

GODS IN THE ABYSS

ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER, THE GERMANIC
LOGOS AND THE GERMANIC MYTH

A S K R S V A R T E

GODS IN THE ABYSS

*Essays on
Heidegger, the Germanic Logos
& the Germanic Myth*

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Translated by Iliya Koptilin and Daniil Granovskiy.

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Foreword to the English Edition

I INTEND TO SPEAK ABOUT the German Logos and, in particular, to extensively analyze the aspects of the fate of Europe and the nuances of the German-Scandinavian tradition. But at the same time I intend to speak and write about this whilebeing located in the space of Siberia and in the Russian language, whose structure sometimes limits one's ability to present German-language ideas and concepts. This can cause a natural dissonance, which I am going to rectify.

My ancestral roots before 1700 go back to Germany, specifically the region of Swabia, the Rhine and the *Schwarzwald* (Black Forest). This heraldic heritage provides grounds for assumptions regarding the noble ancestry of my clan, which later was included in the sphere of the Habsburgs.

Since the eighteenth century my ancestors had lived on the territory of modern Moldova and the Odessa region in Ukraine, where by the decree of Catherine the Great there was created an area for German immigrants, with the status of autonomous diaspora. These were the so-called *Bessarabiendeutsche*. In this historic period and before the program of dispossession, our ancestors were prosperous farmers on this land. Part of my family was repressed and deported to Siberia in the 1930s, the others were evacuated to Germany as compatriots during the war.

I suppose that the German portion of my genealogy predetermined my adoption of the German-Scandinavian tradition. I consider

my standing at a far geographical and temporal distance from the Fatherland to be the result of a long journey through times and countries, in which I was lucky enough to hear and recognize the signs of my Gods.

The other two criteria of belonging are no less important than the first one. One of these is the native space of Germany—and more than this, the space of the German Logos. One needs to visit them, to make a pilgrimage, a visit-return. One must stand on German soil and beneath the German sky, which gave birth to my ancestor Tuisto. I feel a persistent longing for the past and future destinies of peoples and spaces remote from us; I am constantly living them through.

The third criterion is the language. It is necessary to show at least sensitivity to and interest in the Germanic languages, and ideally to know them as a native knows them. More broadly, in the concept of “language” I include the material culture and tradition as non-verbal manifestations of language—the conversation of the people with the Gods.

These criteria are not absolute guarantees of the truth and infallibility of discourse, but they are the conditions for a natural and relevant approach to the Logos and Tradition.

Nevertheless, my stay in the Russian-speaking space, and especially in its provincial environs, carries with it a number of positive aspects. First, my family has maintained a powerful connection with the land and the village, as opposed to megacities. Secondly, we have been shielded from Europe’s process of oblivion and disintegration. Of course, the Soviet state, according to Heidegger, was one of the two destructive forces between which Europe was torn. The second was the USA, and it is still present. And the current post-Soviet political agenda in Russia does not offer better alternatives. But the difference between Europe and Russia allows us to look at Europe from a different civilizational and linguistic perspective. There is a dialectical moment in this: leaving Germany for the sake of a later overview, so as to formulate its state and existential prospects from the outside.

The obvious consequence following from all of this is the need to translate and publish this and other works into German. This task, in fact, involves writing three-fourths of this work again and with great attention to the preservation and adaptation of those Russian-language reasonings that cannot be omitted and that add shades and sharpness to German-language meanings. This work of rewriting includes the title of the work itself. The original title of the book in Russian is *Approaching and Encirclement*, the meaning of which is revealed in the first chapters, and indeed throughout the text. It refers to a peculiar method of researching a variety of topics and fields that are interconnected by pathways and homologies.

There is no need to demonstrate that Germany is the geographical heart of Europe. Together with Scandinavia, they create in Europe a dialectic dialogue and a sharp polemic with the south, Rome and the Greeks. In Modern history, two thoughts cannot be avoided, and these once again direct our attention precisely to the German Logos: the first is the declaration made by Friedrich Nietzsche about the coming of the era of European nihilism, and the second is the statement of Carl Gustav Jung that Germany was obsessed with the spirit of Wotan. Let us add to this the deplorable and tragic situation in which Germany and Scandinavia find themselves today, poisoned by the erroneous and suicidal policy of the Euro-left. And let us recall the mournful verdict about the completion of Western philosophy, summarized by Martin Heidegger.

Bearing all of this in mind, an alternative clearly arises: either a New beginning or the death of everything. Both options need to be thought through seriously, because even death can be decent. The problem of Another Beginning is no less complicated, and rests on the question of the authenticity of being. In the present work, we travel in the direction of these two alternatives, connecting myths, gods, history, politics, philosophy, metaphysics, linguistics and poetry.

It is also necessary to recognize that the translation of this text into English levels out some of the semantic nuances and the deep cultural

context of the Russian language, while on the other hand inevitably adding the cultural context of Anglophone culture. Unfortunately, we cannot fully guarantee that all the necessary nuances will be preserved. This is a regular problem with translating philosophical texts. Therefore, we suggest focusing on the message, on the mood of those theses and fields of thought into which we enter and toward which we point. It is important to understand the questions posed and the method used, in order to understand the importance and role of the instance of Nothingness, as it can be understood in the German context. A thoughtful and intellectually savvy reader will be able to add additional notes and lines to this work.

Most of the references in the subscript refer to Russian-language literature. If a similar book has been published in English, a link is provided to it; otherwise the translation of the name of the original is given. Some important essays and specialist books are listed in the links in Russian. The full bibliography with data about books in European and Russian languages can be found at the end of the book.

I

Approach and Encirclement

AN ENCIRCLEMENT TACTIC is a military approach of disposing armed forces around an enemy or a piece of territory to be seized, with subsequent closure of the ring. Viewed from this perspective, the present paper poses a set of speculations and reasonings which attempt to surround the issue in question and to seize it — the issue being the Germanic Logos, its mentality, myth and tradition.

The Germanic peoples have historically been one of the fundamental structure-forming forces of Europe, of Europe's history, mentality and self-reflection. Beginning with the first military clashes against Rome, this force, ranging from a linguistic, philosophical, poetical and cultural impact to that of dynastic regimes and the dynastic wars, has formed European identity to an extent equivalent to Ancient Greece and Rome. Europe is a Romano-Germanic civilization, as Nikolay Danilevsky puts it. The Germanic Logos is an expression of *what the Germanic is in its nature*, as it unfolds and reveals itself in a variety of peoples: Germans, Frisians, Swedes, Norwegians, Icelanders, Danes, and others, in their languages, traditions and culture; this is what makes them different from other peoples, what makes their underlying structures of identity different from other peoples'. We turn to the Germanic Logos as the Pan-Germanic whole, which in some way anticipates "from above," reveals and unifies various poles of the

Germanic peoples, which, in turn, reveal common underlying initial intentions and structures — though in different proportions, with different terms, nuances and accents. In a sense, the Germanic Logos is the destiny, the Alpha and Omega, of the Germanic as such.

