy, the “same” is found at the point where we focus on the fact of knowledge (*what* I know). Asking how knowledge is executed (*how* I know) is on a higher level. This stems from Kantian philosophy, since the system of transcendental cognition asks much more about “how” rather than “what”. The method that is dialectics for Hegel is the same. It is also the same with Schelling. Schelling, following Kant, keeps Kant’s concept of the “transcendental” in the focus of his philosophy of transcendental idealism. The same is none other than consciousness, so the examination of that will be the primary starting point of our process.

The Hegelian starting point (*Phenomenology of Spirit*) constitutes, in a general sense, immediacy and inexplicability, where there is no real mediation (*Vermittlung*), no reflection, since that is only possible after the appearance of the “other”. In its “same” status, there is nothing to mediate between, nothing to reflect on, and even no one to do the reflecting nor between whom mediation could be understood. The “same” thus is the unexplainable, that which exists only in itself (*an sich*). To understand it a different way: the statement that one is the same as oneself is on the one hand true and on the other hand without content. German idealism (Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling) in the 18-19th century absolutely recognized this. This is, however, the only possible starting point.

We now turn to Schelling, bringing us into the late 1700s and the early 1800s. In France, the revolution is raging. The disillusioning

5 “Listening not to me, but to the logos, it is wise to agree that all things are one.” (Heraclitus)

Jacobin dictatorship and then the rule of the little Corsican are just over the horizon. The latter was seen by Hegel with his own eyes the day after the Battle of Jena, “Weltseele zu Pferde” (“mounted on the soul of the world”), as Hegel wrote to Niethammer⁶. The positions of Schelling and Hegelian are not far apart: the subject does not recognize an object independent of itself, but the cognition occurring is cognition of *himself*, since in all other cases cognition would be lead down the false track of *dogmatism*, and dogmatism is best suited by oppression and suffering. The critical attitude is the field of freedom and opposition to it. Every autocratic system is dogmatic. There is no freedom in it, especially not individual freedom, but the dogmatic person likes this and does not understand why they should have to be free. It is not the tyrant who creates the slave – building on Unamuno’s ideas (Unamuno 1928. p.38.) – but the slave who creates the tyrant. That is to say, as Schelling writes, that all cognition can only be imagined occurring with a foundation of freedom, because there is no thought (and, let us add, no thinker) that would renounce freedom and still dare to call themselves thinking people. Not-free thinking is not thinking. Thus, the only way of thinking, like the only way of philosophy, is *critical thinking*. In the modern sense, we can add that the advantages of anyone, no matter how skilled, educated, etc. they may be, are not worth a button if they are in the service of an ideology, and the same can be said of the person themselves.

In criticism, mediation and reflection can only be interpreted after recognizing this. Let us simply call the latter a conscious thought, an *observation*. However, before looking at the category of mediation and trying to ascertain its nature, it is useful to look at the basic elements of Fichte and Schelling’s philosophy of identity (also known as *Identiätsphilosophie*).

6 The legend that Hegel finished *The Phenomenology of Spirit* on the night of the Battle of Jena does not match reality. The battle, the day after which Hegel saw Napoleon, was on October 16, 1806, while Hegel had already signed the contract with the publisher that summer.

The lack of a first principle

Fichte regards Schelling's work so highly that he calls him the second founder of the Study of Science (*Wissenschaftslehre*). Fichte was already a well-known philosopher at this time. He belongs to the geniuses among whom Kant can be classified. Fichte (1762-1814) was the child of a poor ribbon weaver, just as Kant (1724-1804) was a child of leatherworker—or, as he is more commonly described, he was one of the nine children of a saddler. The age was very rich in such volcanic geniuses who appeared out of nowhere. Fichte admired Kant but also wanted to develop the latter's philosophy further. Kant was, of course, not necessarily happy about this.

The most important principle, which is vital to our study, is that “the same” will be, according to Fichte (and Schelling), the starting point of philosophy, because all serious thinking needs a first principle (*Grundsatz*). They both refer back to the critical comments of Carl Leonhard Reinhold⁷, the worthy Viennese former Jesuit and professor at the University of Jena, who was the first to write of Kant that Kantian philosophy lacks a first principle. All post-Kantian thinkers after this, especially Fichte, Schelling and of course Hegel, agree on this. Their thinking is so similar that when in 1794 Fichte writes *Über den Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre* (*Concerning the Conception of the Science of Knowledge Generally*), Schelling also publishes in the same year a very important work entitled *Über die Möglichkeit einer Form der Philosophie überhaupt* (*On the Possibility of a Form of Philosophy in General*), which, following Fichte, develops the idea of an “identity-doctrine”, almost as if it were a continuation of Fichte's own work. For Schelling, philosophy is nothing but the study of identity and unity (*Identitäts- und*

7 Carl Leonhard Reinhold (1757-1823). The explainer of Kantian philosophy, without whom some say Kant's influence would have been far less universal. His *Briefe über die Kantische Philosophie* (*Letters on the Kantian Philosophy*) appeared between 1786-87. Before Fichte, he was a professor at the University of Jena. Fichte followed him in this, and Schelling followed Fichte. See Gyenge 2005.

Einheitslehre). In Kantian philosophy, because of the lack of a first principle, there is no ultimate foundation, which is to say, a unity of principle. However, the unity of the self with the same is the starting point of all further processes, though as we shall see it is not sufficient for self-determination. It might not be sufficient, but identity as a fundamental theorem is necessary.

And it looks like this: this is precisely the moment when Narcissus stands there lonely and alone, without any reflection, as Ovid writes, 'being consulted as to whether the child would live a long life, to a ripe old age, the seer with prophetic vision replied: 'If he does not discover himself'. (Ovid 2000. III.pp.339-366) This is the state of contentless identity. Narcissus's loneliness is a perfect lack of thought. He feels but does not think, the wonderful childhood of perception with no potential for apperception. The unity of this principle reveals two things: the starting point and the end point can be none other than sameness. How we get there is the question. And how these two identities differ is also a separate question.

Schelling, despite the shift in emphasis in his later philosophy, thinks the same: The fundamentals of individual sciences cannot be derived in these sciences, but must be unconditional in relation to them. - That's why the 'Grundsatz' can only be one. (SW.I.1. pp.85-112.)

According to him, in Kant the idea of unity, the unity of the first principle (*Einheit des Grundsatzes*), is missing, and if it is missing, it becomes impossible to lay the foundations for any further steps. Everyone agrees with this at the time—with the exception, perhaps, of Kant himself. All this may seem completely uninteresting compared to what was said in the introduction, but when we think about it, thinking in general cannot be coherent without a basis for coherence itself, that is, a certain first principle. Clarification of the concept of "the same" certainly requires this, even if it seems either unnecessary or overcomplicated. That is why I try to clarify these with examples that can be easily understood. Finding and applying the first principle (as the basis of our thinking) and the

first principle that will create the basis for the creation of cognition is the primary task for humans and for human cognition. But the question is, what is the foundation of this first principle? On first approach, we do not know much about it apart from what is contained in the first law of logic: identification with itself. However, what is certain is that since it is the first principle (*Grund-satz*), everything else is defined by this, and not the other way around, that is to say, the “other” cannot justify it because it is “the same”, not bounded by the other: *unconditional (Unbedingtes)*. In this sense, the unconditional is *that which is self-determined*, with nothing else as its “prerequisite.” “The unconditional is independent of the content of another Grundsatz.” (see *Ibid* p.12.) It is like the unmoved mover in Aristotle, the originator, which proceeds from itself, not from anything else. This is clearly, under the influence of Fichte, nothing more than the ‘I’, or rather the ‘I or intelligence’ (*Ich oder Intelligenz*). “The I can now only be given through the I, so the basic premise can be this: the I is the I.” (*Ibid*). Accordingly, the three first principles according to Schelling are the following:

- 1) The unconditional (*Unbedingtes*) is none other than the “I” (*das Ich*). It is what is called the *same*.
- 2.) Everything that can be conditioned is thus “Not-I” (*alles Bedingte = Nicht-Ich*), that is, what is outside of the “I”. And this is the *other*.

The other is that which stands in opposition to me-as-same, or at least is determined by it – and vice versa. At the same time, it either wants to penetrate into my circles, which I have to guard against, or it determines how far the boundary of the same extends. The separation between the two seems very simple, following the second and third laws of logic: something is either “A” or “not-A”. These cannot both be applied to the same thing at the same time: I cannot say that something is simultaneously a chair and not a chair. The object in question is either a chair or not a chair. If I say “table,” that is also a not-chair. Contradictory opposites exclude each other. There is no third possibility: *tertium non datur*. Something is either

chair or not-chair. It does not require long reflection to recognize the simple truth of this. The contrary, on the other hand, does not hold true: being the opposite of black-white does not determine what exact color something is, since this could be red or green, but cannot be both at the same time. In fact, it may be that neither is true: it is neither green nor blue. The contradictory, however, is an excluding contradiction: something is either green or non-green. It is either-or, as the worthy Søren Kierkegaard believed.

The identity of the “I” thus means that all that is “not-I” is conditioned by the “I” because the I defines everything, while nothing defines it. “If the not-I is set against the self, and the form of the self is unconditionality, then the form of the not-I must be conditional; and it can become the content of a first principle only insofar as it is assumed by me.” (See *ibid* p.13.) Based on these first two, the third basic principle almost necessarily follows:

3.) Unconditionality defines conditionality (*Die Unbedingtheit bestimmt die Bedingtheit*).

That is, the same assumes the other. Well, we seem to have taken a step forward with this, and it seems to be a meaningful basis for our actual world. I determine who or what is “other” when compared to me (!). Even everyday thinking confirms this.

It is important to note, however, that the same by itself has no content, as we have said and as Hegel also suggests. Narcissus has no “self” image, since he has no “he was aloof, hated, and loved: in himself, as in others, he sought the true essence of perfection.”⁸ Narcissus therefore understands nothing. He wanders in the meadow, hears a sound, but does not understand what the sound is, does not understand what a flower is, nor what fragrance is, nor a bird. He does not understand the self because of his lack of any self-knowledge that would make such reflection possible, something that he could see himself *in relation* to. Here Kierkegaard

8 See the chapter titled ‘The Actor’.

ingeniously captures the essence of the thing. In his later works, he refers to the self as a relation (*Forhold*). (SKS 11. p. 129.) And that is what it is. Hegel formulates this in the following (slightly more complex, but crystal clear) manner:

In itself that life is indeed an unalloyed sameness and unity with itself, since in such a life there is neither anything serious in this otherness and alienation, nor in overcoming this alienation. However, this in-itself is abstract universality, in which its nature, which is to be for itself, and the self-movement of the form are both left out of view. (PoS. p.13., PdG. p.24.)

Identity is thus contentlessness, that which cannot be made sense of by itself. The three principles that then follow through all of Hegelian philosophy are as follows:

- Same (an sich)
- Other (für sich)
- Same (an- und für sich)⁹

Looking at the Hegelian example, these correspond to

1. The seed (the self, proceeding from the self),
2. The seedling (the immediately opposing other, even while the two assume each other's existence),
3. The mature plant (abolished opposition = new identity).

That is, the seedling denies the seed (the seed “dies” in the seedling), and the plant eliminates both the seed and the seedling while preserving the essence of both (there is no plant without seed and seedling). This is the topos of preserving-while-ending (*Aufhebung*, sublation, see to the terminology of German idealism Schelling 2000 pp.109), which, while important insight, is a purely theoretical construct. In the states between their transitions, the Hegelian concept of “mediation” emerges, which Kierkegaard will later call the magic magical tool of Hegelian philosophy. This is

9 In itself, for itself, in and for itself.

because Kierkegaard knows exactly that Hegelian philosophy is all meaning and no substance, so Hegel cannot include in his model something that is becoming something else, the *Tilblivelse* (becoming) (SKS 4. p.273.), and it is in order to solve this problem that he cooks up in his “witch’s kitchen” the magical category of the transitional state. In contrast, Schelling, of course in opposition to Hegel, puts the emphasis on the existence of reality. In fact, Hegel writes that

The bud disappears when the blossom breaks through, and one might say that the former is refuted by the latter. Likewise, through the fruit, the blossom itself may be declared to be a false existence of the plant, since the fruit emerges as the blossom’s truth as it comes to replace the blossom itself. (PoS.p.4., PdG. p.12.)

It is precisely this that Schelling disputes when he writes regarding the relationship between the real and the possible that it is like when we say, “The plant in the seed means the plant potentially, in *pura potentia*, while the mature plant is the plant in *actu*. Here, potential appears merely as *potentia passiva*, passive possibility, since the seed does not necessarily have the potential of the plant, as it also depends on external conditions for this potency to be converted into actuality - such as soil, rain, sunshine, etc. The mind’s cognition as potential also appears as *potentia passiva* (passive potential), when it is a capability that is able to be developed, and this depends simultaneously on external influences.” (S.W.II.3. p.63.) In simple terms, the Hegelian flower is *destroyed* if the soil, sun and rain are only logical constructions. We need to move from logic to reality, which is evidenced by experience.

And that’s what Narcissus misses. Ovid writes of Echo’s refusal:

“Here, let us meet together”. And, never answering to another sound more gladly, Echo replies “Together”, and to assist her words comes out of the woods to put her arms around his neck, in longing. He

runs from her and running cries “Away with these encircling hands! May I die before what’s mine is yours.” She answers, only “What’s mine is yours!”

Scorned, she wanders in the woods and hides her face in shame among the leaves, and from that time on lives in lonely caves. But still her love endures, increased by the sadness of rejection. Her sleepless thoughts waste her sad form, and her body’s strength vanishes into the air. Only her bones and the sound of her voice are left. (Ovid. 2000. III. 359-401.)¹⁰

“May I die before what’s mine is yours.” This is the rejection of the “different”, the other as it appears in reality. It is clear from Schelling’s intention that Hegelian thinking, since it only obtains in a world constructed and circumscribed by the intellect, is not capable of transferring itself into actual existence, and therefore cannot be free. The “Hegelian flower”, I repeat, never grows if it has no soil, if it is not watered, and if it receives no sunshine. It is clear, then, that the Hegelian construction is perfectly fine as a theoretical basis, but in order for it to work in reality, we must assign “reality” as such to it, or at least it is expedient to do so.

This serves as a message for those of us who may like to choose hastily or take the position that what, in theory, appears good or checks out—as they say—or seems pure and logical, is really as good as it seems. Too often we do not consider that these do not stand the test of reality or of *experience*. Testing these theories using experience seems like the obvious solution, but this cannot be the ultimate test, either. Just as the mind cannot go without experience, neither can experience be without a conceptual foundation. Schelling calls the philosophy described thus far, which is to say negative thinking lacking in experience, a priori science of reason (*a priori Vernunftwissenschaft*, see Schelling 2007. pp.127). It is a priori because it can only create a constructed world that exists exclu-

10 How Juno Altered Echo’s Speech. Narcissus and Echo.

sively in the world of concepts, which, though it can be advanced through thinking and reason, knows nothing about the reality of existence. *Goethe's* words may come to mind: "All theory is gray, my friend. But forever green is the tree of life." (Faust, First Part.)

Negative philosophy (See Gyenge 2005. Book II. Chapter IV.)¹¹ is negative because theory can only ever construct a concept of existence, while the reality of existence is closed to it (Gyenge 2020. p.103-129.). Note that Schelling, by including experience and by making existence a necessary factor, goes beyond every border denoted by German idealism and, to again borrow a term from Hegel, genuinely collides with irrationalities. (Hegel 1986. §.231.)¹² With Schelling, we can say that the tree of Goethe has, at the least, begun to bud, if not produce golden fruit. Schelling's goal is precisely to break down this boundary, using a less valuable tool that the Cartesian tradition had almost completely forgotten: *experience*. Despite this neglect, the alpha and omega of positive philosophy is experience, which transcends the world of theory, of construction, but preserves it as a prerequisite. As I said, one is not without the other, nor can it be.

But the point is: identity by itself contains nothing, is nothing, cannot be defined, even in the case that it serves as a starting point.

Before there was earth or sea or the sky that covers everything, Nature appeared the same throughout the whole world: what we call chaos: a raw confused mass, nothing but inert matter, badly combined discordant atoms of things, confused in the one place. There was no Titan yet, shining his light on the world, or waxing Phoebe renewing her white horns, or the earth hovering in surrounding air balanced

- 11 While it does not connect closely here, the concepts of positive and negative philosophy are the fruits of Schelling's later work. Simplified: he defines positive philosophy as that type of thought in which existence is primary, while the constructed and logical generalities are secondary. In contrast to this is negative philosophy, for which the opposite is true.
- 12 I am referring to the chapter titled "The Third Subdivision. Notion." („Irrationalitäten und Inkommensurabilitäten")

by her own weight, or watery Amphitrite stretching out her arms along the vast shores of the world. Though there was land and sea and air, it was unstable land, unswimmable water, air needing light. Nothing retained its shape, one thing obstructed another, because in the one body, cold fought with heat, moist with dry, soft with hard, and weight with weightless things. (Ovid 2000. I.1-20.)¹³

“Nature appeared the same”-as the poet says. One-faced, or faceless, without character or distinction: a “raw confused mass”. In this we see a single-faced Hegelian world. At the same time, we must be fair to Hegel. The path he shows not only must be walked by cognition, but also forms the basis of any interpretation on the basis of common sense. It must be the starting point, especially for judgment-formation. To understand the issue of mediation, you need to look more closely at the mechanism of judgment-formation, because no matter what we do in this world, we are constantly making judgments: this is a table, not a chair; this is an honest person, that one is a liar, etc. However, if I do not test this in the crucible of experience (in other words, if I do not actually determine whether the person is honest or a liar), then my judgment is only *preconception*, which is without experience. In pre-conception (*Vor-urteil*) the prefix refers to the lack of experience. In other words, I am judging in a way that has no empirical basis. For example, anti-Semitism is a preconception, and it is telling that it is well-documented even in places where there have never been Jews. Experience does not make much of a difference here. *Allport* writes quite a lot about this (Allport 1979., Katz 1991.).

The splitting of the same: creation

In the beginning there was only Chaos, the Abyss, But then Gaia, the Earth, came into being, Her broad bosom the ever-firm foundation of all, And Tartaros, dim in the underground depths, And Eros, loveliest of all the Immortals, who Makes their bodies (and men's bodies) go limp, Mastering their minds and subduing their wills. From the Abyss were born Erebos and dark Night. And Night, pregnant after sweet intercourse. With Erebos, gave birth to Aether and Day. Earth's first child was Ouranos, starry Heaven, Just her size, a perfect fit on all sides, And a firm foundation for the blessed gods. And she bore the Mountains in long ranges, haunted. By the Nymphs who live in the deep mountain dells. Then she gave birth to the barren, raging Sea Without any sexual love. But later she slept with Ouranos and bore Ocean with its deep currents, And also: Coios, Crios, Hyperion, Iapetos, Theia, Rheia, Themis, Mnemosyne, Gold-crowned Phoibe, and lovely Tethys. (Hesiod: *Theogony*. 116-135.)

Creation is always *separation*. The greatest German idealists studied theology and philosophy at the same time. The beginning of Genesis reads:

1. In the beginning God created heaven, and earth.
 - 2 And the earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God moved over the waters.
 - 3 And God said: Be light made. And light was made.
 - 4 And God saw the light that it was good; and he divided the light from the darkness.
 - 5 And he called the light Day, and the darkness Night; and there was evening and morning one day.
- (Gen. 1.1-5.)

Here, too, we find separation: God divided or separated the light from the darkness. This is repeated on a much higher level of thought in the Gospel of John. According to many, that separation's description comes from the influence of Gnostic philosophy. We

can also use the Book of John to understand Hegelian philosophy. It is no different in content from other creation stories, but its use of the “Word” raises it to the level of philosophy:

1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
 - 3 All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made.
 - 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
 - 5 And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
- (John. 1.1-5)

Philosophy explains the splitting of the Word starting with the general form of judgment (Urteil) (S. - c - P.). It is important to examine the nature of judgment because this is what performs separation and connection. In the case above, the speaking of a word (Word) is itself a separation. And, of course, it is also a connection. Why?

As early as Kant we find a distinction between certain forms of judgment (analytical, synthetic; therefore, many important figures of German idealism could not avoid this question. Judgment: the house (S) is brown (P). (The “c” is the copula, that is, the “to be” verb. Or this man (S) is (c) intelligent (P). (They are both synthetic judgments, but that is not important here.) This is most accurately described by Kant:

In all judgments in which the relation of a subject to the predicate is thought (if I consider only affirmative judgments, since the application to negative ones is easy) this relation is possible in two different ways. Either the predicate B belongs to the subject A as something that is (covertly) contained in this concept A; or B lies entirely outside the concept A, though to be sure it stands in connection with it. In the first case I call the judgment analytic, in the second synthetic. (CPR p.141., Kants Werke 1977. IV.p.20.)

That is, analytical judgment merely analyzes, it expands on what proceeds from the concept of the subject. Kant uses the following example: “All bodies are extended.” (Ibid) The body (S) is (c) extended (P), which adds nothing to it. On the other hand, the synthetic adds new knowledge to the concept of the subject that would never result from analysis. This is why all experiential knowledge also results in synthetic judgment. For example, it does not follow from the concept of a bag that it is red or brown. I have to look at it (to experience it) to correctly judge a bag’s color, or that someone is a horse blanket.

On this subject, it is worth mentioning the famous explanation of Friedrich Hölderlin in connection with the Fichte lectures¹⁴. Hölderlin writes to Schelling on Easter 1795, “Be calm, I know you will get to where Fichte did, because I was his student.” (Aus Schellings Leben, I.p.71.) Why does he think so? This is explained by the fragment *Urteil und Sein (Judgment and Being)*, which appeared at an auction in 1930. Originally, the manuscript was untitled, so it was not Hölderlin who gave it this title. It has been dated to 1795, which coincides with the above letter. Dieter Heinrich showed that it can be dated based on the changing orthography of Hölderlin. (Cf. in relation to this Weiss 2003.p.200.)

But let us examine the nature of judgment itself to understand the content of the spoken Word’s creation, in a philosophical sense. “Urteil” (judgment), if we take the original meaning of the word, is an “Ur-teil”, an “Ur-Teilung”, which

- is ancient or *originary (Ur)*, (“*in the beginning* was the Word”);
- means *division (Teiling)*, which is involved in “judgment” in that was originally same is divided in the act of a judgment being made; it is divided by judgment (S-P),
- so in other words the Word “was made flesh”

14 Hölderlin arrived at the University of Jena in 1794, where he attended Fichte’s lectures. He shared these with his former roommate, Schelling.

It is as if we were observing the subject (Word) and object (Body) being separated. First of all, the *separation* of the whole (the Word or, in the Old Testament, the sky), takes place. This separation at the same time (also) means a *connection* as a result of a projection. “God created the heavens and the earth.” That is, “from an intellectual perspective in the strictest sense this is the original division of an internally-united object and subject.” (Hölderlin 2000. p.52.) The subject is the Body, or the Earth.

In Fichtean philosophy, this “Urteil” is the “Ich ist Ich” (I = I) theorem, which provides ample evidence that we are talking something originary and indivisible (Ich, I), that we separate the subject (S = Ich, I) and predicate (P = Ich, I) from each other, as a result of which the original unit (Ich = Ich) is divided. But at the same time, consciousness is created through this separation, for this is the function of consciousness, because the beginning of all knowledge is the *differentiation of the undifferentiable*. The moment of creation. The moment of birth. Everything begins with this, all knowledge and existence. Separation, division, *differentiation from the same* is actually an act of origin, whether we think of biblical creation (heaven from earth, night from day, word from body) or Greek (Homeric or Pelasgian) creation myth, in which there is also talk of separation (land from the water). Everywhere, the basis for further existence is the separation of the original unit. *Genesis is nothing more than separation.*

Plato describes this in the story of the androgyne, in which he relates the origin of the human as an individual. In the *Symposium*, Aristophanes describes that the androgynes were both male and female united in one body. As he says,

There was one head for the two faces (which looked in opposite ways), four ears, two sets of genitals and everything else as you might guess from these particulars. They walked about upright, as we do today, backwards or forwards as they pleased. Whenever they wanted to move fast they pushed off from the ground and quickly wheeled over

and over in a circle with their eight limbs, like those acrobats who perform cartwheels by whirling round with their legs straight out.

And they were powerful and very strong. For this reason, Zeus split them apart with a bolt of lightning, because they had come to threaten even Olympus itself. Zeus say,

I think I have a plan', he said, 'that will allow humans to exist but at the same time put an end to their outrageous behaviour by making them weaker. For the present I shall split each one of them in half, and that will make them weaker, and at the same time they will be more useful to us by being greater in number. They will walk upright on two legs, and if they persist in their insolence and refuse to keep quiet I will split them in half again, and they will have to hop about on one leg only.

"After the original nature of every human being had been severed in this way, the two parts longed for each other and tried to come together again." They embraced each other, longing for union once more, „they began to die of hunger and general inactivity because they refused to do anything at all as separate beings”, which is to say they died of hopeless longing. It was all in vain, they were unable even to make love, as their reproductive organs were in back, and so they did not take place „not in the body after physical union but, as with cicadas, in the ground.”

Zeus had compassion on them:

By moving their genitals round to the front, Zeus now caused them to reproduce by intercourse with one another through these organs, the male penetrating the female. He did this in order that when couples encountered one another and embraced, if a man encountered a woman, he might impregnate her and the race might continue, and if a man encountered another man, at any rate they might achieve satisfaction from the union and after this respite turn to their tasks and get on with the business of life. (Plato 2008. 190.a.-191.c)

It is important to note here that the birth of the individual cannot be separated from sexual intercourse. And again, of course, we turn to Kierkegaard. And if it is through sexual course that one acquires guilt, then the individual, in the Christian sense, is indeed guilty, and this is as a result of the original sin. For original sin is passed on to on all human beings at birth. Had the first human not committed sin, there would be no individual, no humanity. That is to say, sexuality is created together with guilt (*Med Syndigheden blev Sexualiteten sat*) (SKS 4. p 357.), and the individual is from its origin a sinful individual. The individual's freedom can also be interpreted along these lines. Sin also means separation, the first human makes a decision, and he is judged (in the theological-moral sense of judgment.).

The same turned to other is forced to recognize what both have in common. This is recognized sameness. In fact, the divided being does not only recognize it, but it feels a desire for the other (its own other existence). "For each of us is a mere tally of a person, one of two sides of a filleted fish, one half of an original whole. We are all continually searching for our other half." (Plato 2008. 191.e.) He longs to have perfection (back), to return the state before the split. In Plato, the divided human becomes a lover; the androgynes want to be gods, even if only in the moment of desire. For this they need the most mysterious Greek god, Eros.¹⁵

Just as in the story Narcissus, Eros is the driving force. In this story, it leads towards destruction, but in a way, it is also a kind of reunion, or at least the elimination of duality. Romeo *and* Juliet, Tristan *and* Isolde, Abelard *and* Héloïse, Hero *and* Leander. The "and" vanishes with death. There is no duality. Death melts them into one. Time and space do not exist for them; there is particularly no time for them, otherwise they would not say to each other, "forever." All this takes place in a moment of desire, and this desire is

15 At the same time, this myth can have another meaning, according to which the supposition of the existence of the "completing other half" can easily lead to becoming lost in illusions and the denial of the self.

for “two to become one.” Is it reconciliation that can put an end to contradictions? In one sense, it is definitely one of its forms. After all, death in the ordinary sense is called reconciliation, and people wish for the dead to “rest in peace.” Whether this is accepted or not, who knows? One thing is certain: “we go our ways - I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows.” This is what Socrates says after his death sentence. (Plato 1999.42.a.) Let’s think about that!

The self-consciousness

The same thing happens in human consciousness: knowledge is created when distinction is created. This is what the “Ur-teil” (judgement¹⁶), “Ur-Teilung” relationship refers to. With this idea, the intellectual intuition (*intellektuelle Anschauung*) is placed above consciousness, as it contains within itself not only the act of separation but also the act of reunification, the act of self-consciousness. “How can I say,” writes Hölderlin, “I without self-consciousness? Yet how is self-consciousness possible?” (Hölderlin 2000. p.53.) Only by recognizing that which is *the same as me* in the thing that which has been divided from me.

The primary task of philosophy, again following in the footsteps of Kant, is to distinguish between the various forms of judgment, and it should be added at once that the *Ich ist Ich* judgment is not analytical, but synthetic, since “I” as a subject and “I” as the predicate of that subject have entirely different meanings. They are what we judge and what the judgment itself is, subject and object; or in judgment: subject and claim. The primary question is: where is the point where the subject and object are one without mediation, how and where does the separation takes place, and finally, how can the separated be made one again?

The act of separation takes place in consciousness (*Bewußt-sein*; literally: known existence), which by definition implies separation

16 See CPR. Introduction IV. Analytic and synthetic judgement.

(Wissen / Sein; knowledge / being), whereas self-consciousness (Selbst-bewußt-sein¹⁷) is already re-creating sameness, as the “personal I”, the “self” (*Selbst*) will create a higher-level synthesis of the two extremes. Consciousness will thus be the point at which this unity is formed, which again brings to mind Kantian reminiscences, since transcendental apperception is also an act of self-consciousness. What is this transcendental apperception? Kant calls the “ego cogito” (I think) theorem a pure apperception, which represents the unity of self-consciousness.

Combination does not lie in the objects, however, and cannot as it were be borrowed from them through perception and by that means first taken up into the understanding, but is rather only an operation of the understanding, which is itself nothing further than the faculty of combining a priori and bringing the manifold of given representations *under unity of apperception*, which principle is the supreme one in the whole of human cognition. (CPR. p.278. my emphasis)

Kant adds that this is the basic principle of cognition. The diversity of experience provided by perception becomes associated with the concept of the object through the transcendental unity of apperception. (CPR p. 246, Kants Werke 1977. III. p.136.)¹⁸ This takes place precisely through cognition: *ego cogito* - I think it. To be clearer: when I think of a house, I think not only of the house, but also that the person who thinks of the house is none other than myself. That is, everything I imagine is accompanied by the

17 Literally: the personal existence-become-known=self-consciousness

18 „The I think must be able to accompany all my representations; for otherwise something would be represented in me that could not be thought at all, which is as much as to say that the representation would either be impossible or else at least would be nothing for me.” German: Ich denke, muß alle meine Vorstellungen begleiten können; denn sonst würde etwas in mir vorgestellt werden, was gar nicht gedacht werden könnte, welches eben so viel heißt, als die Vorstellung würde entweder unmöglich, oder wenigstens für mich nichts sein.”

fact that I am thinking it, which will also form the basis of the intuition itself. “That representation that can be given prior to all thinking is called intuition.” (Ibid) Representation before thought is intuition, but that is not relevant now. The concept created by thinking will be what unites the dividing forces: the concept - say, “table” - means the object with four legs and a top, as well as the result in the mind that this is something I can express with the concept of „table”, and from now on it is enough for me say the word (concept): table. I do not have to point to it and say “look, that is what I mean.” As a result of the concept, everyone has some idea of what a “table” generally is. Then what kind of table it is can be narrowed down: round or rectangular, brown or white, etc. This is the realm of thought, which in turn models the realm of existence. This is by all means true in Hegel, since according to him the concept is capable of metaphysical movement and development.

I make my world: whatever I think, that is thought by me. To put it another way, the world is constituted, the way the *Lady of Shalott* weaves reality through the web of imagination. The Lady of Shalott is cursed: she is locked in the tower, where she weaves a web of things she sees in the *mirror*, as she cannot look out into the real world. As the verse reads, “But in her web she still delights, To weave the mirror’s magic sights.” Double mediation: mirror and fabric. Until the mirror splits, ‘Out flew the web and floated wide; The mirror crack’d from side to side; “The curse is come upon me,’ cried The Lady of Shalott.” (Tennyson) Cursed, like Hegelian philosophy. And yet how much could be learned from it!

Or let us consider one of the best-known quotes: “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away the things of a child. We see now *through a glass* in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know I part; but then I shall know even as I am known” (1 Cor. 13 11-12, my emphasis) The other manifests in the mirror. For a child, it is “from color to color,” like perception. Now, according

to reason, but dimly, as the other is also dim. Vision, however, becomes clear in the self, or at least makes an attempt to. The self wants to see clearly.

The identity of self

The self is created in the self-consciousness. Perception comes into being when apperception appears in it, or in Schelling's sense the *intellect*. (This is critical thinking, which concentrates not only on the object, but on the subject. For the dogmatic, the subject is secondary or is objectified. The dogmatic thinker sees me as an object, as does everyone else. Maybe they even see me as data, which can also take the form of everyday experience.) A dogmatic and schematic person does not like the intellect, because it is remarkably disturbing. It makes you think, and that is very disturbing. It is very comfortable not to think. To be undisturbed in not thinking is heaven itself. Referencing Nietzsche: just let me not stand out! Let me not stand out from the crowd, because that is an extraordinarily dangerous situation to be in. "Vengeance will we use, and insult, against all who are not like us – thus do the tarantula-hearts pledge themselves." (KSA IV. pp. 128., TSZ p.81.) If I remain dogmatic, then I am the ideal subject (sorry: object) for those who want to use me. And for me, everyone who exists in opposition to this is other. They can even become enemies, depending on what the one controlling the dogmatic wants. Because they always need a leader. "It is not the tyrant...." But we have already talked about this.

Schelling defines self-consciousness as where the "perceived" is the same as the "perceiver" (this is intellectual perception). Therefore, self-consciousness means a self-reflection within the thought process, which is to say an act, an unconditional free act. "The ability to intuit oneself therein, to discriminate oneself as thinker and as thought, and in so discriminating, again to acknowledge oneself as identical, will be constantly presupposed in what follows." (Schelling 1993. p.24., S.W.I.3.) The moment of self-con-

sciousness, the free act is the distinction between the thinker and the thought, which at the same time creates identity. It creates a concept that in its genesis is none other than the “I.” Thus, the “I” can be defined as the same discovered in difference. So, the “I” is a pure act, knowledge that has become actual, which is not only knowledge but also *action*. This unity is expressed by intellectual perception, above purely sensory perception. Its synthetic nature is also demonstrated in the fact that it is cause and effect, creator and creator, subject and object, as a result of the doubling of the self (“*Ich ist Ich*”). In connection to this, Schelling notes, similarly to the above, that the judgment is *a priori* synthetic because the “I” has no other predicate but itself. There is no other predicate, even that “something exists,” because the “I” is existence itself, which is to say we would enter into unnecessary repetition with a statement like this.

If we take Schelling’s arguments further, we can say, in Aristotle’s words, that the “I” is pure reality (ενέργεια) because it is originally unlimited, underlying (ὑποκείμενον, subiectus, zu Grunde liegend), limitation. (S.W. I.3. p 382., CPR. p.163.)¹⁹ It is self-limitation in that the subject itself positions something opposite itself (obiectus, Gegen-stand²⁰). The two terms also express this: subject=serves as the basis for something, object=stands opposite.

The question is: what is the basis of this limitation? As we have (and will) say in the case of freedom, there is no freedom without limitation, just as there is no unrestricted “I”, since the unrestricted “I” would preclude all other possibilities. The resulting self would be a sort of quasi-god, which is nonsense. Therefore, it is necessary to limit the “I.” But nothing can restrict the “I” but itself, so taking

19 See the concept of limitation.

20 Using the root words inside the object (Gegenstand): gegen=in opposition to something, stehen=to stand. I would add that the subject=serves as the basis for something, object=stands in opposition.

that into account we are talking about a self-limiting move, which is important because the individual is created by the self-restriction of the “I.”

We have known since Goethe that there is no humanity; there have always been and will always be just humans. The question of *individuum* and *dividuum* concerns not only philosophy, but also the whole of European culture. What is inseparable (*in-dividuum*) and what is divisible (*di-viduum*)? Who wants and dares to be himself is an *individuum*, that which is not divided? The fact that this comes with thousands of dangers hardly needs to be mentioned. On the other hand, a “*dividuum*” is a dogmatic person who is not strong in themselves, has no or little will, who has given away their individuality, and who/which is fit for no other purpose but being used, no different from how we use an axe or fork. In all cases, its ‘autonomy’ depends on how it is used. Its very existence is dependency. At the same time, it is no less dangerous, but actually even more dangerous, than a great evildoer. It is like the slave of Turnus Herdonius, who served his master gladly, but betrayed him at the first word of the tyrant Tarquinius Superbus and watched his lord being drowned with requisite cheer. Superbus had a saying that is eternally relevant: *Oderint, dum metuant* - hate me, only fear me. When there is a lack of self-consciousness, it will be replaced by something or someone other. Here we find another “other.”

Accordingly, in the act of self-consciousness, three moves can be distinguished:

1. The unified “I,” which is to say the original identity of the subject-object (before the “*Urteil*” in the Hölderlin sense);
2. The self-differentiation of the “I”, the duality of the observer and the observed, that is, when the “I” becomes both a subject and itself an object;
3. The reflexive move of the “I” by which the two coincide, the oneness of the observer and the observed (intelligence).

Or, at theological level:

1. the Word;
2. the Body;
3. that in which the two are united.

In the Christian sense, this person is Christ, he who is both divine (Word) and human (Body), both perfect and imperfect, infinite and finite, eternal and temporal. He dies and is resurrected. His death is the most human thing, for only a human can die, and his resurrection is proof of his divine (infinite, eternal, perfect) nature. Neither is the human who is an individual different: they are perfect and imperfect at the same time. Of course, Jesus is also the Son of Man - and the Son of God. Without these three moves, we cannot talk about the individual, the intelligence or the self, and only the self, the individual, can be free, and that is what is really at stake. One who is ready think, doubt, ask questions, and accept risk independently is an individual. The rest are just "objects." Or "tools."

The succession of moves in Hegelian philosophy, narrowing it down to logic, goes as follows:

However, self-consciousness is in fact the reflection out of the being of the sensuous and perceived world and is essentially the return from out of otherness. As self-consciousness, it is movement, but while self-consciousness only distinguishes itself from itself as itself, that difference as an otherness is, to itself, immediately sublated. There simply is no difference, and self-consciousness is only the motionless tautology of "I am I." While, to itself, the difference does not also have the shape of being, it is not self-consciousness. (PoS. p.103.)

The move of self-consciousness repeats that which takes place in the consciousness when this knowledge is given existing status. Thus, the difference in the self-consciousness ceases, which is to say, „however, what has now emerged is something which did not

happen in these previous relationships, namely, a certainty that is equal to its truth, for certainty is, to itself, its object, and consciousness is, to itself, the true.” (Ibid)

Self-consciousness is thus an act of self-identification with itself, whose insight and action is the already-mentioned the intellectual perception. None of this is an achieved, received, closed, and final state, but is rather a process characterized by constant dynamism. In this process, two sides oppose each other: the real and the ideal, objective-subjective, restricting and unrestricted. The tension of these sides implicates the inner struggle of the inner sides of a human. From a global perspective, of course, this process does not only take place at the abstract, generalized level, but can be traced throughout history in the schema of everything. This is because these moments are representative of each period, and philosophy itself becomes the story of self-consciousness.

Narcissus is far from having self-consciousness and thus a self as a result of which we could perceive him perceived as an individual. This is because the individual is the same found in the other. Narcissus, however, is a radical rejection of the other. As such, he is far from being free. The unfortunate young man wanders, longing for cognition, but unable to receive it. Because there is no one else (no other) to get it from. He does not realize that the other proceeds from him, and he could become a real being by the other. Thus the shadow of existence remains.

The nature of memory

The history of self-consciousness plays a special role in Hegelian philosophy. At the level of absolute knowledge, we are talking about a special experience becoming real. The spirit achieves absolute knowledge by stepping beyond each of the phenomenal layers of cognition and, at the same time, reaches the experience that the self-reflection or self-immersion of the spirit is technically a immersion into the night of self-consciousness; but at the same time

it is the rebirth of a new existence, a new world, and a new spiritual being from that knowledge. Based on these, two interconnected moves can be observed in parallel, one of which is a *production*, a creation, with which a perceived world on a phenomenal level is created; while the second movement is getting to know, to learn, this world, that is, *reproduction*. God created the world and then made it real to himself through Christ. This is presumably what was said in the Tübinger Stift when Hegel and Hölderlin were students there. We also find in the logical example previously discussed a process of creation and cognition side by side. Being created is not sufficient in itself for cognition. Creation is fulfilled in cognition and claiming, which, at the same time is also a re-production, in every sense of the word. In this way that which would merely lie before us as dead material comes to life and lives.

The dialectic of remembering and forgetting plays a prominent role in the question of identity, and it also demonstrates well how the Greeks thought about memory. The Greek goddess of remembrance is Mnemosyne. After nine nights of lovemaking with the lustful king of the gods, she gave birth to nine girls of the same nature. These became the muses. Of this Hesiod writes, Mnemosyne “who rules Eleutherai’s hills. She bore them to be a forgetting of troubles.” (Hesiod: *Theogony*. 54-55.) But Mnemosyne was also the name of one of the rivers of remembrance in the underworld, which was the pair of the *Amelēs potamos* (river of unmindfulness). The dead souls had to drink from the water of the river of Lethe, which is called the Amelēs, to forget at birth what had happened in on the plain of Lethe, so that they would not remember what fate they chose, as Plato describes in the last book of the *Republic*. (Rep. 614.a, 621.b.)²¹ Only the initiated had the privilege of drinking not from the River Lethe but the River Mnemosyne after their death.