A continental pole prevails in the geography of our Logos, with its heart located where present Germany and Austria are. The Germans of these lands were actively involved in the history, wars and politics of Europe. The Scandinavian pole (Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland) is left a bit in the shade in this book, wherever localization, crystallization and conservation of Germanic-Scandinavian myths and traditions took place. While we are greatly interested in Germanic and Scandinavian traditions, we also constantly revert to continental German theology and philosophy.

The Germanic Logos throughout the twentieth to twenty-first centuries finds itself in a difficult state of self-oblivion, concealment, existential pause and suspense. A historical destiny of the Germanic Logos is one of the pivotal lines of our story, which is closely intertwined with the themes of death as a special authority dealing with the concealment, being, the authentic Dasein and Nothingness. The Germanic Logos in its radical decay faces an existential challenge and remains in an existential delay. The question of non-duality, for its part, along with the associated apophatic thinking and further (ways of) being, also challenges the Germanic mentality.

The foundation of the Germanic — in the thinking of the German — is war and death, the apprehension of which might change in the course of the river of history. The same belligerence, though applied to the sphere of thought, underlies our approaches here, which use language and tactics adopted from the art of war. However, the questions we intend to explore surpass the duality so necessary for war, with its confrontation of enemies on the battlefield.

Despite the straightforward way in which the question of non-duality in Germanic thinking and Logos is put, a prospective answer is conceived as approaching, *getting closer* and yet closer to what cannot

be expressed by the Word (λογός), but what can only be pointed at, what can be grasped or rather revealed as the “heart,” the middle of speculative encirclement by the reader confided in this journey. Anticipating further meditations, we may note that it is the Emptiness of Nothing that is encircled. But that which seems absurd and senseless from the military point of view, like tightening an empty noose, becomes of ultimate importance when it comes to philosophy: not “everything or nothing” but “everything through nothing.”

Philosophy has been regarded as being opposed to (placed against) myth since at least Plato and the Platonists, but our stance is open to myth, we take the side of myth. Therefore the language of “The Encirclements” may be named “philomythical” — for it appreciates both philosophy and myth. We stand on a solid ground of heathen traditionalism and the German tradition, which still lives one way or another under various names.¹ From this stance we advance an apologia of a manifestation-oriented reading of the German Logos and a deconstruction of ideas of late Christian mystics.

In another work, we have already considered many aspects of a strictly mythological and modern reading of the German tradition in the course of deviation from (warlike) duality and the establishment of a non-dual myth of the Path of the Left Hand in Odinism.² This brought no direct answers to our questions, but concentrated mostly on questions of rites and outward forms of myth and tradition. The latter are important as a means of practical transgression, which may offer a mediated support to our present study.

The approach and encirclement of the Emptiness of Nothing of the German Logos must become better-grounded. This approaching is also a gesture of the Germanic mind referring to its limits and beyond. By encircling the Emptiness of Nothing, the Germanic Mind (Logos, thinking), *per se* being inside its own limits, gropes for them

1 See Askar Svarte, *Polemos: The Dawn of Pagan Traditionalism*.

2 See Askar Svarte, *Gap: The Left Hand Path approach to Odinism*.

and maps the way out. Brute force in dealing with Nothingness causes the failure, distraction, turmoil, stampede and retreat of the mind. The mind stumbles, avoids, refuses to ponder Emptiness. These tactics do not pay off, so the aforementioned “approaching and encircling” of the “outer” Emptiness of Nothing provide the narrow way to escape from the mind’s own self-encirclement by its own “inner” bounds of mental nature. In many respects, the language of “the Encirclement” is a language of paradoxes, for there is no difference indeed between the “outer” (the Emptiness of Nothing) and the “inner” (the mind’s mental bounds). By grasping and encircling the Emptiness of Nothing, the mind approaches and encircles its own inner nature. The Emptiness of Nothing is nothing like a geographical space, which you can visit and of which you can form some image. Nor can it be squeezed to fit into the limited language of rational and logical operations and, speaking more broadly, into any language structure and verbal communication (discourse) based on such. The knowledge of Emptiness does not fit into a niche on the bookshelf, a cell suited for analytical and mechanical operations of binary calculations and thinking. The Emptiness of Nothing does not yield to verbal explication, so language cannot express it or manipulate it directly. The adopted word-term is at most like that of a finger pointing to the Moon in the well-known parable. Therefore placing the Emptiness of Nothing “outside” is nothing more than a tactical hint sublated by a subtle and careful reflection of “within.” Nothingness is not cognized or experienced as “absence” or “emptiness” inside the skull or heart cavity.

Grasping Emptiness is possible in a transgressive act of correct thinking, the way toward which is paved by our approaches and encirclements.

* * *

In view of all of this, it becomes clear that “The Encirclement” is not so topical a question for the Russian Logos and Russian Heathen traditionalism, not to speak of mere “petty-minded” Heathenism.

Precepts and guidelines for practice and rite do not emerge from this work but, on the contrary, get muddled. More than once, we cast doubt on Heathen traditionalism or concede its insufficiency, which may alienate an inexperienced reader from the path of following the summons of the eternal Gods.

Nonetheless such isolation from the Russian Logos is a bit perfunctory. “The Encirclement” is written in Russian after all, and there is an appreciable Germanic influence over Russian history (directly — through the Varangians of Rurik, the founder of the first known Russian dynasty, allegedly of Varangian origin, and later through the House of Holstein-Gottorp-Romanov — as well as indirectly — through intensive cultural and political links). Moreover, contemporary Russian Paganism is obviously subject to a scarcely comprehended attraction to Germanic-Scandinavian myth. All of this makes “The Encirclement” at least an interesting form of the hermeneutic circle of philological excursuses across intertwined Germanic and Slavic languages, their dialogue on forthcoming modes of being.

The following chapters do not necessarily follow a linear order. Therefore it is recommended that the reader pay particular attention to the hermeneutic circle of understanding the text, and read through the “Encirclement” twice (or more times) while keeping up concentrated and trustful thinking. This may, possibly, allow the approach to and encirclement of the sought-for objective to occur.