21 This is referenced in the Myth of Er in the last book of Plato’s *Republic*. He describes that souls reincarnating from Hades first choose a fate, and then they must drink from the river Amelēs, which separates the fields of Lethe from the earthly world, upon which the souls forget everything.

In contrast to the Amelēs, in which the water of forgetfulness flows, the Mnemosyne contains the water of remembrance. According to other writers, everyone drinks from the waters of both rivers, but it is important to do so in the right balance. That is to say, for the Greeks remembrance is grace, but it is at least as much of a mercy to forget. It is no coincidence the sources of the two rivers are found in the same place. And, of course, it is no accident that the mother of the muse is oblivion. To put it in Nietzsche's terms, the Greeks created art so that they could repress the horror of existence, so that we may at least temporarily forget it, though not permanently. We must also keep in mind that Plato accurately describes forgetting in the Myth of Er. He words it as those who were not prevented from doing so by their common sense drank deeply from the river of forgetfulness. (Rep. 621.b.) Obviously, as we also see in the *Phaedrus* (Plato 1972. 249.e.), cognition is nothing but *remembrance* (ἀνάμνησις).

For Hegel also, cognition is remembering—Kierkegaard will object to this in due course—but it is more than that: it is simultaneously remembrance (*Erinnerung*, ἀνάμνησις) and internalization, the realization of itself (*Er-innerung*) (PoS. p.467. *PdG*. p. 591.)²². All this expresses that cognition (remembrance) is not simply epistemological. It does not only refer to learning things from the past, but is also ontological, as it creates. “The goal of the movement is the revelation of depth itself, and this is the absolute concept.” Or “the aim, absolute knowing, or spirit knowing itself as spirit. (Ibid. p. 467.)

The wording, that the spirit finds its path in the memory of spirits, is again a very eloquent expression of the true content of remembering.

22 This is impossible to translate in practice. “Erinnerung” means remembering or memory. Er-inner-ung (*inwardizing re-collection*) is, however, the separated “er” third person singular (he/she), while “inner” means inner.

Their preservation according to their free-standing existence appearing in the form of contingency is history, but according to their conceptually grasped organization, it is the science of phenomenal knowing. Both together are conceptually grasped history; they form the recollection and the Golgotha of absolute spirit, the actuality, the truth, the certainty of its throne, without which it would be lifeless and alone. (Ibid)

This is *history* and the science of knowledge, which mutually create “conceptually grasped history,” (Ibid) that is, “*Er-innerung*”. This history is the history of self-consciousness, some of whose phenomenological aspects it traces all along. In this, the recurring similarities between the thoughts of Hegel (*The Phenomenology of Spirit*) and Schelling (*System of Transcendental Idealism*) indicate a genetic relationship, despite the differences that appear at certain levels in their respect work, regardless of the later hostility between the two college roommates.

The intellectual intuition is that which brings unity (“in which producer and product are one and the same”) (Schelling 1993. p.27). The other perspective besides it is the *productive intuition*. The productive perspective does not consider the “I” merely as a perceiver but also as a creator, because, as Schelling puts it, “every other science presupposes the intelligence as already complete, the philosopher observes it in its genesis, and brings it into being, so to speak, before his eyes.” (Schelling 1993. p.73.). Thus, intelligence is not something we receive in a finished state (intelligence is not given at birth—though I do not think I needed to spell that out), but something that must be created, in relation to the world to be precise. This confrontation is a dynamic state, a struggle that really has no end. The essence of the struggle is that the “I” is in continuous “expansion” and “contraction” and is transformed into intelligence as a result of the forces engaged in this struggle inside it. Thus, inside the “I” different forces strain against one another; one strives for limitlessness, for infinity, while the other wants to limit, to restrict to finiteness. One power wants to be part

of an ideal world, while the other wants to retreat into reality. It is a constant struggle, and it is where intelligence is born. This constant struggle was studied also by natural philosophy, knowing full well that there is an inner dynamism in nature whose basis is the dialectic between finite and infinite. (Förster 1984. pp. 179.) When we consider the human, we find that the two sides are in constant struggle with, and this is not necessarily a description of schizophrenia. I want to be better and more, but I must constantly be faced with my limitations. I want to be the strongest, most beautiful, the smartest; I want to be immortal, to create tremendous things: these are the wondrous dreams of a child. The child dreams beauty and fairytales. Becoming an adult is a slow but painful awakening.

The Greeks asked the question the most tragically: Can the same remain the same and the whole remain whole? Can the self-remain the self? We find this staged not just in the myth of Narcissus, but also in creation myths. There is something that controls almost every process. Love (Eros) is made into a force that simultaneously separates and holds together. It is the most ancient element, present at the very beginning of creation. Plato writes in the *Symposium*:

Socrates, in body and in soul, and when we reach maturity it is natural that we desire to give birth. It is not possible to give birth in what is ugly, only in the beautiful. I say that because the intercourse of a man and a woman is a kind of giving birth. It is something divine, this process of pregnancy and procreation. It is an aspect of immortality in the otherwise mortal creature, and it cannot take place in what is discordant. Now, the ugly is not in accord with anything divine, whereas the beautiful accords well. So at this birth Beauty takes on the roles of Fate and Eileithyia. For this reason, whenever the pregnant being approaches the beautiful, it is in favourable mood. It melts with joy, gives birth and procreates. In the face of ugliness, however, it frowns and contracts with pain, and shrivelling up it fails to procreate, and it holds back its offspring in great suffering. (Plato 2008: 206.c-e.)

This is the work of love, which disturbs the soul and does not allow it to rest. Schopenhauer imagines it in less sublime terms. For him, love is nothing but “sexual impulse” (*Geschlechtstrieb*). (Schopenhauer 1958.p.533., Schopenhauer 1844. p.626.)²³ How beautiful and uplifting. From Schopenhauer’s point of view, to hell with you if you fall in love instead of reading philosophical tracts.

According to Plato, love is the thing that triggers remembering (Plato 1972. 249.d.), which simultaneously separates and reunites. Love is the type of discord that ends in reconciliation, through unifying or in death. There are countless examples of death (the story of Hero and Leander or of Laodamia), fewer of unification. Yet the most beautiful story about this that ever existed was the tale of Philemon and Baucis, and it does not come to us from Plato. Zeus and Hermes, in disguise, visit a place where ask for shelter but are refused everywhere.

There is a swamp not far from there, once habitable land but now the haunt of diving-birds and marsh-loving coots. Jupiter went there, disguised as a mortal, and Mercury, the descendant of Atlas, setting aside his wings, went with his father, carrying the caduceus. A thousand houses they approached, looking for a place to rest: a thousand houses were locked and bolted. But one received them: it was humble it is true, roofed with reeds and stems from the marsh, but godly Baucis and the equally aged Philemon, had been wedded in that cottage in their younger years, and there had grown old together. They made light of poverty by acknowledging it and bearing it without discontent of mind. It was no matter if you asked for owner or servant there: those two were the whole household: they gave orders and carried them out equally.

They greet the gods and offer them a dinner according to their modest means, until they discover who is hiding under those pauper’s clothes:

23 Cf. *Metaphysik der Geschlechtslehre*.

The old man pulled out a bench, and requested them to rest their limbs, while over the bench Baucis threw a rough blanket. Then she raked over the warm ashes in the hearth, and brought yesterday's fire to life, feeding it with leaves and dried bark, nursing the flames with her aged breath. She pulled down finely divided twigs and dry stems from the roof, and, breaking them further, pushed them under a small bronze pot. Next she stripped the leaves from vegetables that her husband had gathered from his well-watered garden. He used a two-pronged stick to lift down a wretched-looking chine of meat, hanging from a blackened beam, and, cutting a meagre piece from the carefully saved chine, put what had been cut, to seethe, in boiling water.

The gods then reveal themselves and, in exchange for the hospitality they have received, promise to fulfill the wish of their hosts. Just en passant: everyone else is destroyed by a flood. The story of Noah and Sodom in one – the Greek version.

We ask to be priests and watch over your temple, and, since we have lived out harmonious years together, let the same hour take the two of us, so that I never have to see my wife's grave, nor she have to bury me.

That the two should be one forever. That the other should disappear forever. To make the “and” between Philemon and Baucis permanently null and void. Their desire is fulfilled:

The gods' assurance followed the prayer. They had charge of the temple while they lived: and when they were released by old age, and by the years, as they chanced to be standing by the sacred steps, discussing the subject of their deaths, *Baucis* saw Philemon put out leaves, and old *Philemon* saw Baucis put out leaves, and as the tops of the trees grew over their two faces, they exchanged words, while they still could, saying, in the same breath: “Farewell, O dear com-

panion”, as, in the same breath, the bark covered them, concealing their mouths.” (Ovid 2000, VIII.611-726.)²⁴

“They spoke of things past.” This is the basis of the identity of the self that manifests in remembering. Without remembrance, there is no identity. And if there were no forgetting, reason would collapse, the human itself would be destroyed. If there were no memory, identity would become nothing. Memory must be. In fact, memory solidifies the same, and forgetting preserves it, because the same and the other remember differently. The other is also the different. If the memories of one can be found in the same place as the other’s, this creates the wondrous illusion of union, to be one with the other, and thus to have the illusion of the other regained—in wood. As a tree, and not two people. Of course, this is also passing away, but it is also union as a new form of life. It is the latter that is emphasized in it. Even if it is an illusion, it is undeniably beautiful for one.

Let us face it, if the same is not Philemon and Baucis, if it is not a combining tree, then the situation is a little more complicated. In the case of the “I”, this system we use to relate concepts moves from the perception of nature to the self-perception of the spirit. The struggle is just beginning, and that is when the “other” appears. And it will not soon disappear. That is, if they do not become a tree.

II. Other

“He (Narcissus) has to make a choice without having all the knowledge. He does not know the direction or source of the sound, he does not know the music that the sounding melody of the sound creates in him, he sees the story, the background behind many small events on which his existence is built. (...) He must choose. But what between? And what makes your choice justified at all?” (Pseudo 2012. Chapter. The Artist)

The “other,” the different is at first glance indefinable. It is the mass, the formless, the unknown, often the rejected. It is the unwanted, sometimes the hated. It is who and what is “different.” How are others different? In any way. In color, smell, hair, eyes, shape, because they are either leaner or heavier: either state is supremely unbearable because it is not normal, right? When I encounter the other’s culture—which in some respects seems more “uncultured,” such as their language, which I do not understand and seems like strange jabbering, and no stranger can understand me, even though I talk to them loudly, slowly, practically going syllable by syllable, saying, “dooo yooouuu understand?”—they look at me like I’m from Mars. The “other” causes confusion. Who are they at all? At the same time, it is completely foolish to imagine this distinction as only between “residents” or “non-residents”, “those who speak the same language” or “those who speak different languages.” That is because difference appears even in the *selfsame*. For those with a minimal sensitivity in a philosophical sense, the “other” is there even among those who live here, even among those who speak one language

Odysseus, when he arrives in the land of the Phaeacians, is warmly received by the king’s daughter, snowy-armed Nausicaa. He is the other, the stranger. The servants, in contrast to their mistress, are terrified of him. The brave and crafty Odysseus—the “other”—appears naked in front of the princess and her no less beautiful servants, who are washing clothes in the creek. They are clean. The “other” is dirty, smelly, not even dressed, and he comes from the sea, which is to say he comes from afar. And whoever

comes from afar is probably an alien, and they can be dangerous. Their gods are also dangerously alien. And on top of that, their gods travel with them, as Schelling claims about astral religions. (Kierkegaard 2001. Notes 37/38, SKS 19. 11.) This is not by accident. The gods are as present to the Greeks under the mystical influence of Greek mythology as our neighbors are to us, that is to say and it is important to emphasize this: the Greeks did not believe in the gods as a Christian or Muslim believe, but they *knew* that the gods were among them. They lived together. Sometimes they even fooled around with them.

The story continues and this is less well known that the girl's father, King Alcinous, heaps gifts on Odysseus even though the latter is a suspicious alien (although the alien is always suspicious, in fact the two are synonymous). In return, the guest tells the adventurous story of his travels. The hospitality is unmatched, and the king commissions a wonderful ship for the use of the ocean traveler, so that he may return comfortably to Ithaca. Poseidon, however, punishes the Phaeacians. Why? Because they were so fair to the alien. This, then, does not pay. The king draws his conclusions in kind, and perhaps this is the first "don't be welcoming to strangers" that we find in history:

Oh no—my father's prophecy years ago ... it all comes home to me with a vengeance now! He'd say Poseidon was vexed with us because we escorted all mankind and never came to grief. He said that one day, as a well-built ship of ours sailed home on the misty sea from such a convoy, the god would crush it, yes, and pile a huge mountain round about our port. So the old king foretold. Now, look, it all comes true! Hurry, friends, do as I say, let us all comply: stop our convoys home for every castaway chancing on our city! As for Poseidon, sacrifice twelve bulls to the god at once— the pick of the herds. Perhaps he'll pity us, pile no looming mountain ridge around our port." (Homer 1999. Book XIII.)

“Stop our convoys home for every castaway (= alien) chancing on our city!” So speaks the noble king. This is much more viable than to welcome them. This attitude, we believe, seemed completely natural at the time, but it is even more so when seen from today’s world. This is because the wanderers of the sea, the Greeks, as well as the Egyptians and Phoenicians, in addition to clashing with each other, were forced to rely on each other. Cooperation was not only natural but also contained an element of self-interest when it came to defense. They provided help they could call on each other’s help in times of need. All this was an interesting feature of the lives of the peoples of the seashore, a special mixture of distrust and cooperation. The sea, the unknowable and inexhaustible, the fearsome and incomprehensible, played the most important role in their lives. It is no coincidence that the Greeks, as mythology shows, populated the world of the imagination with a plethora of sea monsters. The sea is big and unpredictable, but it is also a source of life. Their creation myths are testament to this, as *Ὠκεανός*, the sea of the world, plays a decisive role in each of them. Life comes from water, but it is also lost there. And reality is often very ugly. “Earth-shaking Poseidon,” as Homer names him, is one of the most formidable deities. Odysseus owes almost all his sorrows and bitterness to him. And Poseidon does not want those who suffer his wrath to be helped, so he afflicts the Phaeacians, unless he gets a nice, tasty sacrifice.

The same and the other

Yet the other has a special relativity. In the first instance the “other” is always different in relation to something, for example in this situation you are the other, and for you I am. However, the other of something is not independent of its existence in its own private reality, that is it does not have its *own* otherness, and as such it belongs to it to the greatest degree; the two affix each other. In-itself (the hyphen is not accidental) neither can be understood.

The other is different as a result of distinction, but the alienated can also be myself. Why? Because I can be alienated not only from others, but also from myself. In *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, which I quoted earlier, Hegel accurately describes the process by which consciousness slowly recognizes, through its sensory-perception, that its other is not independent of it, not a stranger, but itself, its own, which is nothing but knowledge of itself through the other. In the last pages of the chapter on consciousness, he reveals the essence of the whole process: in cognition, the cognizer and the cognized are present as two extremes, and the mediating element (the middle) coincides as a result of the phenomenon (*Erscheinung* = *Er-scheinen*, that which emerges is the self itself; the way the two extremes disappear is the way the mediating center does.

Raised above perception, consciousness exhibits itself as merged with the supersensible world through the mediating middle of appearance through which it gazes into this background. The two extremes, the one of the purely inner, the other of the inner gazing into the purely inner, have now merged together, and just as they have vanished as extremes, the mediating middle, as something other than these extremes, has also vanished. The curtain is therefore lifted away from the inner, and what is present is the gazing of the inner into the inner, the gazing of the *non-distinguished* “like pole,” which repels itself from itself, positing itself as a *distinguished* inner, but *for which* there is present just as immediately the *non-difference* of both of them, *self-consciousness*. It turns out that behind the so-called curtain, which is supposed to hide what is inner, there is nothing to be seen if we ourselves do not go behind it, and one can see something behind the curtain only if there is something behind the curtain to be seen. However, at the same time it turns out that one cannot without any more fuss go straightway behind the curtain, for this knowing of the *truth* of the *representation* of appearance and of appearance’s inner is itself only the result of a complex movement, through which the modes of consciousness that go from meaning something, then to perceiving, and then to the understanding itself all vanish. It likewise

turns out that the cognition of *what consciousness knows while knowing itself* requires still further circumstances. The exposition of those circumstances lies in what follows. (PoS. p.101.)

That is, there is nothing behind the “curtain” (*Vorhang*), neither that which sees nor that which can be seen. It is not difficult to conclude that we (*wir*) are both the ones we observe and the ones who are observed. That the two are the same is therefore self-evident from this.

Translated: Let us say I am Narcissus seeing an image of myself. I am the seer (Narcissus), that is what is seen (Narcissus’ image). These are the two different extremes. The mediator is the phenomenon appearing in my vision, in this case the surface of the water. Narcissus sees the other, which is not he but another, but he does not understand that it is *his* other. Hegel thinks a little differently than Pseudo Kierkegaard. He describes how the two extremes (*Extreme* in German as well), Narcissus and the image, are united. The cognizer thinks that there is some curtain between the two (Narcissus/image) that separates the two and also hides, which separates and does not allow complete penetration. But the curtain does not cover, or rather does so until we draw it aside, until we do not want to look behind it, because in that case it is revealed that there is nothing to see behind the curtain (*nichts zu sehen ist*) unless we ourselves step behind it (*dahintergehen*) in order to see and also to have something that can be seen there (*das gesehen werden kann*). (PdG. pp.135-136.)

How often he gave his lips in vain to the deceptive pool, how often, trying to embrace the neck he could see, he plunged his arms into the water, but could not catch himself within them! What he has seen he does not understand, but what he sees he is on fire for, and the same error both seduces and deceives his eyes. (Ovid 2000. III. 399-431)

The two will thus be one. The difference between Hegel and Pseudo Kierkegaard²⁵ is precisely that, while for Hegel self-consciousness begins here, for Pseudo Kierkegaard self-consciousness becomes real and authentic in destruction. Or, more precisely, in death. Because in this case, death justifies the self's existence. (How many of us will treat death like this? Very few.) He perishes in recognition. He dies by dreaming himself into poetry. The fate of Narcissus is that, by recognizing the unity of the two worlds, he realizes precisely that he can no longer be divided into two. That is, his only chance is to fall. His blood does not rain useless to the ground.

It is as if Pseudo Kierkegaard is looking at *Caravaggio's* famous painting *Narcissus* (1597-99) as he writes about Narcissus, even though the unfortunate Dane was notoriously not interested in the fine arts: "But looking at the moment changes everything. It brings the storm that completely shatters the soul of the young man. Seeing the image does not mean knowledge, much less understanding, only its infinity increases desire." Pseudo Kierkegaard 2012. *ibid*) Is this life? Who knows? Rather, it is destruction itself. Narcissus becomes a work of art. The stranger, the other will become one with the self. And from the blood of narcissus come the flowers bearing his name.²⁶ Caravaggio's picture is perfect (among other things) because it depicts Narcissus alone. There is no Echo, no nymph, not even a dog beside him. No. Being Narcissus is a lonely "occupation." Besides Caravaggio, few have perceived this. Perhaps *Gyula Benczúr* is an exception. The slightly twisted figure

25 Pseudo Kierkegaard is an interesting figure. On the one hand, he is a devoted Hegelian. On the other, he almost definitely uses Hegel and Schelling in an unscientific way, on the principle of "let it fall where it may." He cannot be taken very seriously.

26 Flowers growing from blood is a favorite motif in Greek mythology. Hyacinth, the son of Spartan king Amyclus, was the lover of Apollo, who accidentally struck him with a discus and killed him. From the blood of Hyacinth grew the crimson hyacinth flower.

of Narcissus on the cover of the volume says everything about the tragedy of beauty turning in on itself. I reach for that, but I can never touch it.

For Hegel, *mediation* between the two sides creates the temporary and apparent unity. But Hegel adds that it is not that simple: it requires even more precise circumstances. Without exaggeration, I think you must start studying his work with this one sentence, as here the author reveals everything. He could have even finished with it. That he did not is praiseworthy, otherwise we would know nothing about how the other becomes a stranger and how the enemy appears. Of course, this is exactly what everyone who has read *The Phenomenology of Spirit* knows (and I know everyone has read it, at most they have kept having done so a secret, or they have forgotten they read it): the unity of self-consciousness does not stop here, but is confronted with the *other self-consciousness*, which becomes the “other.” The two extremes are reborn, and only that, they are already in conflict.

Master and Servant

This is the *master-servant dialectic*. (see *Mastery and Servitude*, PoS p.108.) To translate it into today’s terms: it is the relationship between the same (I) and the other (Not-I, You). According to Hegel, the conflict between the two is the law. The struggle between myself and the alien (to whom I am the alien; and yes, from here on that person is no longer “other,” but “alien”)

- ◇ is for freedom
- ◇ and existence.

This strife is cruel and merciless, and it is life-or-death. The opposition of the two worlds become truly extreme in this conflict. “For self-consciousness, there is another self-consciousness; self-con-

sciousness is outside of itself. This has a twofold meaning. First, it has lost itself, for it is to be found as an other essence. Second, it has thereby sublated that other, for it also.” (PoS p. 109.)

This fight appears to be for existence and freedom, but they are really fighting for *recognition*. The issue of the two opposed subjects, Hegel of course writes not a word about this but never mind is that they are mutually alien to each other. Hegel uses the expression “other” (*das Andere*), and he sets the concept of the “self” (*sich selbst*) in opposition to it. It can be easily acknowledged that both are *alien* from the perspective of the other. The fight, meanwhile, appears to be for existence. But this really is just how it appears. What is at stake is really to achieve *freedom* through recognition. One and the other both want to be free. Each wants to be recognized by the other. The fight is for this, even at the cost of killing the other or of one’s own death. “And it is solely by staking one’s life that freedom is proven...” (PoS p.111.)

The struggle ends when one abandons their freedom in exchange for their life while the other clings to freedom even at the cost of their life. The latter becomes the “master” while the other the “servant” or slave. One is only recognizer, the other is only recognized. The relationship that comes into being as a result of this is two-sided but unequal, which is the cause of the tension. “However, what prevents this from being genuine recognition is the moment where what the master does with regard to the other, he also does with regard to himself, and where what the servant does with regard to himself, he also is supposed to do with regard to the other. As a result, a form of recognition has arisen that is one-sided and unequal.” (PoS p.114, PdG p.112)

Once more: the master (I as same) gets freedom *and* life, while the servant (you as alien) only gets life. One becomes an independent being, while the other becomes dependent, either through its recognition or the lack thereof. One becomes dependent because it relies on the other for everything. That is alien to it. The servant gives up their freedom in exchange for their life, as do so many these days: happily, whistling, saying, “Well, never mind, freedom wasn’t

doing me any good anyway. Life, well, that is, that's.... Yes! Let's eat, drink, and celebrate the thousand-year empire! Freedom? No! I don't even know what that is. Where would I put it?" As Nietzsche says, „for ability-to-stand is a merit in courtiers; and all courtiers believe that to blessedness after death pertains- permission-to-sit!" (KSA p.254, TSZ p.161.) And when an entire nation feels this way, that is despotism, because let us not forget that it is not the despot that creates the slave, but the slave the despot. The Greeks knew this, too. The tyrant meanwhile rubs his hands together with satisfaction and smiles contentedly. Order comes before all else. I would sell not only my freedom but my own mother for order. Tell me: what is freedom good for? Can I buy bread with it, erect a circus, build a road? Of course not. How good it is to be dependent! How good it is to be a slave!

The master-servant relationship's polarity changes. I am not going to go into detail about this. I am just mentioning it. The masters separate themselves from nature, which is transformed, while servant shape it through their actions (they must serve), and they change not only nature, but themselves. Self-enclosed beings become masters, and they who become the engines of change are the servant. The tension deep down is constantly growing. It is like a dormant volcano: the longer it waits to erupt, the bigger that blast will be. This unequal recognition brings with it abjection and loss of rights, so that it only requires a spark to create an explosion. The two exchange sides again and again and again. A Bastille, then an emperor, then barricades, then another emperor. And it continues. This is why every system can be sure that nothing lasts forever, even if drama returns as comedy. Why do the mini-dictators and the not-so-mini-dictators not read Hegel or Plato? Or why do they not listen, if they read them? The whole thing is like a dormant volcano whose eruption is held back by the pressure of what covers it. The pressure and repressed tension grows ever greater, even though there is no sign of it on the surface. According to volcanologists, the longer the pressure builds, the bigger the explosion will be. It is the same way in a society: however long freedom is denied, and

the situation remains (to all appearances) calm, the bigger the eventual explosion will be, the greater the resulting suffering and pain that come with the fall will be.

The other who struggles for recognition is the alien, and what appears embodied in the alien behind the conflict is a third concept, the *radical concept* of the alien, which is none other than the *enemy*.

The Veiled Image at Sais

And if it is a curtain that the different (or the same) and the other (or I-as-same) are behind, then we must mention one very important story, which can even be taken as paradigmatic in the question of the same and other. In the case of one of them it is a question of truth, while in the other case a new Narcissus story emerges.

Curtain or veil. Does it divide or hold together? What does it cover? What does it hide? What could be behind it? Hegel, after all, speaks of a curtain. *Friedrich Schiller's* ballad about the veil of Sais (*Das verschleierte Bild zu Saïs*) stages this spectacularly.²⁷ A young man who did nothing in his life but impatiently seek the truth stands in the middle of an Egyptian temple and sees a giant shape hidden by a curtain.

*Does yonder veil beneath its folds conceal?
 "The Truth," is the reply. — "What," cried the boy,
 Tis nothing else but Truth that I pursue, Tras
 And must I find that just that Truth is veiled?*²⁸

The truth. It stands before the priests, who have never felt compelled to yank the veil from the "truth." They are much wiser. The essence of the veil of Sais is precisely in the covering. But then what is the truth? (We can read this question in two ways.) The young

27 I analyzed the story in detail in my book titled see Gyenge 2016.

28 Trans. E.P. Arnold-Foster (*The Veiled Image at Sais*)

man cannot control himself. He must know the truth. Although even one-day-old souls know exactly that they need to drink from the water of the Lethe, (Plato 1970. 614.a-621.b.) which causes everyone who drinks from it to be fortunate enough to forget the truth, to forget fate and their own destiny. He pulls the veil aside. The next day he is found half-conscious in the church. He never talks about what he saw. All he says is: „Weh Dem, der zu der Wahrheit geht durch Schuld: Sie wird ihm nimmermehr erfreulich sein.“

Which is to say, “Woe—for she never shall delight him more! Woe,—woe to him who treads through guilt to Truth!” (Schiller 1876-79. 85.) On every level, this means that *one cannot reach the truth easily, simply, or without hard work.*²⁹ If one does this, truth punishes the desecrator of its sanctity. Plato’s cave dweller must be made to know that the road leading upwards is tiring and difficult, and the cave dweller must be brought along it by force. “And if, ‘I said’, someone dragged him away from there by force along the rough, steep, upward way and didn’t let him go before he had dragged him out into the light of the sun, wouldn’t he be distressed and annoyed at being so dragged? And when he came to the light, wouldn’t he have his eyes full of its beam and be unable to see even one of the things now said to be true?” (Plato 1970, 516.a, 517.a.) This is universal: there is no freedom without knowledge, and the reverse also holds true. For Plato’s cave-dweller knowledge comes with the yearning for freedom, and then with the feeling that all the other “eternal slaves” who are sitting chained in the cave must be freed, and that can be accomplished with knowledge. But knowledge requires work—as we have seen—and the slaves are perfectly happy among the others in the warm and dim cave.

29 Hegel argues the same, writing, “this is so because the subject matter is not exhausted in its aims; rather, it is exhaustively treated when it is worked out. Nor is the result which is reached the actual whole itself; rather, the whole is the result together with the way the result comes to be.” PoS. p.5.

They would be crazy to abandon the idyll of their ignorant and servile condition for the sake of freedom and knowledge. What do they do instead?

And if he once more had to compete with those perpetual prisoners in forming judgments about those shadows while his vision was still dim, before his eyes had recovered, and if the time a needed for getting accustomed were not at all short, wouldn't he be the source of laughter, and wouldn't it be said of him that he went up and came back with his eyes corrupted, and that it's not even worth trying to go up? And if they were somehow able to get their hands on and kill the man who attempts to release and lead up wouldn't they kill him?

Platon's (Glaucón's) answer is as follows: "No doubt about it." (Ibid 517.a.) Knowledge requires work. Only the palsied prophets get it for free, though they are celebrated by the enslaved masses. "Wisdom wearies, nothing is worthwhile; you shall not crave!" says Nietzsche, who then adds, „this new table found I hanging even in the public markets. Break up for me, O my brothers, break up also that new table! The weary-o'-the-world put it up, and the preachers of death and the jailer: for behold, it is also a sermon for slavery (*Knechtschaft*).” (KSA IV.p.258.) To paraphrase Nietzsche: only chase the dogs away from me, the lazy hiders and the busy swine.

According to the other version of the legend of Sais, those who draw aside the curtain covering the truth find nothing. Or perhaps they do? Schiller is sure they do, as is *Novalis*. I repeat: the truth punishes those who demean it. Those are the sort of people who demand the truth immediately, without putting in the work it demands. They are the sort who go to fortune-tellers and seers, and they deserve what they get.

Novalis tells this story in a different way. Truth does indeed punish the one who violates it. But how? *With himself*. This is exactly what happens in Novalis's *Die Lehrlingen zu Sais* (*The Novices of Sais*), in a very philosophical way. It is no accident that Novalis once shared a schoolyard with Hegel and Schelling. The most interesting part of his work is the comment he affixed to it. I must

quote it exactly, so that we may feel the entire weight of these words: „Einem gelang es – er hob den Schleyer der Göttin zu Sais – Aber was sah er? Er sah – Wunder des Wunders – Sich selbst.“

It punishes with *himself*. The sentence in its entirety goes like this: “Nevertheless, one person did succeed—he raised the goddess of Sais’s veil—and what did he see? Wonder of wonders: himself.” He came searching for the other and found himself, just like Narcissus. Is it not awful? The same found in the other. This could be called a cathartic experience, if we keep in mind Kierkegaard’s warning that the human experiences much loss, whether that is a coat, umbrella, or an arm. The loss of the “I” is easiest of them all.

But to become fantastic in this way, and thus to be in despair, does not mean, although it usually becomes apparent, that a person cannot go on living fairly well, seem to be a man, be occupied with temporal matters, marry, have children, be honored and esteemed—and it may not be detected that in a deeper sense he lacks a self. Such things do not create much of a stir in the world, for a self is the last thing the world cares about and the most dangerous thing of all for a person to show signs of having. The greatest hazard of all, losing the self, can occur very quietly in the world, as if it were nothing at all. No other loss can occur so quietly; any other loss—an arm, a leg, five dollars, a wife, etc.—is sure to be noticed. (Kierkegaard 1983. pp. 70. SKS 11.)

Is it the self that is so terrifying? Or is it the identity found in the other? Do we all become narcissuses the moment our own selves appear to us? Yes. The self is a terrifying thing, which causes terrible restlessness. It is much more pleasant and easier without it.

The loss of the self does not happen in the other, by the other, or despite it. The loss happens “on its own.” It is therefore no accident that people yell, rage, and curse when they encounter it. Those people lack a certainty of spirit, so like the Platonic soul who chooses incorrectly (Plato 1970, 619.c,d)³⁰ they curse everyone

30 When the souls choose their fates, they are warned that they must consider

but themselves. The finding of fault in the other is, above all, the surest sign of weakness in the self, the complete lack of freedom of the imagination, because only in the world of the imagination can one be perfectly free. It is as though this were exactly what Kierkegaard were writing about when he said,

The philistine-bourgeois mentality lacks every qualification of spirit and is completely wrapped up in probability, within which possibility finds its small corner; therefore it lacks the possibility of becoming aware of God. Bereft of imagination, as the philistine-bourgeois always is, whether alehouse keeper or prime minister, he lives within a certain trivial compendium of experiences as to how things go, what is possible, what usually happens. (Kierkegaard 1983, pp.83-84.)

Without imagination there is no self, and without that people can finally be at peace. The move to unify in Hegel comes about through reconciliation (*Versöhnung*), as was previously mentioned. Unification could also happen as it does for the Greeks when Eros combines that which has been divided magically, just as in the Hegelian world the spirit reconciles contradiction and dissolves into discovering a new world. It is as though we were hearing Ovid:

Her prayer reached the gods. Now the entwined bodies of the two were joined together, and one form covered both. Just as when someone grafts a twig into the bark, they see both grow joined together, and

their choices carefully, because afterwards they can blame none but themselves. But humans are nevertheless fallible creatures: "And when he had spoken, he who had the first choice came forward and in a moment chose the greatest tyranny; his mind having been darkened by folly and sensuality, he had not thought out the whole matter before he chose, and did not at first sight perceive that he was fated, among other evils, to devour his own children. But when he had time to reflect, and saw what was in the lot, he began to beat his breast and lament over his choice, forgetting the proclamation of the prophet; for, instead of throwing the blame of his misfortune on himself, he accused chance and the gods, and everything rather than himself." See Plato: *The Republic* Book X.

develop as one, so when they were mated together in a close embrace, they were not two, but a two-fold form, so that they could not be called male or female, and seemed neither or either. (Ovid 2000, IV. 367-400)

Not two but one. Do not let the fact that in this world this can only be perfectly accomplished through death bother you. Hero and Leander, Abelard and Héloïse: we could continue this list, as I have described. Death ends the difference between two bodies. It ends the “and.”

The curtain exists between perceiver and perceived. Is it like Hegel’s curtain, which only shows what is hidden deep? Or is it like the curtain of Parrhasius, which seems to cover something,³¹ while the reality is the curtain itself. And the truth is the self itself. The other, which is oppositional at first, later becomes the subject of reconciliation, through which the same recognizes itself, or else it recreates its solid sense of self by destroying itself. It finds perfect reconciliation in death, not in the world, and not in the unity of the spirit. Then what or who is the alien? And what or who is the enemy?

31 Pliny tells the story in his *Historia Naturalis* in which two Greek painters, Zeuxis and Parrhasius, entered a contest to see which of them is the greater and more capable painter. Zeuxis, who was justly famous for his paintings, painted such a lifelike bunch of grapes onto the canvas that the birds landed on it and tried to pluck the grapes. Encouraged by this judgment of the birds, Zeuxis stepped in front of the canvas of Parrhasius and said that it was impossible that the painting behind the other artist’s curtain could ever match his own, and he told him to draw the curtain aside to show what he had created. This is when Parrhasius told Zeuxis that he could not, as the *curtain* was the painting. According to the story, Zeuxis admitted defeat. He admitted that while he had been capable of fooling the birds, Parrhasius had fooled him, the painter. According to the other variant of the story, Zeuxis painted a boy carrying a bunch of grapes that were so realistic the birds landed on them. When he heard this, Parrhasius became so enraged he exclaimed that he can fool not only the birds but people as well. This is why, when Zeuxis went to the gallery and sought a painting, he said that it was there behind the curtain. When Zeuxis tried to draw the curtain aside, it was revealed that the curtain itself was the painting.

III. Alien

*“St. Bartholomew’s night was a great sin
(...)
the majority of the nation
actively or tacitly participated in it;
armed to attack the Huguenots,
whom he considered aliens and enemies.”
(Prosper Mérimée)*

“The decision is made at the moment, not in time or space. Narcissus must decide. The image does not mean knowledge, much less understanding, it only enhances desire. The choice separates.” (Pseudo Kierkegaard 2012)

Pseudo Kierkegaard is a bit pathetic here, but this is indeed the meaning of the story of Narcissus. Narcissus, searching for the same, finds the other that stands opposite him, and then, when he recognizes himself in the other, in his anger and despair he wants to destroy that stranger, who is inside him. By doing so, by the way, he is destroying himself. But that is what interests me the least. He could do something else, for example reconcile with himself, but he did not read Hegel (even though everyone reads Hegel.) Or he could simply go step over that border, accepting the indifferent horrors of presence, reconciling with the other. He could marry Echo,³² he could have children, he could become a good military leader and slaughter neighboring populations in order to possess the pleasure that comes from otherness and to win glory for the same: the more foreign blood, the greater the glory. He could start a large family whose members would also feel and act that way, and so on and so forth, perhaps until the end of time. Then, at the end

32 How interesting that almost from its inception psychology has used the term narcissistic. In contrast, it only started using the term egoistical much later. This term refers to someone who subsumes their self entirely to another, who only repeats the other's words, in a manner of speaking.

of his boring life, he would be laid in a boring grave, above which a plain headstone gives sole evidence that there lies a boring man. Because the root of all evil is boredom. Moreover, Kierkegaard adds that if we need a starting point, we cannot go too far astray if we say that all people are boring. Boredom is just so enjoyable. All people enjoy boredom—it only causes them to stop existing. Boredom results in a kind of crowd, a faceless army of people who feel pretty good in this state, a state where instead of insufficiency, facelessness, and uniqueness you get uniformity, where quantity rules instead of quality. In the crowd, the herd mentality eliminates all responsibility, whether that is responsibility for oneself or for others. Action ceases and is replaced by a state of fixed, passive existence. This starts an endless process of leveling, and we can follow it back to the beginning of the world. The gods were bored, so they created humans. Adam was bored because he was alone, and therefore Eve came into being. And from that moment boredom also Since that moment, “from that time boredom entered the world and grew in exact proportion to the growth of population.” (Kierkegaard 2004, p.583. SKS 2-3.) The vast number of people in the world indicates neither aloneness nor the end of indifference.

Adam was bored alone; then Adam and Eve were bored en famille. After that, the population of the world increased and the nations were bored en masse. To amuse themselves, they hit upon the notion of building a tower so high that it would reach the sky. This notion is just as boring as the tower was high and is a terrible demonstration of how boredom had gained the upper hand. Then they were dispersed around the world, just as people now travel abroad, but they continued to be bored. And what consequences this boredom had: humankind stood tall and fell far, first through Eve, then from the Babylonian tower „Adam was bored alone, then Adam and Eve were bored in union, then Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel were bored en famille, then the population increased and the peoples were bored en masse. To divert themselves they conceived the idea of building a tower so high it reached the sky. The very idea is as boring as the

tower was high, and a terrible proof of how boredom had gained the upper hand. Then the nations were scattered over the earth, just as people now travel abroad, but they continued to be bored. And think of the consequences of this boredom! (Ibid)

This boredom is not Narcissus's, nor is it that of the self-destroyer, but it also not the desire of the person who wants to exist and does so by asking questions: it is fit only for rabble. Anyone who is human accepts responsibilities, even if doing so causes their downfall. Therefore, the saying that it is better to keep your mouth shut and be thought a fool than to open it and remove all doubt is not in the least bit true. In fact, it is terribly damaging. One must take risks and express ideas, because staying quiet is hiding, while speaking up means taking a risk. Those who hide quite simply lose their faces.

Conflict, communication, cooperation

At the same time, let us be fair. Three things have always existed in history. We can call them the three C's:

1. Conflict,
2. Communication,
3. Cooperation.

This is perfectly illustrated by the story of Odysseus. First, let me be clear: these are not necessarily mutually exclusive concepts, nor can we say, based on a misunderstanding of Hegelian principles, that any follows from the other. They can come in any order. Of course, when there is a greater degree of communication and cooperation, it reduces the likelihood of conflict. However, in the aftermath of a conflict, there may also be communication, and cooperation is not ruled out.

1. Conflict

The cause of conflict is almost always an attempt to preserve one's status as "same." A tribe, a family, a nation, in fact, defines itself by drawing a border around the actual or ideological territory it must protect. They are like the rhinoceros that marks its territory and attacks without any further provocation anyone who enters that territory, even accidentally. When this territorial principle comes into being, the *wall* also appears (more about this later), in an actual or ideological sense. This strengthens the cohesion of the same. We could say this is completely natural. It comes from human nature; after all, the human is an aggressive animal, as it has been from Cro Magnon to the present day. Kubrick's film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, when the ape realizes the bone can be used as an excellent tool, it also comes to the realization of

- ◇ the importance of killing for self-defense, but at the same time
- ◇ the importance of killing for food.

One who is capable of making weapons from animal bones can gain more sustenance, and—which is at least as important—can more easily defend that sustenance from strangers. In this way, that person—whether they mean to or not—establishes and strengthens their group belonging. If this does not succeed otherwise, this is achieved by and only by entering into conflict.