II

Language

THE PATERNAL LANGUAGE of philosophy is Greek. It is the language of the philosophy origin, the main, along with Latin, language of Western thought. German has become the language of the end of philosophy — a fact acknowledged as far back as Fichte J. G.¹ and fully implemented by G. Hegel, F. Nietzsche and M. Heidegger. Here we see the first power axis of approaching — the Hellenic-Germanic, the beginning and the end of The First Beginning of Western philosophy. And if the language of the beginning of philosophy is Greek, the language of the end of philosophy is German, then the language of Germanic myth is the Old Norse (Icelandic: *fornnorræna*), whose closest modern descendant is Icelandic.

The Icelandic language underwent minimal Roman and Danish impact which was effectively compensated due to the “linguistic purism” movement, one of the symbols of which is an alternate Icelandic flag with a stylized “Thor’s Hammer” (*Mjöllnir*). The modern Icelandic language is rather pure and near-isomorphic with Old Icelandic — the language of Sagas, eddic and skaldic poems, spells, etc. — which makes it a unique phenomenon indeed.

¹ See Fichte J.G., *Addresses to the German Nation*.

A subtle and unobvious *prima facie* problem that arises from the linguistic purism in Iceland, especially in its radical “High Icelandic” (*Háfrónska*) form, is in the specific divergence between newly-collated words, lexical constructions and the meaning of a substituted term. At times this divergence comes from etymological and semantic traits resonating with the term’s neighborhood and creating unexpected associations and consonances. Thereby lexical meaning clashes with etymology and neighboring semantic fields. From a traditionalist’s point of view it becomes of special importance regarding technical and virtual media terms, which must be substituted with negatively colored, demonic terms that stress the decadent nature of modernity (A Wolf Age, *Ragnarök*) on the level of household words.

For example the term “Big Bang” — the name of a generally accepted theory of the creation of the universe, independently devised by Russian and Soviet physicist Alexander Friedmann and Belgian astronomer Georges Lemaître — is the fruit of modern physics from the beginning and middle of the 20th century. It is rendered into High Icelandic as “ginnungahvællur.” The first root “ginnunga” directly refers to the stanzas of the first poem of the *Poetic Edda*, “the Prophecy of the Völva,” where the world’s origin from the “yawning gap” (*gap var ginnunga*, Ginnunga-gap) is depicted:

3.
Of old was the age
when Ymir lived;
Sea nor cool waves
nor sand there were;
Earth had not been,
nor heaven above,
But a yawning gap,
and grass nowhere.

3.
Ár var alda,
þar er ekki var,
var-a sandr né sær
né svalar unnir;
jörð fannsk æva
né upphiminn,
gap var ginnunga
en gras hvergi.²

2 Old Icelandic text by Guðni Jónsson.

Thus, a strictly scientific and atheistic theory of the creation of the universe is associated with the myth of the world's origin from the Abyss through the direct abuse of a mythological term meaning "to yawn," "to gape," "to bewitch." As a result, a modern term sounds in resonance with the myth, evoking an irrational mythological trust in the mind of the hearer. The trick is in mimicry and substitution of coloring of the foreign term, bearing modernistic content, through tincturing it with mythological connotations.

The second word "hvellur" means "roar," "rolling peal of thunder." Compared with the flat English "Big Bang" this questionable calque, from the traditionalist point of view is still endowed with greater poetic power and shades.

As an opposite example of positive word fitting we may point to the term "Háfrónska" itself. The second root "frón" is the name of Iceland in the *Poetic Edda*, which ties the asserted nation's language directly to the myth. The first root "Ha" — "high" — refers to *Hávamál*, Sayings of the High One — the second poem of the Poetic Edda, where the High One is one of the names of Odin.

In case of linguistic purism one must always bear in mind the etymology of the word and its linguistic neighborhood. An uttered word (no matter whether aloud or to oneself) is like a string whose vibration does not only make it sound but also affects neighboring strings-words-terms, thereby rousing a whole spectrum of individual and collective cultural and archetypal associations; the word never sounds alone, but in resonance or dissonance with other words. The word may have cognate words, similar-sounding words-neighbors, homonyms, synonyms, antonyms, paronyms, synecdoche which sound in the mind altogether with the word, altering its lexical meaning and, therefore, its perception. And this process is rarely reflected upon in the course of speaking or thinking, comprehension of what is said or heard. Whole word-symphonies play in the mind without being noticed by a trivial consciousness, which runs straight ahead,

but they are of extreme significance when it comes to philosophical thought.

“The Encirclement” is set forth in Russian while its subject is Germanic, which makes it inevitable and necessary to appeal frequently to the German and Icelandic languages, along with the other Germanic languages and Greek, paying great attention to subtle aspects of translation, of word-symphonies, to the greatest possible extent³. By “word neighborhood” we mean cognate words, homonyms (similar-sounding, homophones, other phonetic matching of lexemes), synonyms and antonyms and elements of folk etymology. This lexical and etymological environment (word-neighborhood) gives rise to associative lines, cultural connotations, personal links, recollections and images in the mind, not necessarily reaching the level of rational consciousness. This way the whole gamut of the words’ shades appear, which refines the picture of the word’s usage, but may also lead to erroneous interpretations. Such a play of words and language makes translation a considerably difficult task; a radical view on the issue contends that no adequate and comprehensive translation is possible, for it can convey only a limited section of the semantic gamut of words and ideas put into them. Moreover, in receiving language they acquire new links, causing new linguistic plays and semantic shifts of words and philosophical terms. Hence — attention to the language, to the way word ensembles sound; accommodating to the words’ flow and their consonances.

To a large extent the language of narration herein is based on the hermeneutic method of Martin Heidegger, his style of exposition of ideas, of work upon language, of selecting and bracketing the words, emphasis on words’ roots in order to attract attention to the essence of what is said. It makes the language of “the Encirclement” somewhat “esoteric,” but thus the reader is liberated from illusions of

3 This topic is explained in detail in *Polemos*.

understanding, evoked by quick and superficial associations lining up while reading; then comes a more thoughtful immersion into the word.

Deutsch und Volk

In *Addresses to the German Nation* J.G. Fichte establishes the principle of German nation-building based on community of the language and apology of the linguistic purism⁴. The key term “deutsch” means “people” and originates in Old High German “diutisc” — the common name of German languages in the epoch of Charlemagne. The term “germani,” the Germanic peoples, according to Strabo was assigned to them by the Romans and came from Latin, “germanus,” which means “genuine.” Thereby the Romans indicated that these peoples were genuine Galatae, being wilder (more warlike) than the Gauls of the time. The Russian word “немец,” “a German,” used to stand for “alien” in general, that is the man who cannot speak your language [mutus], came from the Proto-Slavic “němъ,” “dumb.” In later times it was secured to denominate Germans. The language-oriented theory of the genesis of nations for all its modern popularity, is rooted in ancient times being one of the basic means of discrimination of “one’s own” and “foreign” peoples.