Along with this, another element arises when the goal is no longer self-defense but acquisition. This is, of course, the third component: aggression, the emergence of which is activated by the bone as weapon-tool-existence. If I can easily get the supplies, I need without having to take a risk (the mammoth has grown too big), I would rather take them from someone else. Doing so means less risk and effort for me. For this, the term "efficiency" was coined. This is what the Vikings did, and this was also what the so-called

“adventuring” Hungarians did.³³ (I always liked this euphemism: “adventure.” It is as if they were just going on a picnic, with cold cuts softened under the saddle, trading, traveling, carrying kalach and kumis in the baskets they wove. They did not rape, they did not plunder, and they did not set fire to villages, towns, churches, they only “adventured.” And rambled a little. Perhaps this is where the seemingly unstoppable process of our historical self-delusion originated from.)

And either there or in the slightly later “Cro-Magnon” there appears killing for *enjoyment*, which we can call a new element,

◇ killing for pleasure

After a while, a law had to be made because of this killing as an end in itself, for mere pleasure. This is even carved in stone as the “thou shalt not kill” command of the Ten Commandments of Moses. Of course, this is a bit wrong. Correctly translated, this is “thou shalt not murder,” that is, do not kill—out of self-interest. The Hebrew term (*Tircach*) means murder. Killing is different, since it is not always for selfish reasons. In fact, it may be legitimate, for example, for food. I can kill a mammoth if I am hungry (and not a vegan), but I cannot kill a mammoth out of passion. Even the law recognizes the legitimacy of killing in certain situations (e.g. self-defense), but not killing for self-interest. It is a matter of premeditation. From now on, we will consider these questions on the basis of natural law, in the rational world. This is also why it is unfair (I could stylishly say “unreasonable”) to compare animals to humans (more precisely: to compare humans to animals): the animal does not kill for pleasure, the human does. The goal of the animal is to obtain food or to protect itself. (This is despite an ethologist of our time concluding that self-serving aggression and killing are also present in animals. This may be, but it is not

33 “Adventuring” (“kalandozás”) is the Hungarian euphemism for the Hungarian invasions and raids into Europe c. 9-10th centuries.

universal, that is for sure. And we can never know whether the bonobo considers the human a model, or whether the human follows the example of the bonobo.) Aggressive conflict is definitely the domain of human difference. To put it another way, humans were created by and for conflict. Their lives are nothing more than a struggle for everything.

The struggle between the same and the alien is staged in conflict. This can be with an external or an internal other. An external conflict might be over territory: this is my territory, and I will defend it. “No trespassing! If you weren’t invited, you aren’t welcome!”—read the signs on the borders of many properties in the USA. And they will shoot, too. The law is on their side against the alien trespasser. Trespassing is ingression, and it meets with aggression. Because life is beautiful. At the same time, common sense tells us that nothing ensures survival quite like this way of seeing the world, at least not at first glance. But then again.

2. Communication

A second element must also be present, *communication*. Communication obviously does not involve going at each other’s throats, since it is a bit problematic to communicate or engage in a relatively meaningful exchange of ideas while strangling each other. Communication is instead a cognitive activity ruled by the intellect. Communication creates an opportunity for dialogue, which of course can lead back to conflict in a given situation, but perhaps that becomes less likely. If I communicate, the chances of conflict are much less than if I did not. At least while we communicate weapons and fists are (relatively) at rest.

Communication can help bring into being (or just support) understanding, and it can lead groups from conflict to cooperation. Both history and personal experience demonstrate that the complete lack of communication is often the cause of the most intense conflicts. This is true even in our personal lives. Kier-

kegaard calls this the “anxiety about the good” (SKS 4. p. 421)³⁴ Many of us have experienced times when we became so angry at someone we completely cut off communication with them, which prevented the tension from being relieved. It often happens even in romantic relationships that people stop speaking to each other as “punishment.” This results in more serious conflict, which often leads to complications the parties did not initially intend. “Anxiety about the good” therefore means that people often feel too good in conflict to do anything to end it, even though often one word would be enough to resolve a situation. But they do not, since it is such a good feeling to hate and to live in hate. This feels like home. We can add that hate undoubtedly increases group cohesion when members can hate the same things together. It hardly matters who or what they hate. The object of hate is designated, and the group follows the leader with aplomb. The object of our hate can be a person or even a duck. It does not matter. Orwell explained this very well. The only thing we cannot say is whether we are still before 1984 or after it. Or living it. Once that hate has been designated, communication only occurs inside the group. There is nothing to talk about with the other. That has only to be hated. In fact, it is treason to enter into communication with the enemy. The basis of hate is often blind faith, and reason often sleeps in these situations. This is why there is no reasoning with hate. Try to convince someone who hates that what they are doing is unreasonable. It is a pointless waste of your energy. They hate because it is good to hate. In these cases, hate becomes fundamental, and the person who hates becomes a fundamentalist.

On the other hand, experience shows that communication can stop the development of hate, simply by allowing each side to get to know the “other.” Many times the demonized other, as soon as we come into contact with them, ceases to be what we thought they were and becomes human. For that reason, those who hate truly do everything they can to avoid dialogue, and they know

34 And demonic.

exactly why. A devil can only be painted from a distance. On closer inspection, it may not be so dark (or red). It is well known that the human features of the object of hatred must therefore be eliminated. Creation (heaven, earth, light, darkness) was named by God and all creatures by man.

And the Lord God having formed out of the ground all the beasts of the earth, and all the fowls of the air, brought them to Adam to see what he would call them: for whatsoever Adam called any living creature the same is its name.

(Gen.2.19.)

Their names must therefore be taken from them. We have to turn them into data, because a number is not a person. Numbers can be hated; in fact, they can be erased. There are two kinds of hate:

2.1 territorial or

2.2 generic.

2.1 Territorial hate can be ended if the one I hate and do not communicate with *goes somewhere else*. History has numerous examples for this, such as the liquidation of nations and groups for territorial reasons. Genocide against Armenians, Kurds, etc. were of this nature. When they left the territory someone else claimed, they could escape. The pogroms against Russian Jews were like this. Those who emigrated from these zones to find a new home were not chased down by Cossacks seeking to exterminate them at all costs.

2.2 The most obvious example of generic hate was also directed at Jews: The Holocaust. It began as a territorial hate (we need only think of the unfeasible plan to remove all Jews to Madagascar). It only later became generic. It did not matter where the Jews were, they had to be hated. It made no difference whether they left or not, they had to be hated. They had to be exterminated

whether or not they fled, because they were not human. This was proven by them having a number and not a name. It was there on their arms, on the side of the railway carriage, and on the lists. However, there are examples of times that communication made it possible to dissolve the problem of namelessness even in this situation, because communication returns names to people. This is because we always communicate with someone. And through communication, the thing which enables us to hate is lost.

3. Cooperation

The slightest chance of communication creates the opportunity for cooperation, which is henceforth important, although the opportunity is constantly there: in principle, in any case. The freedom of the group is limited by its nature. If I define freedom the way the average person does, that is, if freedom for me is “I can do what I want and when I want,” I fail to understand anything about either freedom or my own life. For if it were true, if I were absolutely free in this way, I would become a quasi-god, but at the same time I would deny the freedom of everyone else, or at least restrict it, which would permanently endanger the existence of freedom. For if I can do what I want when I want, no one else can do what they want, either now or ever, at least not if it conflicts with my will. There is no point in talking about freedom after that. Schelling describes it very precisely: “in struggle, freedom always” becomes real. It is always born in struggle. Freedom, then, in the Schellingian or Hegelian conception, is not an acquired and eternal gift, nor is it a “forbidden fruit” that we steal a taste of; freedom is what one *wins for oneself through struggle*.³⁵ And not necessarily by destroying the other.

35 When I was translating *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit* (1809), I saw that this small book which had such an enormous influence on Heidegger is also hugely beneficial to people today.

The problem of freedom creates tension in both generally and individually, especially within a specific group. This comes from the relationship between the two, i.e., the conflict between the general ethical imperative and individual moral conviction. Let us consider a proposed law that stamp collectors should be persecuted in a country. On the other hand, I particularly love stamps, and I collect them myself. The general and the individual will be in conflict with each other. The question is: how can the tension between the two be eliminated? Can this tension be eliminated at all? Can the contradiction? It is to do so that Schelling reframes the Kantian categorical imperative, which in Kant is phrased as “act so that the maxim of thy will can always at the same time hold good as a principle of universal legislation”. (Kant, 2018. Book I. §:7., Kant 1977.)

That is, if you have the opportunity to steal, although you could steal you by no means would want there to be a general rule saying everybody should steal. This would be contrary to the urgings of common sense: if the general rule is for everyone to steal, that could negatively affect you. People could steal from you, too. This contradicts common sense. Thus, I behave rightly when I act in a way that can be made a general rule. Indeed, “do not steal” as opposed to “steal” can indeed become a general rule. This is true even if I myself steal occasionally, when I can. This can be transformed into a moral principle. (*S.W. I. 45. §.*)³⁶ This formulation seeks to bring something new to the Kantian categorical imperative in many respects, by emphasizing “action,” namely, by stating that action has an effect on the moral world and thus assumes the co-action of the majority. Co-action is the highest level of communication.

This is because, even though it is about the relationship between godly and human freedom, at its core it is about internal and external limitations without which freedom would be completely meaningless.

³⁶ *Neue Deduktion des Naturrechts* (1795.) The title stresses the importance of natural law. I am convinced that when we speak of any positive right, it defies understanding if it has no basis in natural law. I will return to this later when I discuss G. Radbruch.

This is the starting point for Schellingian jurisprudence, which, like Kant's, is based on the will, the wanting. Freedom in this case is freedom of will. There are three elements to this

- 3.1. Original rights, the lack of cooperation;
- 3.2 Compulsory rights, the possibility of cooperation;
- 3.3 Constitutional rights, the coercion of cooperation.

3.1. *Original rights* cannot yet be called rights, nor can Schelling take them seriously. At the same time, they form the basis of rights. The original will (because everything must have a starting point, in this case: the *Urwille*) is inherently unlimited in nature, its freedom is an unlimited freedom. This can only seemingly remain the case, since if it were to be unrestricted, as mentioned earlier, that would mean the complete abolition of freedom. There is no communication here.

Translated to our Cro Magnons, they assume that they are the most precisely circumscribed centers of the world (the way children do), nothing bad can happen to them, they can do anything. Then they encounter the other, which/who is the limit of our Cro Magnons' world. Their freedom already contained this subverting element. The Cro Magnons do not read Plato or Kant, which in their time would be a bit problematic, so they do not know that according to philosophy (the Greek, modern or even German idealism's conception of freedom) this question is vital, and therefore, with a few exceptions, they consider unlimited freedom, even as a concept, to be meaningless. Freedom does not, cannot exist without *restriction*. It is necessary to limit freedom, so the concept of freedom can be described not by *können* (what I am capable of) but rather by *dürfen* (what I may do). "Was ich darf, ist mein Recht." (What I am allowed to do is my right.) I only have the right to do what I am allowed to do. Law is thus the science of *dürfen*, which asks: What may I do? (Ibid. 95-104.§.)

Mostly without infringing on the rights of the other, the Romans

add. And if I already know it is my right to do what I may do, then all I have to do is answer *what* I may do. The question “what may I do?” is the same as asking, “What are the rights I was born with?” and the question of *original rights*³⁷ will be determining in this case. Let us take the idea that a person is born free and equal. This is an ideal that, however, has no reality. Its reality lies in its pursuit: striving to remain free and striving to be equal with others. It is “necessary” to strive against the real and towards the ideal. If the goal is impossible, so be it. I will return to the latter point.

What then are the rights humans are born with? It is important to know primarily that we have seen that unlimited freedom cannot be realized. There is no communication in this, since in this case there would not even be someone (the other) with whom to conduct a dialogue. Unlimited freedom will never be a reality, only an ideal. We have seen that Hegel agrees. This is the problem he describes in terms of master and servant or slave. Ideal freedom is, on the other hand, exclusively the freedom of the imagination. Its real field is not science but arts and philosophy. The imagination always enjoys unlimited freedom.

3.2 The law is an institution that creates restrictions to the will, where the originally unlimited freedom becomes constrained. Schelling names the second element *compulsory right*³⁸. The will is opposed by another will, just as in everyday life the will of one person is opposed to the other, and these limit each other; that is, what may be called a right is nothing more than a restriction. Thus, the legal system is the coordination of forces in opposition to each other, in which, in my opinion, two elements play a decisive role:

- ◇ Internal restrictions
- ◇ External restrictions

37 Urrecht

38 Compulsory or compulsive right (Zwangsrecht)

The basis of all this is the sovereignty of the individual, which of course includes selfishness and self-love. Breaking it down, compressing it, or more precisely limiting it is the basis of the moral world, which creates the possibility of communication. The essence of coercive law can be summarized in the fact that if one violates the moral freedom of the individual, that person will have the right to take action against their violator and will have the right to enforce their own rights. (Fischer 1902. p.297.) On the surface, this succeeds or fails depending on the power of the individual to enforce their own rights (what physical force they have at their disposal). This comes down to how hard our Cro Magnon can hit, and how hard the other, who can then be nothing but the enemy emerging from the alien, strikes back. The other is here. It should come as no surprise that to ask whether this was aggression or self-defense is meaningless, as is whether it was legal or illegal. Any who opposes me is the alien-become-enemy, whether I am justified or not.

However, asserting freedom by force is doubtful to succeed and is done arbitrarily using physical strength, so its outcome is highly unlikely. Force and arbitrariness again lead to physical coercion. Why? Because both sides (eg. both of our brave Cro Magnons) deeply believe in their own unlimited freedom. Their desire does not tolerate restriction. Both want to assert it by force, even if that is impossible. Today, we experience this most often when driving, even at the risk of someone's life. In more calm moments we see that both parties cannot be unlimited at the same time at each other's expense. If nothing else, the infinity of each is limited by the infinity of the other.

Recognizing this, a recognition that is painful even in the literal sense, provides an opportunity to create a more highly organized coexistence. This is guaranteed by the law, which up until now had not played a role in its organized form. It is in this that the possibility of communication is made possible, and it is simultaneously brought into being.

3.3. This realization reveals that the situation is untenable; therefore, it transforms into a system that is capable of enforcing rights without creating further violence, and this will be the third movement, constitutional rights.³⁹ It basically consists of this: if my rights are violated, my own rights will not be enforced by me, but rather I bestow that function to the sovereign power, so that they may do it. Constitutional law is a matter of agreement. The Cro Magnon comes to an agreement with the others (by entering into a pseudo- or actual contract) to entrust someone (the sovereign) to pass judgment over actions while avoiding tyranny, and they agree to accept the sovereign's decision in advance. This is where restriction enters the picture. This is cooperation in the strictest sense.

It is important to note that this interpretation is not at all a novelty in the history of philosophy, as others have come to the same conclusion in their analyses. We can already see it emerging around the 5th century BC (in *Critias*), (DK 1.Fr.25.)⁴⁰ and then several variants of it are formulated by some of the thinkers of the 17th-18th centuries (Grotius, Spinoza, Hobbes, Locke).⁴¹ Many theories of criminal law are also built on this principle, since if the goal is to avoid the *lex talionis* (an eye for eye, a tooth for tooth) as this principle, as they say, only “results in many, many

39 Staatsrecht.

40 The drama *Sisyphus*, of which fragments survive, stages a version of the formation of the state and religion, creating a very interesting theory of the state. At its core are agreement and a contract.

41 Let me use a simple example. If someone knocks me down in the street, it might be most direct for me to shove him back, but it is more legal for me to “go” to the courthouse and say that my rights were violated. I leave the enforcement of that to the bearer of sovereignty, the state. If I receive a wound that is healed within eight days, then I can report the person for unlawful wounding, but if the injuries are not that serious, then at most for battery. In the best case, the state institutions serve justice punishing the perpetrator (“shoving back”). In other words, if I take a stand based on my *Zwangrecht*, then I shove the person back, but I have to know, that this creates physical violence. If I do it based on my *Staatsrecht*, then I leave all of this to the state.

blind and many, many toothless people,” then the individual waives their own right to enact of punishment and “transfers” that right to the state as the bearer of sovereignty. This is the basis of the contractual theory of criminal law. If we take a closer look at this foundation of state law, even if this is not exactly an explicit contract theory, it becomes clear that it is a construction of natural law.

That is, the Cro Magnon “goes through” three stages.

1. In the first the Cro Magnon sets his own self-interest above all else, figuring it as the unlimited *same*.
2. In the second the *other* appears, which questions the Cro Magnon’s identity, so they either hit or get hit. They either assert their rights by force or are oppressed. This brings about the need for intensive communication, at least within the group, as the Cro Magnon will be incapable of defending themselves or of destroying the other alone. This is true of those living in the cave as well.
3. The third occurs when the mammoth appears, and if the Cro Magnon does not want the mammoth to be the victor, they have to talk with those beyond their immediate circle (nota bene: with the opposite individual/group), which is to say, they need to *communicate*. If they do not, they will become just a footnote in the pages of the history taught in mammoth school.

The basis of cooperation based in natural law is agreement, or at least striving for agreement. Nevertheless, agreement can be forced even in the absence of law, although that is tyranny itself. There have been examples of this in history. We can safely assume that the Parisian women, who until a few days previously had been living jovial lives, running up and down with the severed genitals of the Swiss guards of the Tuileries Palace did not pause before they did what they did to consider natural law and its modern application,

even though that is what made it possible to nullify the (social) contract and formed the basis of the right of resistance. Even the Marquis de Sade, for whom sadism is named, was disgusted by those events.

There is a thinker who has been unfairly forced into the background by the fame of Karl Schmidt. In 1932 *Gustav Radbruch* defined law as the structure of the general arrangement of human coexistence (*Inbegriff der generellen Anordnungen für das menschliche Zusammenleben*) (Radbruch 2003. p.38.) and gave the term “justice” (Ibid p.34.) a prominent place. It is precisely these ideas that underpin the notion of “legalized illegality.”

The term is, without exaggeration, ingenious: legalized illegality. It precisely suggests that legality is not simply compliance with the rules of legislation, nor the totality of positive law and its application and observance in accordance with official procedure. Behind it there is the concept of justice. As we can see, it is a construction purely from natural law. A typical example of “legalized illegality” is Nazi law, whose actions were in accordance with the rules, if we look only at the structural elements. The state thus created a law and it was observed—and enforced—by the judiciary (judges, prosecutors). How can a law passed under the rule of law be called illegal? This is an important question for lawyers as well, because it is clear that racial laws, even if they are enacted in full accordance with legislative practice, cannot be called just. That is, compliance with the rule of law does not automatically mean compliance with the principle of justice. A parliament in a dictatorship usually makes decisions unanimously, but its actions do not (necessarily) meet the criteria of justice. Legalized illegality (injustice) means that the law is opposed to “the law above the law,” which rests on the principle of justice and takes precedence over statutory law. It is the law that exists naturally and does not depend on a positive set of rules enacted by states. It does not depend on legislative acts. On the contrary, legislative acts depend on it. The Radbruch Formula, which formed the basis of the *Nuremberg principles*, among others, builds on natural law and appeals to common

sense. By building on these, it was possible to oppose even such monstrous legal experts as Ronald Freisler (German legal scholar, first lawyer, then Secretary of State for Justice, then President of the People's Court between 1942 and 1945, an ardent supporter of laws for the oppression of ethnic minorities or "Rassenschande", and who personally imposed more than two and a half thousand death sentences) even if doing so was not permitted by statutory law. Incidentally, this figure passed the judgment in the Scholl brothers' case, as well as in the trial after Stauffenberg's failed assassination attempt. Although Freisler did not survive the war (he was killed by a falling beam during the bombings), he is an example of the type of person of whom many, including formerly senior legal officials such as judges, were held accountable for their judicial actions during the Third Reich in 1947. The trial, which lasted ten months, had four charges, the most important of which was the third: "Crimes against humanity" (*Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit*). Lawyers for the defense have consistently argued that their defendants were, on the one hand, only enforcing the law, that the statutory law they applied were passed in accordance with the rules of the time, and that one judicial official has no right to question, much less overwrite them. Radbruch's theory does not support this defense, no more than it does the "I was following orders" defense. That is, in such an extreme situation, it is clear that statutory, *written law* conflicts with *unwritten law*, which is a set of natural laws based on morality, higher principles, and common sense. It follows, therefore, that the moral norm is more fundamental, or, if you prefer, higher than something we might perceive as a simple system of rules, behind which the sovereign either stands or, occasionally, slumbers. Natural law is a more important basis for justice, especially when there is no statutory legal norm against "legalized illegality" (as exemplified by the trial of judges who strictly adhered to Nazi law), or when a general norm needs to be established (be it by a constitution or for example the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) that does not follow directly from a specific legal norm. In other words, as good

Kantians, we assume that there is a general moral law which we is not derived from anything, but which we *must* assume exists, and from which everything else can be deduced. And it makes people cooperate with each other.

Everything is different in practice, of course. The operation of large-scale and general legal principles has often been and continues to be flawed. The noble idea of equality — as many have discussed — fell with the rise of the guillotine and the Jacobin dictatorship. The Himmelreich (celestial empire) as described by Schiller, where “alle Menschen werden Brüder” (all men become brothers) also seems to have slipped away. The same is true for the world of ideals in *The Magic Flute*, which Monostatos cannot fit into.

*“Und ich soll die Liebe meiden,
weil ein Schwarzer häßlich ist!
Ist mir denn kein Herz gegeben,
bin ich nicht von Fleisch und Blut?”⁴²*

He asks despairingly whether he is not allowed love just because he is black. After all, he is also a flesh-and-blood (Fleisch und Blut, flesh and blood) man. Only the color of his skin is black, while his blood is red, like that of a white man. The same is true of the complaint of Shakespeare’s Moore of Venice or the Merchant of Venice. It is as though they had just been reading Antiphon, who considered the Greeks and barbarians equal due to the fact that we all eat with our hands and breathe through our noses. (DK. A. fr. 11.) Monostatos, like Papageno, is an “Unmensch” (inhuman human), at least in relation to the others. Papageno is a bird-man, while Monostatos is a Saracen. They are different, but both are “Unmensch.” When they meet, they are mutually afraid of one

42 But I must forego love
because a black man is ugly!
Have I not been given a heart?
Am I not flesh and blood? (*Die Zauberflöte* / *The Magic Flute*)

other. (What a great expression: “one an-other.”) Different and same. They are similar in that they are excluded from the world of the light. The light is only for a few, the chosen (how boring the Masonic interpretation of Mozart’s opera is!⁴³). The song sung by the chorus sounds practically like a schoolbook lesson.

„Wenn Tugend und Gerechtigkeit,
Der grossen Pfad mit Ruhm betret,
Dann ist die Erde ein Himmelreich,
Und sterbliche den Göttern gleich.“⁴⁴

When virtue (*Tugend*) and justice (*Gerichtigkeit*) rule, everything becomes possible: the “Earth and the heavens” and “mortals and gods” draw near to each other (*Sterbliche den Götter gleich*). A perfect and beautiful order is realized, where the type of person reigns whose greatest evil is their inability to do evil. It lacks interest; this world of Sarastro is infinitely perfect—and infinitely boring. There is only one figure who may be an exception and is therefore true to life: it is Papageno. He does not sacrifice himself for the ideal. He wants a real woman, but not at the cost of his own life, and that is why he can (and dares to) be a coward. He is an “Unmensch” in a different way than a Monostatos, an Othello, or a Shylock. Such a community as theirs is also foreign to him, as he is to them. With the rule of the all-encompassing light and the complete exclusion of darkness, a one-dimensional world opens before us. And if we think about it, this is the real parousia: the complete exclusion of

43 For an example of this analysis see the useless book of the otherwise outstanding Jan Assmann, (Assmann 2005)

44 “If virtue and righteousness
pave the Great Path with honour,
then earth will be a paradise
and mortals resemble gods.”

the opposite possibility, even though there is no good without evil, no health without disease (see Heraclitus). In the same way, there is no light without darkness.

On the other hand, it is as though the idea of brotherhood really does seem to “fall to the side.” Of the three “big ones,” freedom still remains to be discussed, but its interpretation, as we have seen, is more than problematic. It is ideal and unrealistic. It is impossible at this point to analyze it in more detail. It is enough to note that freedom is different for the individual and for the community, and also that we cannot disregard the relationship between freedom and necessity, although let us add: Hegel thinks differently, and the existentialist Sartre has still another perspective.

The alien as guest

Let us look at the concepts used throughout history to describe the “other” and the “alien”. The original meaning of the terms and the transformation they have undergone over time reveal much. The Greeks used the term ξένος (xenos) for both other and alien, meaning both stranger and guest. But they also used the term άγνωστος (agnothos), which means “unknown to the community” and has a much milder overtone. However, there is another term, ξενοδοξία (xenodochia), which means hospitality, a friendly welcome. The ξενοδοχεϊον is the place where the stranger is looked after, in the Middle Ages the place where pilgrims were looked after (hospitale pietatis), in Hungarian it is the “ispotály”. The ξένος, then, becomes (can become) a stranger’s welcome friend if we have knowledge of him. The unknown is suspicious and remains a stranger. One who may be hated (φόβος) or feared.

If we look at Latin, there are also several terms for a stranger, such as *hospes*, which means alien, newcomer, but can also mean invited. The “other” is the *alienus*, and the *barbarus* is the “alien” as enemy, whose culture is different (= uncultured), while the *exoticus* suggests an attentiveness mixed with curiosity, which typified the

18-19th centuries. Roughly the same conceptual meanings appear in other European languages. The German “*der Fremde*” means “other” and has no “guest” connotations. *Unbekannter*/stranger is most closely related to *exoticus* and *agnothos*; it does not necessarily have a negative overtone. Barbar/Barbarian/Barbare is the same in German, English and French, and refers to cultural difference, or rather: lack of culture. The *Ausländer* /*étranger* is more of a “foreigner” who is not from the area but can be a stranger and a guest (or friend). It depends. On what? On what kind of relationship develops between a given community and that person. It depends, on the one hand, on the attitude of those receiving the foreigners and, on the other hand, on those who enter the spaces of the community; the two behaviors are inseparable and continuously interfacing. This interaction can be influenced by many external factors, but it can also depend on the method and time of entry. The temporary resident who has received an invitation and follows the host’s rules is a *guest*. One who did not is an *alien*. And those who use violence to stay will easily become *enemies* (ἔχθροί). We see that this was the case historically, and it has not changed much. Many things impact a judgment, but it ultimately depends on people.

Protagoras says, “Of all things the measure is Man, of the things that are, that they are, and of the things that are not, that they are not” (DK 80. B.1.) Many have misunderstood this, because, of course, it really (also) means that everything is relative, including perception and cognition, even the gods (who have at times even been sued). The more important message in this quote is that if humanity is the measure, then the “human-scale” changes as the human community changes; and if this is true, then the laws — at least in principle — change, because they are not constant and are even constantly changing. One might say that laws are based on the expectations of most people, not whether those of the highest order are sufficient, and they may be right about that. That is because the rule, the norm (which makes us “normal”) will turn from a habit to a law according to the number of people who are willing to follow it, according to the degree to which it suits the

expectations of a given community. That is, the base is quantity, not quality. The will of the masses, according to the Sophists, will be the basis of regulations, and after this point in history this always has the most bearing and, more importantly, is the point of reference. As Callicles says:

The reason, as I conceive, is that the makers of laws are the majority who are weak; and they make laws and distribute praises and censures with a view to themselves and to their own interests; and they terrify the stronger sort of men, and those who are able to get the better of them, in order that they may not get the better of them; and they say, that dishonesty is shameful and unjust; meaning, by the word injustice, the desire of a man to have more than his neighbours; for knowing their own inferiority, I suspect that they are too glad of equality. And therefore the endeavour to have more than the many, is conventionally said to be shameful and unjust, and is called injustice (compare Republic), whereas nature herself intimates that it is just for the better to have more than the worse, the more powerful than the weaker; and in many ways she shows, among men as well as among animals, and indeed among whole cities and races, that justice consists in the superior ruling over and having more than the inferior. (Plato 2013. 483.c-d.)

Interestingly, the ideal norm here is confronted with empirical reality, according to which it might even be right. (Although—excuse me for the humor—Callicles did not read Kant.)

So, according to the Sophists, laws were created by weak people, by the masses, which the class we call philosophers hates more than anything else. For Nietzsche or Kierkegaard, the masses are not only content to live all at the same level (as long as that level is as low as possible), but actually feel good about it, because their community expects nothing from them but compliance. They do not have to toil; they do not have to strive for more. From their perspective, which is neither broad nor deep, the whole world looks the same. This “mole perspective,” which Plato called the cave life, is com-

fortable for them, so it is very disturbing if someone threatens their happy and boring indifference. They hate it so much that, according to Plato, if they can, they will kill anyone who threatens it. They intended to do so with Anaxagoras, Protagoras, and Aristotle, and they did kill Socrates. The “mole perspective” means everything to people who feel *ressentiment*, who quietly hide, do not lift their head out of the swamp, say, in order to avoid being mistaken for ducks by hunters. They follow this way of life completely, as they consider it good and desirable, and so they also proudly consider themselves virtuous. They never believe that all this is “poverty and filth and wretched contentment” (Nietzsche). No. The swamp perspective is the only true yardstick.

If we step outside of this world a little and take a good look at ourselves, examining what we see and being honest with ourselves, maybe we would discover, to our shock, that the stranger is most of all *inside* us. This is by way of the fact that a human is an individual (and not a dividuum). In other words, one may be called Socrates, who tirelessly walks the agora and argues with all sorts of figures, and when he is slapped he only says it is annoying that one did not know in the morning if he should have worn a helmet when leaving home. (Senecva 1900. III.XI.2.) Because of this, he is already an in-dividuum, that is, undivided, one with himself, but different from at the same time alien to the other, precisely in respect to the essence which causes the alienation within him. And vice versa. The stranger is in me, it comes from inside me. How interesting it is when φόβος becomes independent, overwhelms everything, and it does so in the absence of knowledge, which is not necessary, as it only creates confusion. It is much better to hate. But then the other is no longer simply an alien but an enemy.

The image projected onto the other world also demands analysis from something outside philosophy. We know by now that the unknown, alien world, which to me is not familiar but unusual, is sometimes hostile. Strangers themselves were the “other” after separating from the “same,” and then they became “alien.” But they are here among us, and we are there among them. This did

not start recently, but when one tribe strayed into the hunting grounds of another. They found themselves faced with strangers who were different from them. They were obviously surprised, a little amazed, and then they struck. And maybe not even in that order.

The alien as race

Then suddenly a multitude of aliens formed around the same. Is it not ironic? They all have different skin color, different hair, different habits, different language, different social structure, etc. But then, who is the other? The different. These were called *races*, and on top of that they also used this unclear term to denote what we call species.

Let us take a closer look. The concept of race was introduced by *François Bernier* (1620 - 1688) at the end of the 17th century, but it became known and codified in the middle of the 18th century. Differences between races became more and more differentiated, especially as differences in values became more and more apparent in conflicts both big and small.

The question inevitably arises: why the 18th century? After all, the great geographical discoveries, when Europeans encountered people in distant places, took place much earlier. Yes, distant peoples were obviously known before, but philosophical—more precisely, cultural-philosophical—reflection is still a product of the 18th century. Until then, non-Europeans were simply looked down upon or not counted. They were good slaves, objects that could talk. This did not change for a long time, but when sciences such as comparative religion or comparative linguistics were born, it was out of a desire to understand them. (A German, *Max Müller*, founded the Institute of Comparative Religious Studies at Oxford in the late 19th century.) At this time philosophy also added to this process, no less than in the person of Immanuel Kant, among others. Kant best expresses what the travels and discoveries meant

to the mode of thought that was just awakening to self-discovery during the Enlightenment, so however the travels have shown how many different people live in the world, but that was not enough for the mind. (Kant 1977. 8. p.89-106.)⁴⁵ Kant committed this to paper in 1785. In 1775, he began another of his works with a remark that was uncommon at the time: “all humans in the whole word belong to the same natural genus” (Kant 1998 p.39. Kant 1977. 2. p.427.) With all this in mind, it is very difficult to write calmly about the insane remarks that typically circulate that Kant was a *racist*. Whoever says this, 1. has not read Kant (or did not understand a bit of it), 2. does not understand the 18th-century concept of “race”. (Ibid)

Who or what is a stranger and how do they relate to me, the European? That the stranger is inferior was not in doubt at this time. The point of reference was the white race. Everything and everyone else was measured by that standard. (This should be evaluated according to its place, in its given age, in its given cultural context, in its given conceptual network, etc., etc.) Even if there was not complete agreement about each interpretation, there was complete consensus on this. This was demonstrated by the enduring “popularity” of Theodor Bernhardt Welter’s book *Lehrbuch der Weltgeschichte für Gymnasien und höhere Bürgerschulen*, which was incredibly widely read by German-speaking people: it first appeared in 1826 and by 1873 had been through 31(!) editions. We find this book even in Nietzsche’s library (see Campioni’s edition of the library). Nietzsche owned the 14th edition (1854). Welter distinguishes five races among “primitive peoples.” These are: Caucasian, Mongolian, Negro, American (by which he means Native American), and Malay. All of these, of course, are contrasted with the spiritually rich and educated European. In Welter’s *Lehrbuch*, on the subject of the religion of the “primitive peoples,” we find that, “like the ancient Germans,” they worship gods without temples, statues, and altars, and people pray to the celestial bodies, and especially to fire. This one-sided picture is challenged by Müller’s

45 Determination of the concept of a human race, 1785

Vorlesungen über die Wissenschaft der Sprache, which, for example, Nietzsche became acquainted with in 1869. We also know that in 1875 he borrowed the book *Einleitung in die vergleichende Religionswissenschaft* from the library in Basel. You can see even Nietzsche is seriously interested in this question. (Campioni 2003.p.401.)

But let us not get ahead of ourselves. Let us examine the relationship of human to human from the perspective of cultural history: humans as they relate to the other. After all, the alien can only and exclusively be interpreted as a relationship. Let us be so Hegelian as to consider “alien” by itself to mean nothing. Even before Hegel, no lesser philosopher than Immanuel Kant himself spoke on this issue. It is very instructive, as Kant in *The Metaphysics of Morals (On Duties to Others Merely as Human Beings)* suggests the following position that has eternal validity, classifying humans into five basic types in this respect (and not yet according to race):

1. Someone who finds satisfaction in the well-being (*salus*) of men considered simply as men, for whom it is well when things go well for every other, is called a friend of man in general (a philanthropist).
 2. Someone for whom it is well only when things go badly for others is called an enemy of man (a misanthropist in the practical sense).
 3. Someone who is indifferent to how things go for others if only they go well for himself is selfish (*solipsista*).
 4. But someone who avoids other men because he can find no delight in them, though he indeed wishes all of them well, would be shy of men (a misanthropist in terms of his sensibility [*ästhetischer*]), and
 5. his turning away from men could be called anthropophobia.
- (Kant 1991. §.26. p.245., Kant1977. §.26.)

This has nothing to do with race, as it is discrimination applied to people within a species. And look, everyone decides where they belong! Everyone belongs somewhere for sure. To be completely and unreasonably harsh: the “philosopher-type” is mostly the *aesthetic*

misanthrope. Of Nietzsche or Kierkegaard, this is definitely true. The average person (according to Kierkegaard: the philistine), on the other hand, falls into the second category.

At the same time, both Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, or even 20th-century existentialists, have an opinion on this “species of animal”. They see, they feel, that the welfare of the emerging bourgeois world offers everyone an infinitely stupid, boring, and monotonous alternative, one that is lacking in humanity. They are proud that they create so-called equality of opportunity, but in the meantime say nothing about the fact that this is nothing more than a general call for total (self-)exploitation, in which after the establishment of welfare one also becomes acquainted with concepts such as alienation, loneliness, and anxiety through their own experience. This is what Marx writes around 1844 about alienation (*Estranged Labour*). He saw what Hegel highly respected as human teleological activity as nothing but forced labor. (PoS. pp.108., PdG pp.145.)⁴⁶ He wrote that, “its *alien* character emerges clearly in the fact that as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labour is shunned like the plague (Pest).” (Marx 2012. p.44. Marx 1981. p. 515.) And he is not alone in this. Oswald Spengler describes similar beliefs when he writes that “born of and grown on the soil, there is a new sort of nomad, cohering unstably in fluid masses, the parasitical city dweller, traditionless, utterly matter-of-fact, religionless.” (Spengler 1927.p.32.)

The relationship between humans often develops at the border of values, perceived or real. When the measure of all values becomes quantity, the world becomes one of total stupidity and insensitivity, where human beings are permanently distanced by self-exploitation and then alienated from labor, from their relation to labor, from human relations, and finally from themselves, and thus cease to be what they were: sovereignly thinking and acting, sentient and emotional human beings. In this world, the *misanthrope* and the

46 See *Herrschaft und Knechtschaft* (Self-Sufficiency and Non-Self-Sufficiency of Self-Consciousness; Mastery and Servitude).

solipsist attack the philosopher, or they attack each other first. If one becomes anthropophobic upon learning this, we can almost understand why. The person of the crowd then calls the rat race world a civilization and despises those who do not want to “be civilized.” And this civilization, which is in fact nothing more than collapse into a foolish, unimaginative, and indifferent boredom, is set on a pedestal as civic virtue. The person of the crowd insists that this is the only realistic alternative, and people go to the corral proudly and voluntarily to become proud, baaing members of the uniform flock. Life thus becomes more and more prosaic. The human world becomes atomized. It narrows in space and time. As Nietzsche writes, it “shrinks,” and there “jumps up and down on it the last man” (*der letzte Mensch*), who dwarfs everything and who is happy in the knowledge that “the earth has then become small, and on it there hops the last man who makes everything small. His race is as ineradicable as the flea; the last man lives longest.” (KSA IV. p. 20. TSZ p. 17.). So writes Nietzsche, as though he were describing what happened to him.

At this moment, the other, the alien, appears, since they are not part of the flock. That is enough also for them to be the enemy. In this way every thinking person becomes an alien to fools. And since there are more of the latter, the outcome of any conflict between them cannot be in doubt. In this respect, not only thinking but also art lose their value. Neo-nomads only have a use for useful things. What is useless does not interest them. Spengler again:

Rousseau and Socrates to quite primitive instincts and conditions, the reappearance of the panem et circenses in the form of wage-disputes and football-grounds - all these things betoken the definite closing-down of the Culture and the opening of a quite new phase of human existence - anti-provincial, late, futureless, but quite inevitable. ” (Spengler 1927. p. 34.)

Kierkegaard also considers being part of the masses one of the most hateful ways of being, which is also represented by his lines about crowds and people of the crowds:

The people who do not bore themselves are generally those who are busy in the world in one way or another, but that is just why they are the most boring, the most insufferable, of all. This species of animal life, surely, is not the fruit of man's desire and woman's pleasure. Like all lower forms of life, it is distinguished by a high degree of fertility and multiplies beyond belief. Inconceivable, too, that nature should need nine months to produce creatures like these which one would rather suppose could be produced by the score. (Kierkegaard 2004. pp.589-590.)

People of the crowds do not like to encounter those who differ from themselves. For them, the escape from this is a given: to hate someone or something. For example, if instead of facing my own identity I despise myself. I repeat, it is foolish to limit this to intercultural relations only. For men this other can be women (let us think of Otto Weininger) (Weininger 1997. p.5), for the rich the poor—and the other way around, for the small the great, for dark-haired people blonds, etc. All that matters is that they be *different*. Whatever we do, it is as though antipathy is in our genes. Maybe this started with the Cro Magnons. For them it was in the service of survival, at least from the perspective of a sympathetic observer. Because antipathy was not all that served survival. Communication and cooperation were at least as important for it, or else—I say again—the mammoth would have been the survivor.

We may not shut our eyes to the knowledge that this antipathy is also within us. Cooperation often only works within a group. They who are different are the others, who embody a different culture in addition to a different skin color. It is childish to believe that we can settle the matter by simply declaring “Let's love everyone!” “Das Man” is not necessarily external.

Thus, different categorizations of human do not yet apply to race (species), but they do show well that the concept of the same and other does not necessarily require skin color. The individual and the masses are also same and other. In fact, they are strangers, or even enemies. (Let us consider how the fascist or socialist dictatorships in the 20th-century treated thinkers.)

The question is different from the perspective of cultural history. It is not so much philosophical as empirical. In Immanuel Kant's *On the Different Races of Man* (*Von der verschiedenen Racen der Menschen*, 1775) (Kant 1977. 2. p.432.) he repeats the concepts of Linnaeus when he divides humanity into four root races. The race question interested Kant later, too, as he published another text on the subject almost ten years later. The debate between *Forster* and Kant on this subject is important, as this addresses the subject of the alien, the concept of race, and non-European cultures.

Kant's solution is simple: he separates the four root races by skin color. It is impossible not to notice in his system that it is based in essentially two races: in the first place, the white race (*die Race der Weißen*) and second designated the Negro race (*die Negerrace*). (Ibid) However, he writes in a later work that "in terms of skin color, we distinguish four classes among people," by which he means the so-called "inherited skin color": "white, yellow Indians, blacks, and red-skinned Americans" (by which he means Native Americans). (Kant 1977. 8. p.93.)