But what Fichte is speaking about is not just some language of the Germanic branch. The language in his conception must be alive and bearing, rooted in native nature, only then the language is capable of becoming the voice of the people (“nation”), so that people can use it for conversations and philosophy. Fichte is willing to compare German in its purity and potential only with Greek — the language of the beginning of philosophy. He argues that German is the only Germanic language which is still alive and linked with the nation’s roots. The worse situations are when the language gets filled with loan

4 We are talking about the modernist social construct of the “nation,” but fundamentally different from the French principle of “nation state” by citizenship.

words and calques, or when it is cut off from its root and mingled with some alien structure, so that to some extent it expresses a foreign nature through thus alien language, a foreign voice disguised in German words and turns of speech. The example of this process is Vulgar Latin of Gaul Romance languages incorporated into the Frankish language. The same is true when speaking of incorporating alien peoples into the body of bigger nations and states. The linguistic purism is what Fichte sees as means of protecting the nation against such encroachment of foreign language and mentality. Newly accepted peoples are kept silent; they can regain their voice only through accepting the nation's language, allowing language to re-form them:

It does not matter if ever so many individuals of other race and other language are incorporated with the people speaking this language; provided the former are not permitted to bring the sphere of their observations up to the position from which the language is thereafter to develop, they remain dumb in the community and without influence on the language, until the time comes when they themselves have entered into the sphere of observation of the original people. Hence they do not form the language; it is the language which forms them.⁵

We beg to differ from Fichte's assessment of the other Germanic languages, Icelandic in the first place — as the language of Germanic myth, supported by Swedish, Danish and Norwegian, which indeed play a more modest role in the Germanic Logos. In the times of Fichte the German language was probably an ideal instrument indeed for building a 19th century nation and the finalization of philosophy in the form of *Wissenschaftslehre*, i.e. "Theory of science"⁶. But our strategy of encirclement requires the closing of the line which crosses

5 See Fourth Address, "The chief difference between the Germans and the other peoples of Teutonic descent," Chapter 51.

6 The term by J.G. Fichte meant to substitute the Greek term "philosophy" in line with the linguistic purity doctrine. See Fifth Address "The consequences of the difference that has been indicated," Chapter 59.

numerous languages of the Germanic Logos, which are, ipso facto, Pan-Germanic (encompassing several poles and numerous peoples).

An important nuance of choosing language as the basis of identity and a discerning criterion for “one’s own” and “alien”—lies barely noticeable in the fact that language is an entity given before any gathering and construction of the people’s community. A “linguistic nationalism” is more conservative than a “civic nationalism” (France and the USA) or racial physiological-biological and altogether positivistic concepts of the Nazis of the Third Reich. Modern linguistics is capable of offering only a set of theories that try to reveal a language’s origins but themselves originate in a shaky convention, being mere speculative models. A close to the sacral concept of the origins of protolanguage was developed by Herman Wirth, who put emphasis on the name of the Nordic God AIU (a proto-word); this line will be explored later in this book. But in any case, language precedes mind, it conceals-and-unconceals itself in man’s speech, in what we call “language” in everyday life⁷. Language is magic, theurgy and a field of philosophy—and, moreover, philosophy as it is. “Language is the house of being” in the words of Martin Heidegger. Language does not originate from somewhere, does not emerge as something functional out of communication needs, but it reveals-and-conceals itself in man as being. Man is language, a speaking entity. It is language that owns man.

In the domain of Heathen traditionalism “language” is not only the language of oral speech of some people, which serves to give utterance to the Gods’ names, to praise them, to charm and to pray, to write down sacred texts, but language is also a whole culture—from word to ornament embroidery on ritual garments, carving, ceramics, architecture, behavior, rites, popular beliefs and superstitions, annual rituals, and so on. People communicate with the Gods and spirits not only via spoken language, but also the language of culture, modes

7 See Friedrich Georg Jünger, “Language and Thinking.”

of everyday life, rites and behavior. This understanding of *language* makes it synonymous with the term *tradition*, which is vividly exposed in the Russian term *язычество* (*paganism*), which can be traced back to the Old Church Slavonic *ꙗзыци* — *the peoples*. The closest analogue in German and English is the shared stem *Volk/folk* in *völkisch/folkish*, used nowadays in the West to denominate heathen traditions.

To complete this excursus let us cite Johann Gottfried Herder: “The peoples are thoughts of God.” This quotation is in full resonance with what we consider to be a correct understanding of the term *язычество/heiðin/völkisch*.

The Sides of the Term “Heathenry”

According to Heidegger, “language is the home of being”; in it, *Seyn-beyng* reveals-and-conceals itself. In the fourfold of *das Geviert*, in the Sky-Earth axis, the Sky is also understood by Heidegger as the World (*die Welt*). The world is openness and orderliness of things (Greek *κόσμος*, “order,” “space”), coming from the upper pole of the Sky (*die Welt*)-Earth axis. With that, the understanding of the Sky/World depends on a certain people. The Sky is not universal and one for all, it is not a scientifically interpreted “stratosphere.” The Sky is not one, they are many. Each nation has its own Sky and its own Earth; the understanding of the Sky, and hence the World, *die Welt*, is deeply national (*völkisch*). Peoples in their languages conceive Sky and World; language distinguishes one people from another, which means that language distinguishes the Sky, earth, Gods and man of one people from the Sky, Earth, Gods and man of another people.

The variety of languages in which *das Geviert* of *Seyn-beyng* reveals-and-conceals itself is the outpouring wealth of *Seyn-beyng*. The world (*die Welt*) is revealed to peoples in languages; in languages peoples conceive their destinies and timidly communicate with the Gods. In this sense, the word “language” comes very close to the concept of “tradition.” The word “tradition” goes back to the Latin

“tradere,” which means “transmission,” “chain,” and is a fundamental expression of the essence of the initiatic transmission, Tradition, of which enough has already been said.

In Hebrew, the word “goyim,” גוים, means “peoples” or “nations” in the plural. Initially, the word did not carry negative connotations and simply meant “nations,” including Jews. Later, with the formation of the creationist monotheistic cult of Yahweh (the Old Testament), the word acquires negative connotations and the meaning of peoples of other faiths, “infidels,” strangers. At the same time, these peoples of the goyim-infidels were polytheists who surrounded the habitat of the monotheistic Jews. That is, in Hebrew and Jewish space, the word *goyim*, “peoples,” was originally implicit, covert, identical to the tradition [pagan tradition]. The explicit identification of the concepts of “nations” and “polytheists” [pagans] occurs simultaneously with the religious isolation of the Jews and their distancing from other peoples. In this case, there is a strict negative identification of polytheism with sin; hence comes the derogatory name “goy” for those Jews who violate the commandments or for entire nations if they fall away from God and violate the Covenant.

In Greek, “a people,” “nation” or “folk” was denoted by the word ἔθνος, “ethnos”; it gives rise to the Latin word *ethnicus* — “national.” In Latin there appears a new derogatory term for referring to polytheism — *paganus*. The word *paganus* comes from *pagus* — country, village, settlement, allotment. In the German-Scandinavian tradition, the word *odal* is close to this concept (it corresponds to the rune ᚫ), meaning “allotment,” “piece of land,” “inheritance.” *Paganus* means “rural,” “rustic.” In villages, folk customs, legends and paganism as such were preserved much longer and more thoroughly than in developed cities (*urbanus*); therefore, the concept of “pagan” became identified with the concept of “village,” forming a derogatory semantic range of *paganus* — rural-heathen-ignorant-heretic, etc. Hence the opposition of “rural/urban,” bearing also implicit religious overtones

of *paganus-urbanus*, [still] paganism/Christianity.⁸ The words “goyim” and “pagan” are connected to each other through their pejorative connotations and later designation of the phenomenon of paganism as opposed to monotheism, first among the Jews, later Christians and Muslims.

The word *Heide* in German means “wasteland;” sometimes it is translated as “steppe.” According to the reports of Ancient Roman historians, who described the life of the continental Germans during the Latin-German wars, the Germanic tribes considered it a great honour to surround their settlement with as much uninhabited land as possible.⁹ The village and the tribe living in it should not be close to the neighbouring villages with their tribes. They found pride in living in solitude, surrounded by a large space of uninhabited land. For an ancient German, a large free space is wealth and status.

We find the same word in Icelandic—*heiðr*, and in Old English—*hæþen*. From the Icelandic *heiðr* there comes *heiðni*, which means “heathen”; from the Old English *hæþen* directly comes the modern English name for “heathen,” the term *heathen*. Etymologically, they go back to the “wasteland” or “steppe,” the empty unoccupied space around the settlement. This brings these words closer to the Latin *pagus*, but they do not carry such an openly negative connotation. A Heathen in the Germanic languages is one who lives in a large and empty space, on Earth in *das Geviert*, understood in a noble way. This understanding of the surrounding emptiness, interpreted not as a “lack” or “scarcity of territory,” but as a “vastness” and “prosperity,” opens the veil over the specific conservatism of the Icelandic language and culture. In the future, the word could also gain certain

8 In pagan traditionalism, this opposition further develops into the war of Tradition with Modernity along the axes of paganism-*paganus*-Tradition and creationism-*urbanus* (Christianity)-Modernity.

9 See “Ancient Germans. The History of Latin-German Wars in the Descriptions of Ancient Historians.”

connotations in contrast to more densely populated lands around castles, forts, cities, etc, becoming even closer to *paganorum*.

The closest correspondence to the word “tradition” in the Icelandic language is the word *forneskja*, which consists of two roots *forn* — “old,” “ancient,” and *skja* — “custom,” literally meaning “old custom.” The word is found in “The Story of the Heath-Slayings” (*Heiðarvíga saga*) during the conversation of Bardi and his brethren with King Olaf the Holy, who denies them his friendship because they took their revenge resorting to “ancient ways that are utterly against his mind.”

In Icelandic:

þó hafið þér nokuð forneskju og þess konar átrúnað sem oss er óskaptíður
Howbeit ye have still some ancient ways about you, and such manner of
faith as goeth utterly against my mind.¹⁰

The word *forneskja* is used to refer to both “old times,” “magic” and “Heathenry” in Icelandic.

In the course of the translation of the Bible from Greek, where the concept of “peoples” was conveyed by the word ἔθνος, in the Church Slavonic language there appeared a constructed word *языци* (“yazitsi”), “tongues” or “languages.” In Russian, very important meanings are attached to this word: it gives rise to the very word “paganism” — *язычество* (“yazychestvo”). At the same time, it is firmly connected with the concept of “people”; that is, paganism is “peopleism,” languages are “peoples,” and a pagan is a “peopleist.” In such a perspective, paganism becomes synonymous with the concept of tradition in the Russian language. On the other hand, it directly refers to the speech and language of the people. This can be added with an understanding of tradition as not only verbal (spells, praises, speeches, prayers), but also material (embroidery, carving, architecture, ceramics, etc.) and behavioural (rituals, customs, rituals, wars,

¹⁰ “Heiðarvíga saga,” translated by William Morris and Eiríkr Magnússon, 1892.

unions) heritage, which together forms the language where each nation communicates with the divine, with the Gods. Here we can see a special semantic neighbourhood of the word “paganism”: the people — language — tradition. At the same time, the language of the people, understood as the totality of the material and behavioural, becomes extremely close to the concept of the World — *die Welt* — of the fourfold of *das Geviert of Seyn-beyng* in the philosophy of M. Heidegger; that is, to the direct ordering of the Earth by the Sky to the Cosmos.

Understanding paganism as “peopleism,” we find in German and English similar words *völkisch* and *folkish*, meaning “of the people,” “of the folk.”¹¹ These words also have the connotation of “rural” and “rustic,” which brings them closer to *paganorum*, but they are not imbued with negative tones.

Moreover, these words are now used to refer to “paganism” and “pagan” in German and English, neutrally coloured. However, these words are connected with the “language” only indirectly, as the language is the basis for defining “what is theirs” for the Germans. It is necessary to keep in mind that we come to the pagan understanding of the word *völkisch* through a hermeneutic excursion into the Slavic etymology of the word “Heathenry.” Also, we should add here the fundamental position of M. Heidegger¹², who lived in seclusion in the province and defended this image and place (*topos*) of life, as well as the huge role of the black forest paths and trails (*Holzwege*), which the philosopher actively uses as metaphors and illustrations of his thought of being.

11 Modern Icelandic uses the form *folk*.

12 It is important to clarify that in the time of the Third Reich Martin Heidegger was sceptical about *völkisch* in “The Black Notebooks,” but this is due to the fact that he used this word in the sense of “nationalism” in a historical and ideological context different from the traditionalist translation of this word as “peopleism.”