Let us return to Kant's "racism" for a moment. Let us take into consideration that the Enlightenment demanded that individuals signify the world around themselves on the basis of rationality, according to the standards of the scientific world of their day. For example, the scientific world promulgated the theory of phlogiston, and therefore Kant did as well. (Ibid. p.103.) This theory claims that all flammable materials contain a substance called phlogiston, which is the substance that burns. They thought that during the burning process phlogiston is removed from materials, so the more phlogiston something contains, the more intensely it will burn. It is a theory invented by Joachim Becher and refined by G. E. Stahl

in the 18th century (until Lavoisier), and as I said it was widely known and accepted. It may seem comical (as seen from today), but it was a huge breakthrough (as seen by them) compared to what had come before. I mention all of this to demonstrate that to interpret thoughts out of context or to use today's standards from a distance of more than two hundred fifty years to pass judgment leads to misunderstandings or even to inanity, the signs of which are most present in the Anglo-Saxon world.

As for the label of racist, to return to the point, it is best to return to Kant himself. He himself writes the following (in contrast to his early view), which we can even see as refuting his earlier stance: "essential qualities are common to all people as to *human being*" (Ibid p.99.). As to genera (γένος). Nothing more needs to be said.

He was never really interested in differentiation of races when discussing the alien. Additionally, there are still today several theories about human races. Sometimes four, six or even nine are proposed. It is completely pointless. Importantly, the morphology in each case focuses on external features. It considers skin color (this is the first, and of course it is the most immediate, because it is noticed first), then the shape of the face and head, and then of the rest of the body. External markers are the deciding factors then and now for the superficial person. Think of Arthur Schopenhauer, who also follows an external typing in his metaphysics of love. When he examines what makes one fall in love with another, with a woman in this case, he concentrates on external traits. These are what Schopenhauer examines in his *The Metaphysics of Sexual Love* (in his day this work was read in great secrecy in cadet schools). After age and health, the first of the external signs, he said, is that the shape of the "skeleton" (*Skelett*) catches the man's attention, as he says: beyond anxiety and illness, nothing repulses a man as much as a crooked figure. (Schopenhauer 1958. p.543., Schopenhauer 1844. II.p.638.) He also considers large breasts, which he imagines a man is attracted to (!) because it „promises abundant nourishment for the foetus". (Ibid) Moreover, he thinks bone structure is also the determining factor in the beauty of the

face, which is why it is so important to have a beautiful nose, the “short, turned-up nose mars everything”.(Ibid) We could continue, because his claims are great fun to peek into, but for our purposes we do not have to pursue this further. Although we do peek, because this is what empiricism does: I have to look, I have to experience, *horribile dictu*: I have to touch it to know *what it is like*, to get a first impression. Let us be honest, this has not changed at all, so it is no coincidence that the Enlightenment thinkers themselves use this as a basis.

And of course there are many kinds of alien. The woman who wants to be emancipated, or someone who follows a different faith and whose way of dress can already be an irritating factor, the homosexual, or even those who simply behave differently can all be alien. In the 19th and 20th centuries the woman was alien. We need only think of the “noble” but seriously mentally deficient Weininger, who considered both women and Jews similarly worthless. Women ruin men and Jews ruin humanity. (see Weininger 1997. XIV. Kapitel)

IV. Enemy

*“The majority of the nation took part in it,
either actively or by saying nothing.
They armed themselves to attacking
the Huguenots, whom
they considered alien and hostile.”*
Prosper Mérimée

The enemy is the radical concept of the alien. At first glance, the outer marker, in this case skin color, determines this status, not that the alien is something who/which is elsewhere, because otherwise it would be logical. The alien, of course, is usually the one who is far away or comes from afar. Or not: “here” can also be far away, which is to say it can be “there”. Spatiality is secondary.

The hate-person

Skin color says so much more, at least at first glance. If we think about it completely independently of anything else, it really does seem obvious, that the first apparent sign of the “other” is skin color, even if I limit the definition of “other” to the “that which has not been seen before” and do not consider it in its cultural context. The thinkers of the 18th century necessarily use this distinction. After all, our primary sense is vision: I see that something is different from me. There is pure empiricism, experience present here, and there is no question of any cognitive relationship. The intellect

processes the information sent by the receptor to the brain and draws conclusions rooted precisely in a cultural, historical, and of course emotional background. Then I hear that the person in question speaks differently. It is also a shift towards reflexivity. Nazi ideology is the best example to show that the other does not always live far away. This goes well beyond rejecting the other, and even marking the other as a stranger. This is the enemy, the radical notion of the alien.

The *enemy*. The enemy must be erased, must be excised, or else they will destroy us. Fascism was the victory of doing nothing. It was the revolution of failures,⁴⁷ those without talent or accomplishments. Illiterate writers without self-awareness, painters who could not even draw, engineers who failed at color and proportion, stuttering actors, etc. achieved positions of power and declared what was art and what was not, what was science and what was not, and what culture was at all and what it should be. The alien is an enemy. Whether internal or external, the important thing is that it exist. In fact, the alien is *degenerate*. Their art is even more so.⁴⁸

But how does the other become an alien and then an enemy? Let us look at Shakespeare, who can serve as a serious starting point for everything. In *Othello*, Brabantio says:

*Whether a maid so tender, fair and happy,
So opposite to marriage that she shunned
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,
Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou, to fear, not to delight.*

(Act I, Scene II)

47 see note 51.

48 The term (degenerate) achieved its racist connotation in Joseph Arthur de Gobineau. M.S. Nordau used later this concept (*Die Entartung*, Berlin, 1893) but not in a racist sense. The Nazis defined “degenerate art” (Entartete Kunst) for the public at the 1937 exhibition at Munich. A list of these: <https://opendatacity.github.io/taz-entartete-kunst/>

It is inconceivable to Brabantio that Desdemona should fall in love with a Saracen, or at least that this should happen without her being deceived into giving herself to him. But the Moor wants the same as the Jew. Shylock expresses his hopes in *The Merchant of Venice* thus:

Hath

*not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs,
dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with
the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject
to the same diseases, healed by the same means,
warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer...?*

(Act III, scene I)

It is as though we were hearing Antiphon speaking on equality according to natural law based on natural similarity: because people have their noses, usually, under their eyes and above their mouths. Of course, this in itself is *contradictio in adjecto*, because equality does not follow from the simple fact that I have one head and two legs, I hear with my ears, and I eat with my mouth. This was by no means true for the Greeks, nor in the German Constitution, for example: „Alle Menschen sind *vor dem Gesetz* gleich” – which is to say that all people are equal *before the law*. (Grundgesetz für Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Art. 3. (1) (my emphasis): Not in general, but before the law. Anyway, it is obvious that they are not equal, certainly not in the empirical world. In the ideal world, maybe. It is no coincidence that if the concept of equality comes up, it is used to discuss discrimination, to describe those who deviate from the equal, which disguises that what is really at stake is the masses. That is why the idea of equality is so despised. Because the person of the crowd is despised by every wise thinker. The Sophists thought so, Nietzsche, often referred to as the modern Sophist, even more so. As we previously quoted Plato expressing, equality was invented by the weak, since for them it is enough to reach that level.

We could say it is up to the alien to take steps to shed their alien status. They should work themselves to the bone, acculturate, fit in. There is a fitting Shakespeare quote for this, too, in *The Merchant of Venice*. Jessica, who is Jewish, also wants this. She desires equality from marrying a Christian:

Jessica:

*I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a
Christian.*

Launcelot:

*... This making Christians will raise the
price of hogs*

(Act III, Scene V)

Which is to say that the assimilation of the social climber is also forcefully rejected. It is unwanted, you are unwanted: vanish, forever if possible. Here, Shakespeare is genius—as always.

Gratiano

O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog!

And for thy life let justice be accused. (Act IV, Scene 1)

Which is to say that it is the fault of bad laws that the alien cannot be removed from the ranks of humanity with a single legal procedure. They solve this (also) later. Not only SS Obergruppenführer Heydrich took part in the Wannsee Conference in 1942, but many office workers, legal experts, and civil servants. The goal: to find the points in the law that would allow the “Endlösung” to be executed. It was for this purpose that many minor bureaucrats gathered in the villa in Wannsee (Heydrich and Eichmann were practically the only high-ranking Nazis there). Each and every one of them contributed: mostly peaceful, all absolutely normal people. None would have hurt anyone, not even a fly. They had families, children, and dogs. By themselves they were absolutely uninteresting. They would have lived their little lives uneventfully without anyone noticing that they had been on Earth for a while. They were little people who did not think, faceless, dissolved in the mass. Hanna

Arendt touches on the essence of this: “the trouble with Eichmann was precisely that so many were like him, and that the many were neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were and still are, terribly and terrifyingly normal.” (Arendt 1964 p.129) Also he was like so many other people. Yes: that is the *banality of evil*. An evil person is like any other person. Any and other. Here we find smallness in every sense: a lack of broadening, a neutrality emerge. This “person,” in any other circumstance, would be a simple church servant, a postal worker, a minor clerk, or an electrician nobody cares about, who would perish anonymously and vanish into a hole in history. It was the situation—fascism, the revolution of the failures, the little people suffering with inferiority complexes, which put people like this into a position as though they were someone.

Eichmann said: his role in the Final Solution „was an accident” and „potentially almost all Germans are equally guilty”. (Ibid) This failure is a miserable nobody and nothing, who exists in such a way that they simultaneously *do not*. Eichmann is exactly this. Arendt continues, “this normality was much more terrifying than all the atrocities put together for it implied.” (Ibid) The takeaway from Wannsee is that we legalize illegality, or from Gratiano’s perspective we correct the flaws in the law, such as the too-lenient Nuremberg Laws. As he said, “for thy life let justice be accused.” As though there were a need for this, as though we really should follow the thinking of Shakespeare’s character. Even though they say the law is only good to serve a collapsed and infinitely base idea. But it can be overturned openly if it is wanting. This makes it seem as though the law does count for something after all, as though the Nazi regime were not a system of “legalized illegality” (Radbruch again). It is as though law has some sort of meaningful role, even though the Kantian categorical imperative suggests the exact opposite.

The harder form of this is the provocation in regard to the “other,” the transformation of that into an enemy, whether in the case of Jews in non-Jewish environments or Hungarians where they are the minority. Nietzsche, who is considered the harbinger

of fascism by vulgar humanities scholars, stridently condemns for example anti-Semitism, one of the opiates of the masses, in relation to which he writes, “it might be practical and appropriate to throw the anti-Semitic hooligans (antisemitische Schreihälse) out of the country” (KSA 5. p. 194., Nietzsche 2002. p.141.), seeing precisely that, in addition to their nationalist sentiments, the basis of the hatred of “others, who are not us” is a deep and unforgiveable *sense of inferiority*. Those who struggle with this, the failures, will never forget their grievance—which, of course, could be attributed primarily to themselves if they were able to face that. But they are not. It is much better, and even damn good, to hate someone. It does not matter who, only that you hate. Hate can have an object or be objectless.

And it can be

1. external, or
2. internal.

Or simply invented. The other, the alien is good to hate, because they are distant. We have never seen them. At most, we have heard of them, been shown pictures of them, etc. The alien is a real or unreal person, who of course embodies something.

1. In 1984, Orwell gives a genius description of the Two Minutes Hate. It is an outstanding example of the *external* enemy. It is the hatred of someone who is far from me, which is to say it is oriented outwards.

At this moment O’Brien glanced at his wrist-watch, saw that it was nearly eleven hundred, and evidently decided to stay in the Records Department until the Two Minutes Hate was over. ... The next moment a hideous, grinding speech, as of some monstrous machine running without oil, burst from the big telescreen at the end of the room. It was a noise that set one’s teeth on edge and bristled the hair at the back of one’s neck. The Hate had started. ... The programmes of the Two Minutes Hate varied from day to day, but there was none in which Goldstein was not the principal figure. He was the primal

traitor, the earliest defiler of the Party's purity. All subsequent crimes against the Party, all treacheries, acts of sabotage, heresies, deviations, sprang directly out of his teaching. Somewhere or other he was still alive and hatching his conspiracies: perhaps somewhere beyond the sea, under the protection of his foreign paymasters....

The psychology of hate is that hatred in a crowd is a remarkably democratic thing, it sucks in a person greedily.

Winston's diaphragm was constricted. He could never see the face of Goldstein without a painful mixture of emotions. It was a lean Jewish face, with a great fuzzy aureole of white hair and a small goatee beard—a clever face, and yet somehow inherently despicable, with a kind of senile silliness in the long thin nose, near the end of which a pair of spectacles was perched. It resembled the face of a sheep, and the voice, too, had a sheep-like quality. Goldstein was delivering his usual venomous attack upon the doctrines of the Party--an attack so exaggerated and perverse that a child should have been able to see through it, and yet just plausible enough to fill one with an alarmed feeling that other people, less level-headed than oneself, might be taken in by it. He was abusing Big Brother, he was denouncing the dictatorship of the Party....

It makes no difference whether Goldstein is Goldstein or someone else. It also does not matter whether he even exists. The point is the hate itself.

Before the Hate had proceeded for thirty seconds, uncontrollable exclamations of rage were breaking out from half the people in the room.... In its second minute the Hate rose to a frenzy. People were leaping up and down in their places and shouting at the tops of their voices....

No one can remain critical or indifferent. Orwell continues,

the horrible thing about the Two Minutes Hate was not that one was obliged to act a part, but, on the contrary, that it was impossible to avoid joining in. Within thirty seconds any pretence was always unnecessary. A hideous ecstasy of fear and vindictiveness, a desire to kill, to torture, to smash faces in with a sledge-hammer, seemed to flow through the whole group of people like an electric current, turning one even against one's will into a grimacing, screaming lunatic. And yet the rage that one felt was an abstract, undirected emotion which could be switched from one object to another like the flame of a blowlamp. (Orwell 2014. I.1.)

According to Kierkegaard, hate is the panic of the lowbrow, panic and anxiety to be themselves. (Kierkegaard 1983 pp.71., SKS 11.) This is incredibly apt. They are desperate to be themselves. This forms the basis of their feeling of inferiority. They are capable of anything to disguise their despair and inferiority. Such people are incredibly limited in their perspectives but hold their heads high proudly when they see only like-minded people around themselves. Otherwise, they would have to face the fact that there is nothing “original” in them. They are failures. They lose their selves as easily as people lose umbrellas, since their selves mean nothing to them. They take no risks.

And yet, precisely by not venturing it is so terribly easy to lose what would be hard to lose, however much one lost by risking, and in any case never this way, so easily, so completely, as if it were nothing at all—namely, oneself. (Ibid.p.73.)

Or later:

They use their capacities, amass money, carry on secular enterprises, calculate shrewdly, etc., perhaps make a name in history, but themselves they are not; spiritually speaking, they have no self, no

self for whose sake they could venture everything, no self before God—however self-seeking they are otherwise. (Ibid p.74.)

Kierkegaard is right, though it makes a difference how others write their names into the history books and what is written after they are gone. If they leave a mark, it is mostly by revolting, the revolution of the failures. They consider this a great, world-changing act, to be celebrated year after year. They even make it a public holiday. And on that day also they hate, because that is what they celebrate with.

2. And in addition to all of this is the *internal* hate, which is to say the hate we direct towards ourselves. What is it Launcelot says? “This making Christians will raise the price of hogs...” In other words, accommodation is a sign of *weakness*. If that accommodation is surrender, it is because I have recognized through it the strength of that which opposes my strength. One expected accommodation is assimilation, and even then it is expected that anyone who satisfies it be looked down on precisely because they are weak (as was done in great numbers in Germany in the 1930s, for example). *Tertium non datur*.

Let us turn back to Prosper Merimée. What is it he wrote? “The majority of the nation took part in it, either actively or by saying nothing. They armed themselves to attacking the Huguenots, whom they considered *alien* and hostile.” The Catholics saw the Huguenots as alien. They lived in France, they spoke the same language, and we can know from different sources that even a day before the massacre they were each other’s loving neighbors. They did business with each other, all to everyone’s great satisfaction. A day passed, and that night (the time of day is significant) the Catholics brutally and happily cut their favorite neighbors’ throats, raped them—for the greater glory of God—and dragged them along the wharf, so that, after they had hanged and burned them, they could dump their corpses in the Seine. It was just one night.

From dusk on August 23, 1572, to dawn the next day, hate ruled absolutely. Several thousand lost their lives. On August 26, the king ordered an end to it, to barely any effect.

It makes no difference whether it is a Jew or a Huguenot. All that matters is that the same people who lived beside each other became alien to each other because of an ideological difference. In the case of the French, it was a religious difference. For the Nazis, it was a question of race. And for the Bolsheviks, it was class. Race or ideology or religion. Without making any equivalency between these events, I can say they had this in common: anyone, whether a friend, a relative, or even just an acquaintance, became an alien and then an enemy. In these cases, they were no longer simply aliens, but *enemies*. In fact, they are the kind of enemy that must be fought against.

How do I recognize the enemy (Huguenots)? Because I was still talking to them yesterday. I bought eggs from them at the market. I drank a cup of wine with them in the tavern on the corner. There is something called a *sign*. Whoever is different is marked out. According to some descriptions, the houses of the Huguenots were marked with external signs, while they themselves were also identified with a sign. Some people put crosses on the enemy's houses while putting on a white shawl to mark themselves. To look at it another way, external difference, in the case of race, is also decisive here, since I *have to* see who is the same, who is the other, and in this case who is the enemy. Yesterday, they were my colleagues—sorry, my friends—but if they wear a sign and I wear a sign, then discrimination takes place. I now know who the enemy is. I know who (more precisely: what) is to be exterminated, and I also know who the friend is with whom I can exterminate the enemy. If the enemy is Huguenot, then we kill them for that reason. If a Jew, then that is why. The same goes for the capitalist. All must be marked, both the same and the other. The action of the Danish King during the Second World War was exemplary, whether it really happened or not, because it also involved wearing/not wearing a sign that could be seen externally and empirically.

The “sign” is therefore vital, especially if “skin color” cannot be used as a basis.⁴⁹ The sign separates and holds together at the same time. The common sign holds together — be it a tricolor, a piece of clothing, a white cloth tied around an arm, a Nazi badge — and at the same time distinguishes it. The sign that distinguishes someone who is different, alien, or enemy, is the enforced sign that those in the same group would not wear voluntarily. It distinguishes as well as holds together. The sign is identity-forming. The sign indicates that whoever wears a different mark than me is the other, and who wears the same as me is the same. The radical alien becomes the enemy.

The same marks itself if the other and the alien cannot be recognized by external marks; but, if it can, it marks the other so that it can then be recognized, separated, and destroyed. The same protects itself from the alien who is now the enemy. It only takes a sense of an enemy (cf. *Two Minutes Hate*) to create a community. A sense of the enemy powerfully reinforces the sense of identity. According to Plato, the *tyrannos* also begins by strengthening the sense of identity (“Isn’t it also the same for the leader of a people who, taking over a particularly obedient mob.”) (*Rep.* Book VIII. 565 e.), and he demands a personal guard, so that, „all those, then, whose careers have progressed to this stage now hit upon the notorious tyrannical request—to ask the people for some bodyguards to save the people’s defender for them.”), (*Ibid.* 566.b.) then continues by defining the other, the alien, and, more precisely, the enemy. From there on, the two are inseparable, which means the *tyrannos* has no choice, only the war.

49 Legend has it that the Danish king himself put on the yellow star that Jews were forced to wear during the Second World War. The next day the whole population of Denmark wore a Star of David armband; a day later the Germans revoked the order. Some say it is just a legend. From this point of view, whether it is or not is completely irrelevant, because here, too, the external “sign” (the yellow star) is key. *Vilhjálmur Örn Vilhjálmsson* in his book *The King and the Star*, Örn Vilhjálmsson calls the story a myth invented by the Danes. (Jensen, Jensen 2003. p.102.)

Then, too, I suppose—if he suspects certain men of having free thoughts and not putting up with his ruling—so that he can have a pretext for destroying them by giving them to the enemy? For all these reasons isn't it necessary for a tyrant always to be stirring up war? (Ibid. 567.a.)

The alien is as necessary as bread for the sense of identity, especially when our identity is on shaky legs. But let us not be unfair. This is not only a peculiarity of the *tyrannos*, but a very important factor in community-forming historically. That is exactly why it can be abused without further ado. The German *Lebensraum* (living space) is a concept that at first glance does not appear problematic. But its use *our* living space (sense of self) narrows not only “space” for everyone but the scope of “living” as well (through our sense of enemy). As a result of this process, anyone who endangers our living space must be placed outside the self-space or be destroyed, depending on whether the hatred is territorial or generic. I deserve life, as does the space, ergo those who are in that space are occupying it in my stead. I must expel them or destroy them, or else they will expel or destroy me. The blind cannot see it, the deaf cannot hear it. If a community thinks this way, then that space can also be a common space, and life is the process that takes place in it that space and needs to be protected by putting up a wall around it.