Speaking of Heathenry in the Heideggerian context, we must make an important and subtle distinction in our understanding of paganism, its inner tones or levels. Paganism can be understood in the sense of neo-paganism and neo-pagan (or sometimes just “pagan”) movements of modernity that seek to re-create and re-construct ancient traditions as a form of religious identity and worldview, which undoubtedly refers to the past metaphysics of the first Beginning that has already ended. Regarding such paganism, this term itself inherits its negative, derogatory undertones from the later understanding of the Jewish “*goyim*.” In fact, in the vast majority of cases we are talking about the ontic (pre-philosophical, “ordinary-as-profane”) thinking and the return to it. This is a profane interpretation of paganism, which is separated from the postmodern New Age by a transparent and [almost] nonexistent border; they actively communicate and appear to us rather different, but closely related, intermixed phenomena.

The situation is different with Heathen traditionalism, which raises its horizon above the ontic towards the metaphysical and ontological, *clearly understanding the end of the living traditions of the past, and taking the position of traditionalism-as-philosophy*. When a person, an ordinary pagan of any community or organization, realizes *the already fulfilled completeness* of tradition but still hears the call of *beyng*, he *no longer* belongs to the ontic, layman paganism, but is already *open* to pagan traditionalism, which allows him to comprehend the hierohistorical process at a different level. But this openness is not a guarantee of the transition from “ordinary” to philosophical Heathenry. When one gains insight about the death of tradition, there opens an abyss of horror that cannot be filled up with things and *techne* of being. The Heathen becomes—or rather, he may become and he may become not—not a “religious Heathen” but a Heathen-philosopher, and while there is philosophy, there is Heathenry. The upper or the most fundamental level of philosophy is Martin Heidegger’s fundamental ontology of *Seyn-beyng*. This corresponds to the Heideggerian understanding of Heathenry. And exactly this understanding of Heathenry

is proper and insistent. A person who is afraid or embarrassed to use the word “Heathenry” reveals that they, consciously or not, support the positions of creationism and its interpretation of ontology and philosophy.

But the core of Heathenry is manifestation paradigm (manifestationism), and by using the term “Paganism” or “Heathenry,” we mean manifestationism in the first place and all implied ontology, metaphysics, mentality and structures. In this, paganism (pagan traditionalism) is much closer to a real understanding of pre-Socratic and Heidegger’s φύσις. This interpretation of paganism at last has nothing in common with contemporary pagan movements.

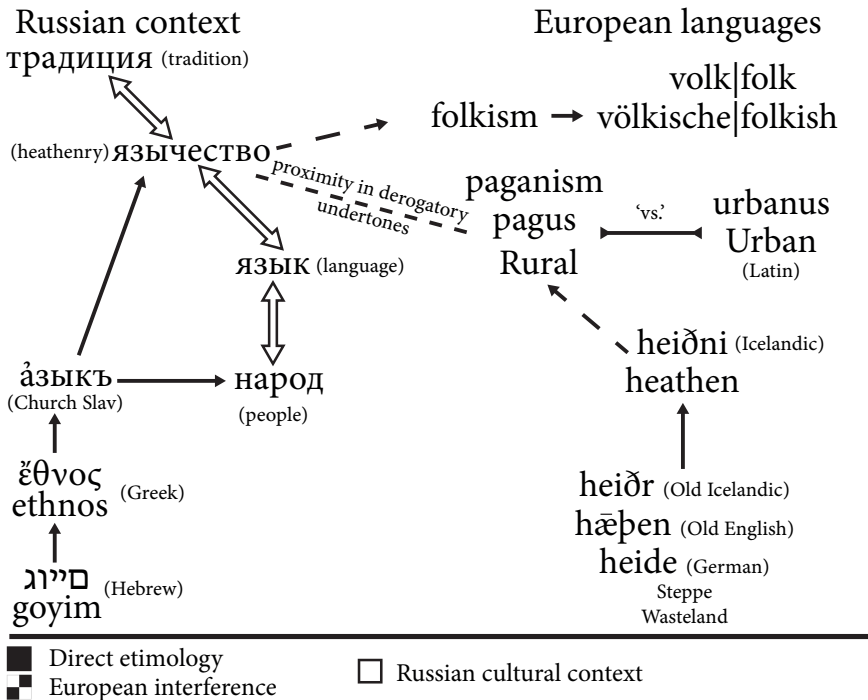


Figure 1.

Here let us voice a consideration which we do not wish to impose on the reader as it takes an in-depth comparison of two philosophies — that of Heidegger and that of traditionalism — to give it proof. Our idea is as follows: Traditionalism is based on the postulate that the modern world is the time of the End, the Era of the Wolf, or Ragnarök. Tradition is over, but there is traditionalism that realizes and recognizes this end, claiming that we people are in its heart here and now. According to the cyclic doctrine, the Age of the End is resolved in an eschatological event (the battle, dissolution, transition) after which a new Beginning, a new Golden Age, begins. In the course of Heidegger's thought and language, we may add the nuance that the Beginning is not an instantaneous action here and now, not an abrupt "here-it-is-the-Beginning," but it is *beginning to begin*. That is, the Beginning begins to swell like buds on the trees, it starts its leisurely run while the End may still smoulder and decompose. Here we can add another dimension to Heidegger's understanding of "paganism," which will outline the path to Heathen traditionalism. The path runs not from top to bottom and not from the past to the future, but is rather just a path, a bridge between the banks. According to this path, the [philosophical] paganism of *Seyn-beyng* no longer refers to the past cycle of centuries, but highlights the silhouettes of Heathenry of the *new Golden Age*, a different thinking, a different attitude to *beyng*; it casts a glance over the horizon.

III

War as the Centre of Being of the German Logos

WAR AND BELLIGERENCE lay in the foundation of the German Logos and psychology of the Germans, resulting in a special mentality and perception of the world, of surrounding tribes and nations. Belligerence is a dominant strain of the Germans. Throughout their history the Germanic societies, both continental and Scandinavian, were led by military men's unions (*Männerbund*), which incorporated representatives of the second estate, the martial function in the tri-functional hypothesis of Georges Dumézil. All European royal dynasties and houses are traced back to these unions, being founded by the Germans and, to a great extent, survived as such. It is reflected in an allogeneic theory of origination of the states and elite; the Germanic military unions seized power over peoples, establishing their royal dynasties. The same story allegedly took place in Rus', where the first dynasty was established by Rurik, who is said by some historians to be of Germanic origin.

War is a special element which *precedes those who are in war, precedes enemies and reasons for war*, and by no means sets or answers the question of *who the victor is*, does not point at or predetermine the victor. War comes first, it is in the middle, and all accompanying

phenomena are being irradiated as beams from it: poles of rivals, procuring *casus belli* (in a name of what), preliminary preparations and warfare, battles, victors and vanquished. The Germans in their being are merged into this element as no one else, which is reflected on the level of myth in the cult of Odin, his maidens, the Valkyries, and Valhalla, and on the level of philosophy — to the greatest extent and based on the fundamental ontology — in Martin Heidegger’s teaching of the fourfold (*das Geviert*) of *Seyn-Beyng*. This belligerence of the Germans’ is explicitly implemented in their history up to the 20th century.

This understanding of war is in fine resonance with that of Heraclitus the Obscure:

πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους.

War is father of all and king of all; and some he manifested as Gods, some as men; some he made slaves, some free.

Pre-Socratic Greek thinking begot the dictum which could have been agreed upon by the Germans, who have implemented it in the purest form, for it was the axis and the nerve of their tradition and world outlook. And such an agreement we witness in Heidegger’s thought.

The Greek God of war Ares is accompanied by Polemos — a daemon of war that embodies the element of battle, combat, that hovers amidst the warriors, blows of swords against shields, attacks and counterattacks, while Ares soars high over the battlefield. Polemos is a masculine deity, as is the German word “Krieg” and the Old Icelandic “gunnr” that denote war and the battle. The Russian for “war” is “война,” “voyna,” which is a feminine gender, as is “брань,” “bran” — another term for the battle, wrangle. So the above cited translation of Heraclitus sounds erroneous to the Russian ear, as war must have been “mother of all.” The word “polemos” brings forth “polemics,” that is a controversy. The Russian “bran” and other words originating from this stem bear the same meaning, though some of

them downgraded to designate genre styled quarrels of ordinary life. Odin is also the God who instigates and abets conflicts and wars. But he, as Ares does, stays over the battlefield and the war, he is the God who is offered sacrifices [of enemies] and lives of warriors, who, being over the battlefield, grants one party the victory, often out of an arbitrary, capricious will; who carouses with them afterwards in the Hall of the Slain. The element of war — *gunnr/Krieg/polemos* — incorporates the Valkyries (the Old Icelandic *valkyrjas*), Odin's maidens, who choose in the heat of the battle half of those who died to join the ranks of Odin's forces (to become *einherjar*). Apart from the Valkyries, this special military female suite of Odin, the Goddess Freyja, a member of the Vanir, receives the other half of the slain into her afterlife field *Fólkvangr*. In the words Valhalla, Valkyrie, in some of the names of Odin and Freyja — *Valföðr* and *Valamoðer* — father of the slain and mother of the slain respectively, the first root stems from the Indo-European phoneme “*vl” — slain, dead, which evolves into the Old Icelandic “valr,” the Norwegian “valen,” the English “fallen.” The Valkyrie is “she who takes the fallen from the battlefield.” It is fair to say that Odin participates in the battle both directly, amidst blades and pole axes, and indirectly, through the Valkyries, who are right in the thick of things, attacks and deaths. Finding an affinity between the maiden-Valkyries and the Russian feminine “bran” is rather indirect and contextual and not etymological.

A resonance between Heraclitus' insight “πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι...” and *Krieg's* implementation in the Germans, the Germanic Logos fits the pattern of the Hellenic-Germanic axis. A full-blooded war element, *polemos-Krieg*, we encounter in numerous Latin-Germanic wars of Rome against the Germanic tribes, described by historians, mostly of Greek origin. At that time Odin acted as an absolute personification of the divine instigator of wars, he created and ruined unions, turned friends into foes, sowed hostility between the Germans and pitched them against the Romans and the Gauls. It was the time of the still living unrestrained element of pure

belligerence, when war was the core, and the rest — *who fights and with whom* — were just derivatives built by war itself as its manifestations; they do not exist apart from war.

War is a prime element that emits-from-itself to the opposite directions the fronts, unions, rivals, the fallen and victors. And it manifests itself as fire. War is a fiery element. Fire is war.

Alvíss in his controversy with Thor mentions the different names that fire has among people, the Titans and the Gods:

«Eldr 'tis called by men,
but by the aesir funi;
the vanir call it vag,
say jotnar frekan,
but the dwarfs forbrenni;
in Hel they call it hraduth.»

«Eldr heitir með mönnum,
en með ásum funi,
kalla vág vanir,
frekan jötnar,
en forbrenni dvergar,
kalla í helju hröðuð.»

The difference in names suggests that fire is differently perceived in different worlds, by different beings, on different metaphysical levels, that it constitutes different beings. Among the Aesir it is heat, for *funi* is a derivate from *fyr* — flames. In the subtle world of the Gods, fire is not material flames (which is the case with *eldr* — men's "ordinary fire"), but a natural heat of frenzy and thirst for an active martial deed, it is the flame of excess. The opposite is a greedy devouring fire of a Titanic poverty of the Jötnar.

Fire is connected with war by numerous links-objectifications: war tools are forged in the fire of a furnace, in its heat the sword's steel becomes firm and willing to kill, to bring death, victory and fame; war is carried on with fire — with torches, flaming arrows, conflagrations, grassland fires, arson, burning of villages and towns of the enemy; the heat of frenzy — is the fire of war in the bosom of the berserker or the warrior, his blood is hot, the temper is fiery; war is the space where the Spirit blazes; finally, having found their death on the battlefield, the glorious warriors, Konungs and Jarls, are gone to the other worlds, Valhalla and Fólkvangr, on a flaming bonfire or a long-ship, riding the

flames which take them up to the sky. The myth introduces fire at the dawn of the universe, in the beginning of the cosmogenesis when icy Niflheim collided with fiery Muspelheim and sparks of this collision became proto-entities. The ruler of Muspelheim, the fiery Jötunn Surtr (Black), plays a crucial role in the eschatological battle on the Vígríðr field, where he ends the battle of the Gods and the thurs by stumping the cosmological tree Yggdrasil with his fiery sword, ending all nine worlds engulfed in flames. Fire is the beginning and the end constituted by war.

For a German, according to his second caste of warriors, “to be” means “to-be-at-war” — in the moment of combat, an attack against the opposing enemy. Peace is the time for preparations for war, battle is the flash, a moment of being-here-and-now, a period of authenticity that lacks time (as time is sublated); “to be stands for to beat.”

Let us introduce a nuance in understanding the fight, combat, battle which uncovers a fine distinction between the possible authenticity and non-authenticity of *Dasein* on the battlefield. A warrior may advance to face his enemy in two different ways. First is to don one’s best war gear, chain mail, guards, noble helmet, to take the sword adorned with gold, mount a stately warhorse, surround oneself with an equally noble and impressive suite, ensigns, flags, and command to blow into horns and beat the drums. Second is to face the enemy bare, smeared with soot or ash, intoxicated with substances, or in a frenzy without any external impact, with only a simple and reliable sword and a wooden shield.