The person without myth

The introductory quote was not accidental, nor is that I am referring to *Game of Thrones*. The series has an unprecedented influence on the world. Tens of millions of people are watching it worldwide, the former President of the United States is among its fans, and its impact is really great.

I wonder where this popularity comes from. What is the fuss about? It demands that we talk about it. One reason for it: we live

in a myth-poor environment, and we crave myth. The romantic turn of the 19th century brought the idea of myth to the fore. In addition to the renewal of religion (Christianity), the need for a new mythology is extremely strong. The most important observations on this topic come from Schelling. Mythology is not simply a story, but rather an atavistic symbol, or as Schelling calls it well before Freud and Jung: a “archetypal world” (*urbildliche Welt*). (S.W. II.5.p. 416.) He describes very well in the *Kritisches Journal der Philosophie* that mythology can only become mythology if it is universal, if it contains every element that was previously contained in culture (science, religion, and the arts), and if it perfectly combines not only contemporary material but also that from the past. (Hegel, Schelling 1967.p.35.) Going beyond the unique character of any given myth, he emphasizes the universal truth of mythology. He argues that there is something in common in *all* mythologies, a universal unity that must be brought out and demonstrated beyond the diversity of each mythology itself. This is done by responding to a universal need.

European culture is rather poor in mythology after the Classical Age and the rise of the domain of the mind in general. However, the need for a new mythology has been elementary since the 19th century. Psychoanalysis discovered the power of mythology, its archetypal (Jung) significance, the concept of the collective unconscious. (see Jung 1935. p.179-229.) All of this was done by leading back to the mythologies already commonly known. People had to wait for a new mythology. To be sure, the success of fantasy (especially in the world of cinema) just shows an infinite lack of imagination, and it really seems as if the whole world is escaping into some kind of impossible fairytale world. The surroundings of modern people are shallow and pathetically bleak. Their lack of imagination makes it so. However, fantasy itself is just as shallow. It replaces individual imagination, which humanity lost a very long time ago when they resigned themselves to living in the emotional desert of the contemporary world. One thing, however, is indisputable: these fantasies convey something essential. They

actually take on the role of myth, although perhaps they do so in a primitive way. Their essence is simplification. The undifferentiated dualism of black and white, good-evil, light-dark reigns. But this determines the thinking of the masses, which is one-dimensional. They think mostly in terms of the dualism of the same and other. The alien is the alien who is the enemy, which either kills us or we kill. Look no farther than the *Alien* series. Death travels with us. And indeed, starting with the early works of art, the depiction of the idea of memento mori has been given a central role. All of this is very deeply embedded in the universal essence of thinking, to put it simply: this approach conveys something that, however primitive, is closely and completely related to the issues that occupy the world. It would be hard to deny that these days this includes the concept of the other and alien (enemy).

Returning to the quote: “When he opened his eyes the Other’s armor was running down its legs in rivulets as pale blue blood hissed and steamed around the black dragonglass dagger in its throat. It reached down with two bone-white hands to pull out the knife, but where its fingers touched the obsidian they smoked. Sam rolled onto his side, eyes wide as the Other shrank and puddled, dissolving away. In twenty heartbeats its flesh was gone, swirling away in a fine white mist. Beneath were bones like milkglass, pale and shiny, and they were melting too. Finally only the dragonglass dagger remained, wreathed in steam as if it were alive and sweating.” (George R. R. Martin: *A Storm of Swords*.) The other here is an alien and an enemy who wants to occupy what was not originally his and does not belong to him. He wants to change the lives of those who are different from him by destroying their world. In *Game of Thrones*, this is symbolized by a Wall that separates the same and the other. The Wall (capitalized thus) is an indestructible structure, seven hundred feet high and over one hundred leagues long, yet still unable to fully protect those behind it. Whoever lives beyond the wall is the other. The other, the alien, hates the one behind the wall, and vice versa. One seeks to protect, the other seeks to destroy the wall and destroy all that exists behind the wall, because that

is the enemy. The moral relativism of existentialists, according to which who is locked out by the wall it is a question of point of view, is utterly invalid here. Here the struggle is for survival, and the outcome of that fight is in doubt. From this point of view, the wall's defense is understandable and acceptable since it is legitimate protection in the form of the protection of the individual. It is at least as indisputable in the case of an individual as it is for a group or even a community. The community can protect itself just the same as the individual. If I defend myself, this is grounds for exemption from all legal punishment, so long as I meet two conditions:

- ◇ the danger cannot be avoided in any other way,
- ◇ and my actions are proportionate.

We might add that the struggle here is not to occupy the other's living space or destroy the other, but to defend. This is what the wall stands for. It is only for your own protection. It cannot be used to retaliate. Anyone who thinks in this way inevitably sees the other as hostile even without a realistic threat from that other. This seems good and desirable because it puts the person in a legitimate position of defense against the other (whether there is a real threat or not), and that person firmly believes that they can and in fact must take steps to defend their territory, culture, economy, etc. from the enemy, otherwise the other will distort and then completely change the same, and thus identity will vanish and be destroyed. The words of King Alcinous are clear and unambiguous: "Stop our convoys home for every castaway chancing on our city!"

Cooperation is replaced by confrontation, justified by legitimate protection. You need a Wall. The bigger, the stronger, the more protected, and of course the longer, the higher, the better. And the Night Watch (*Game of Thrones* again) will resolutely defend the Wall, if necessary, by any means. This is understandable and follows powerfully from human nature. In the past, castles were built, ditches were dug, watchtowers were erected, and defenders opened fired when someone approached with hostile or even un-

definable intent. They fired first and asked questions later. This is not new at all. It has just become unusual now. But let us face it, the inhabitants of Westeros who build a Wall want protection against the Other. They want to find the tools to protect themselves, including the mysterious dragonglass. The wall still exists today. Whether it is legitimate is a topic of eternal debate. It exists in fact and exists figuratively. There is not much that can be done about it. It is part of identity, whether you like it or not.

When we mention walls, the Great Wall of China comes to mind, which attempted to block out the influence of the other made into alien, in order to prevent the world of the same from being overturned. The wall here is not protecting against an enemy but against an alien *culture*. These days many similar walls are being built, especially in the figurative sense.

The Berlin Wall was built almost in moments. Whether this was so it could serve as a defense is highly doubtful. In Berlin, the wall rather trapped people and prevented them from leaving. More precisely (this is the real perversion!): it kept them from going “over there.” However, of course, like any wall, it also protected, in this case against *ideology*.

There is also the wall of the state of Israel. This is not about ideology, not culture, not confinement (or else the en passant would become compulsory), but defense against the alien as enemy. The wall here is terrifyingly nonsense, even if it is legitimate, because for the Jewish people it was as a wall that racial ideology created the institution of the ghetto. Whether the origin of the word is the concept of “get” (separation) or Geto Nuovo makes no difference. The ghetto does not keep out but rather keeps in. Their wall now keeps out—and, paradoxically, also keeps in.

The enemy is the other turned into alien, who/which is defined in opposition to the same. The “alienness” or “hostile” nature of the alien-turned-enemy is a matter of choice. It can be legitimate or illegitimate. Care must be taken that the alien can be “appointed” as an enemy, precisely when the same’s self-definition is uncertain. That is to say, it is their own identity that the same wants

to strengthen, or else they simply want the other to submit. A classic example is the strengthening of the German identity in the crumbling Weimar Republic on the one hand, and the eradication (of Jews) or subjugation (of lower peoples, e.g., Hungarians) on the other (see *Mein Kampf*). This is the point from which National Socialism was a political religion of redemption, according to, H.A. Winckler. (Winkler 2002. p.9.) The eternal Orwellian pattern is tempting. Jews are an acceptable enemy because they have different culture, religion, and also appearance. And if they do not actually look different, because they look exactly like the same, then they will be given a marker of their enemy status, the sign.

It is exactly here that there emerges the opportunity for the goal to be a tool, more precisely for exclusion to become a community goal. I do not know if anyone has studied the signatures on Hitler's letters, because they reveal a great deal, even more than the content of the letters: "*mit treudeutschen Gruss*", "*mit deutschem Heilgruss*", or "*Heil dem kommenden nationalsozialistischen Gross-Deutschland*". (Maser 2002.p.,121,127.) Each of these "signatures" contains an apocalyptic vision of the world to come. The vision of a madman. The essence of his personality is the reinforcement of identity through the exclusion of the other, because this identity is still weak. His first step is to name the same, to emphasize exclusivity, paralleled by the simultaneous naming and contempt for the other. There can be no doubt when one reads in *Mein Kampf* that „this conglomerate spectacle of heterogeneous races which the capital of the Dual Monarchy presented, this motley of Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, Ruthenians, Serbs and Croats, etc., and always that bacillus which is the solvent of human society, the Jew, here and there and everywhere--the whole spectacle was repugnant to me. The gigantic city seemed to be the incarnation of mongrel depravity.” Of course, by then he had the future fates of these “mixed” races precisely in mind. (Hitler 1939.p.109)⁵⁰ The image of the enemy is

50 „Widerwärtig war mir das Rassenkonglomerat, das die Reichshauptstadt zeigte, widerwärtig dieses ganze Völkergemisch von Tschechen, Polen, Un-

necessary, as Plato suspected in his genius way, on the one hand to reinforce identity and on the other to create a basis for oppression. Oppression by whom? The failures. This is the revolution of the herd, of the mediocre (*Aufstand der Herde, der »Mittleren«*) (KSA 13. p.94.) against all that is great—in comparison to them.

Let us think a little further. The person of the herd is driven by instinct and not reason, even by herd instinct, which suggests that being in a herd protects you from having to raise your head to take a risk by thinking, forming an independent opinion, critically looking critically at the world and keeping your face. “The herd feels good in the swamp and muck” – says Nietzsche. (KSA 4. p. 122. TSZ p. 77.) To sit quietly in the swamp. That is where warmth and safety can be found. Outside of that we encounter not only the alien but also the enemy. Failures (*Schlechtweggekommene*) think this way, at any rate.⁵¹

How is it that a failed person is taken in? Schopenhauer emphasizes their pride in the same, which is the most important basis for belonging, while (or additionally) Nietzsche points to the hatred of others. In fact, as already mentioned, the two exist together. Schopenhauer writes of the “pride in the same”:

On the other hand, the cheapest form of pride is national pride; for the man affected therewith betrays a want of individual qualities of which he might be proud, since he would not otherwise resort to that which he shares with so many millions. The man who possesses outstanding personal qualities will rather see most clearly the faults of his own nation, for he has them constantly before his eyes. But every miserable fool, who has nothing in the world whereof he could be proud, resorts finally to being proud of the very nation to which he belongs. (Schopenhauer 1974. p. 360.)

garn, Ruthenen, Serben und Kroaten usw., zwischen allem aber als ewiger Spaltpilz der Menschheit – Juden und wieder Juden.”

51 Nietzsche’s term *Schlechtweggekommene* = person who went down the wrong path, or person whose life has gone wrong.

Clearly, he is speaking primarily of times when the sense of “the same” eclipses all other criteria, or rather it takes their place, as Schopenhauer might have experienced himself just a few decades later in his own country. He himself puts meritocracy above all else. It cannot be stressed enough. If that does not work, then misanthropy is the antidote: he would even pay the bill of the table beside him at the restaurant just so no one would sit beside him.

These two go very well side by side: the real fear of the stranger, and the transformation of the mediocrity of the same into greatness on the other side. That is, fear of my own littleness, although one can easily disprove the other. But who would think of that? That is no longer interesting at such times.

Conclusion

From the day they are born, people are alien in the world. Birth itself is a separation, just like creation. Birth thrusts people into a new action, just as Kierkegaard says: without anyone asking them about it.

I am at the end of my rope. I am nauseated by life; it is insipid—without salt and meaning. If I were hungrier than Pierrot. I would not choose to eat the explanation people offer. One sticks a finger into the ground to smell what country one is in; I stick my finger into the world—it has no smell. Where am I? What does it mean to say: the world? What is the meaning of that word? Who tricked me into this whole thing and leaves me standing here? Who am I? How did I get into the world? Why was I not asked about it, why was I not informed of the rules and regulations but just thrust into the ranks as if I had been bought from a peddling shanghai²¹ of human beings? How did I get involved in this big enterprise called actuality? Why should I be involved? Isn't it a matter of choice? And if I am compelled to be involved, where is the manager—I have something to say about this. Is there no manager? To whom shall I make my complaint? (Kierkegaard 1983.a. p. 330.)

Birth is the creation of the one, who can then become an individual. It is the creation of possibility: the possibility to be human, and the possibility to lose their humanity. Either-or.

1. The baby is the *same* cast into the world. Let us consider: the baby knows nothing of the *other*. Its concerns, struggles, and sufferings are all exclusively within its own inner world. The baby cries if it is hungry, cries if something hurts. In a panic, the parent searches for the reason. They feed it, but it keeps crying. They comfort it, but it keeps crying. They try to find something that might be causing it pain, they rush the baby to the doctor, but the baby keeps crying. They rock the baby to distract it, but they are not successful, because it keeps crying. Just because.⁵²

Later, if the parent gives the child a rattle, the baby seems to forget all about everything and everyone else, because nothing else exists for it, just the same. Its hand moves, the rattle makes noise, and it searches for where the sound is coming from. It looks at the rattle in the hand, but not at a rattle in *its* hand (nota bene: it has no hands, no feed, no head—this is complete sameness). It does not understand, nor could it understand. It lives in pure perception.

Later, when it is older, the baby discovers the rattle, which turns out not to be alien from it after all. It realizes that the rattle is in its hand, because by then it has hands, feet, and a head. And it shakes it harder and harder. This is its own. Here, the complete sameness has ended. The other has appeared, which will later become *its* other, its other-existence. The consciousness discovers perception, or to put it more precisely perception brings the consciousness into being. (“His criterion of truth is thus *self-equality*.”) (PoS. p.71. italics mine) The consciousness knows of itself, and so the possibility of the self comes into being, which will then become real through

52 This brings to mind Bergman’s genius film, *The Serpent’s Egg* (1977). They conduct an experiment to see how long a mother can stand to hear her baby cry. They give the child a chemical injection so that no matter what the mother tries, it will not stop crying. What starts as empathy turns over time to panic, until in the end the mother murders her own child.

self-consciousness. (Ibid p.102.) To describe it in a very Hegelian mode, this is the moment that one consciousness becomes aware of and then reflects on the meaning of the other consciousness. The baby does not see only the rattle but the other person (its mother, for example) who gave it the rattle. Its consciousness reflects on the other consciousness. This is the moment that self-consciousness comes into being. From this point, one self-consciousness confronts the other. (Ibid p.108.)⁵³ It is completely apparent that the Hegelian self-consciousness's independence and dependence can be observed even in the mother-child relationship. This is, of course, (also) opposition. This includes conflict but also reconciliation. Humans have to remain alive but also become humans, says the outstanding *Alexandre Kojève*. (Kojève 947. p.101.)

2. The *other* is one who differs from the particular self, either voluntarily or by force. Distinction is the determining factor which also embodies the promise of moving beyond, since the same is a mere possibility (δύναμις, *potentia*), reality (ἐνέργεια, *actu*) is created by differentiation. This is creation, or as it is usually expressed the actual moment of true birth, when possibility can become reality.

3. The *alien* is one whose home is distant, even if they never go anywhere, even if they carry their sense of homelessness in themselves. I, as the same, feel at home in my own space. But where is the alien? Far from me. Outside. If they are distant, the problem comes from them coming closer. They disturb me by wanting something different. It disturbs me that they might force that on me, too. That disturbs me, and so the aliens themselves become disturbing. And where else is the alien? In me. Inside. If it is inside me and that disturbs me, then the final solution is to step out of life (Narcissus). At the same time, the alien cannot be judged purely as

53 See Self-Sufficiency and Non-Self-Sufficiency of Self-Consciousness.

itself, because the alien is a relationship. The alien is always alien in relation to the same. When this happens, the sense of exclusion grows, and the first bricks appear in the wall.

4. The alien can appear at any time as *enemy*, whether I choose this consciously or not. They can become enemy and can be made it if I feel that they are threatening me—or if I want to feel like I am threatened. The sense of an enemy can create fear in me whether it is justified or not, and I can feel like I am in danger and must protect myself. Or I could be in an actual defensive situation that makes me have to protect my identity. Cooperation ceases, as do often even the simplest forms of communication, even though the situation does not call for that yet. In this situation, regardless of what anyone says, the conflict starts, whether in a Platonic or a Hegelian sense. Only reconciliation lets itself be delayed.

It is important to emphasize:

-The concept of the *other* was, is, and always will be present in every age. Homer's story is an example. It is just as certain that the other cannot be understood in itself, as it only exists as a *relation*. We can see this in Hegel's theory, mentioning the example of Narcissus. We should add that Kierkegaard expands this radically: according to him the human itself, the self (*Selv*) is none other than a relationship: the relationship of the human to itself. (Kierkegaard 1983. p.41., SKS 11.)

- It is also important that from the 17th-18th centuries—precisely with the birth of the comparative sciences—the question of the “other” becomes cultural, and as a result becomes a global question. In other words, the relationship becomes the relationship *between* communities, which includes every single segment of culture (language, customs, laws, etc., and especially religion). In *Samuel F. Huntington's* famous and often-criticized work, he writes,

Blood, language, religion, way of life, were what the Greeks had in common and what distinguished them from the Persians and other non-Greeks. Of all the objective elements which define civilizations,

however, the most important usually is religion, as the Athenians emphasized. (Huntington 1996. p.86.)

For those who want to point to a connection, this is important for that reason. For those who want to point to differences, it is important for that reason. Religion can also be used in many ways. Religion is one of the segments of culture, but only one of them. In a secularized world, its role transforms. In a culture where, however, secularization is absent or hardly present, religion can indeed be a decisive factor, to say nothing of fundamentalism. It is very interesting and weird that Unamuno, reflecting on different skin colors, writes the following explanation, which seems very typical these days: “The yellow peril? Black peril? Peril has no colour. In so far as they participate in history, become civic and political - and warfare is, as Treitschke so aptly said, politics par excellence – desert-bred Mohammedans are being Christianized, becoming Christian. Which it to say, agonistic.” Then the whole situation becomes “agonistic.” (Unamuno 1928. p.121.) The *ἀγών* means struggle. The word “agony” derives from it.

The new millennium also brings with it new phenomena, and together with them new questions, new possible answers, and as we have seen even extreme emotions. Nietzsche’s prophecy applies partly to the crisis of European (which we can also call Western) culture. It is worth listening to him:

What I relate is the history of the next two centuries. I describe what is coming, what can no longer come differently: the advent of nihilism. This history can be related even now; for necessity itself is at work here. This future speaks even now in a hundred signs, this destiny announces itself everywhere; for this music of the future all ears are cocked even now. For some time now, our whole European culture has been moving as toward a catastrophe, with a tortured tension that is growing from decade to decade: restlessly, violently, headlong, like a river that wants to reach the end, that no longer reflects, that is afraid to reflect (*sich besinnen*). (Nietzsche 1968. Preface 2., KSA 13. p.189.)

“Sich besinnen” has two possible meanings: to reflect and to remember. This is no coincidence, since to reflect on something also means measuring my present on the scale of my past. Memory is, of course, important in this, and so is forgetting. When learning from memory (that is what history is), it would be much more important to learn wisdom than facts. And forgetfulness is also important because holding on to grievances leads to new grievances. In 1871, a young French doctor watched in shock as Prussian soldiers committed atrocities in his beloved Paris. He decided to take revenge on the Germans one day. His name was Georges Benjamin Clemenceau.

Echoing Nietzsche, Spengler later writes the following in *The Decline of the West*.

In this book is attempted for the first time the venture of predetermining history, of following the still untravelled stages in the destiny of a Culture, and specifically of the only Culture of our time and on our planet which is actually in the phase of fulfilment - the West-European-American. (Spengler 1927.p.3.)

And the final conclusion is not very favorable. Humanity keeps committing the very same mistakes that they did before. According to Hegel, we can learn one thing from the past: that humans never learn from it. If there was something to be learned from remembering, this is the most painful part. It is impossible to forgive. This is what it relates to, even though the “other” and the “different” have always been among us and always will be, whether we like it or not. This can be as alien, guest, or even enemy. Just like us.

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