The first is the *konung, jarl*, king as an embodiment of the will to power, who shares some of his status with things (a personalized sword, ensign, decorated horse) and delegates it to the suite (noble clans, sons, vassals). The heat of belligerence here is abated by the beauty of representation of might (*Macht*) through surrounding people and things, for such beauty demands ipso facto power and will to not let it go, to keep it by the lord. At the same time it does not mean that such a warrior lacks valour, courage, the knowledge of martial

art, the skill and the nobleness of prosecution of war. But this environment of luxury, of things and men, already dissembles a distance and alienation from the element of war, the conversion of its flames into the lustre of dress, of gold, of fame. This is the path of the warrior of the Right Hand.

The second path is the one of the warrior whose nature is closer to the element of war, frenzied and in divine possession of the As Odin. He is perfectly indifferent to the material store and property he might or might not have. He enters the battle as if he were already dead, non-present as a person, but only a warrior for the sake of the battle here-and-now, during which he blazes up with an authentic mode of being. The vivid examples of such warriors are berserkers and *úlfhéðnar* (wolf warriors) and mythical *einherjars*, who spend their days fighting each other. De-personalization of such a warrior is conducted not only through de-identification with material attributes (getting bare-chested, smearing with dirt and ash, intoxication), but sometimes through possession by a beast's spirit — the one of a bear or wolf, which he had to overcome during the initiation and gaining aegis of this beast as a martial totem. For such a warrior the battle-and-death is the life-here-and-now. While life and death here is correctly understood not through dialectics of thesis and antithesis which are sublated in the synthesis of transfer “through death to a new life.” On the contrary, life and death must be comprehended literally as simultaneous, synchronous, *as the same one action indeed*, in the spirit of Zen-koan that breaks conventional and customary logic (generally speaking, it should be renounced at all, when it comes to myth and the question of *beyng*). Only when openly going to his doom, the warrior is living a fully authentic life. During a truce a warrior lives the life “borrowed” from death and the battle to be. This is the path of the warrior of the Left Hand.

The Titanomachy and Ragnarök

The Titanomachy—the war between the Titans and the Olympic Gods—is the nerve around which the ancient Greek¹ being is built¹. This conflict underlies the cosmogenesis of the Hellenistic Apollonian myth, which is the establishment of order, Cosmos and its proper organization. The initial Titanomachy is further reflected in the Gigantomachy and the Typhonomachy—the fact that leads F.G. Jünger to the conclusion that the Titanomachy is a meta-historic war, i.e. not only a mythological battle linked to the dawn of the Cosmos, but the battle which is in permanent development at any given moment of human history. The Titanomachy is not what has once been, but what always is. The Titans and the Giants are chthonic children of the Great Mother. They are heavy, stupid, technical, and fraught with will to power, craving for Olympus, its seizure and the Titanic rule of the Titans. They are the embodiment of never-ending appropriation, forlornness (misery), which they try in vain to make up for and to fill. On the other hand, the Gods are always light, incorporeal, of *nous* nature, and a priori are full of the regal, they are by definition above, on Olympus. The God is not a Titan, the Gods rule—the Titans thirst after power, the Gods possess it forever—the Titans have been deprived of power forever and are always being deprived of it.

This is where the inner conflict of an ancient Greek comes from—the problem of the inner struggle with the Titanic, advocacy of the Divine²; the conflict of the sacral versus anti-sacral. F.G. Jünger in *Griechische Mythen* (Greek Myths) also points at the absolute nature of this confrontation (*~macy*), maintaining that “where there are no Gods, there are the Titans.” A man intrinsically cannot evade this war as long as he is a man. Not making a choice is indeed a choice in favor of the Titans; postponing decision, procrastination—is staying on the Titans’ side. This choice offers man intrinsic freedom: to choose

1 See F.G. Jünger, *Griechische Mythen*.

2 See also Natella Speranskaya, “Dionysus the Pursued.”

the Gods or to take the Titans' side; to carefully invite the Gods, or dare not to disturb them, let alone summoning and forcing them to appear, or to turn them out and kill them. Thereby the Titanomachy is a metaphysical foundation of history, which proves to be a sacred history (hierohistory in terms of Henry Corbin and Friedrich Jünger) of war. Avoiding a long excursus, we may compare the Divine and the Titanic in the modern era with the paradigm of Tradition, philosophy of traditionalism, the Conservative Revolution — on the one side, and Modernity, Postmodernity and nihilism — on the other. F.G. Jünger points out the Titans' love for the noise of machine tools and factories; they live in machinery and show themselves in machinery, in τεχνη, in Gestalt of the Worker (*Der Arbeiter*) of Ernst Jünger, who also noted the sweeping rise of the Titanic³.

Unlike Greek tradition, German-Scandinavian myth presents a relatively tranquil picture of the world's creation. The original "conflict" between Fire and Ice, Niflheim and Muspelheim, is attested to in couple of stanzas in the Edda and, at first glance, is not as dramatic and fundamental as in the Greek tradition. The world comes to being slowly, gradually, somewhat sluggishly, culminating in dressing the carcass of the primeval giant Ymir, whose body parts become the heavens, clouds, forests, and mountains, the ash Yggdrasil manifests itself. Nevertheless, the plot of numerous myths and the same "inner conflict" of an ancient German or Scandinavian refer to the confrontation between Týr and Thor on the one hand and the thurs and rime giants (*hrímthurs*) on the other. Thor is a thunderer God and an exponent of the second function in Dumézil's hypothesis or an analogue of the second Deity, who bears the world, according to the divine Triad of the Creator — the Bearer — the Destroyer.

The warlike Thor also has some fiery traits — a fiery-red beard, the lightning casting. The hammer Mjöllnir, his main weapon, refers

3 See Ernst Jünger, *Der Arbeiter. Herrschaft und Gestalt* (1932, "The Worker. Supremacy and Gestalt"), *Strahlungen* (1948, "Reflections"), *Siebzig verweht* (1980, "Seventy passed"), *Der Waldgang* (1951, "The Forest Passage").

to the blacksmith's work, and further — to a smithy magic of fire, of transformation of raw substance of iron in the fire and under blows of a sledge hammer into the shape of handicraft. This is the realization of the idea descending from above into the concrete matter, especially into swords, axes, pole axes, hooks, and other weaponry. A mythical figure of a smith-magician is represented by Wayland the Smith, who is said by some scholars to be an alias of Odin, the father of Thor.

The rime giants act as the adversaries of Thor. These frost titans-jötunnar from Jötunheimr, or, generally speaking, Utgard, “the world behind the wall [*gard*]” act with giants-thurs, Þursar.

In the *Poetic Edda*'s poem “Vafþrúðnir's Sayings” the knowledgeable Jötunn Vafþrúðnir calls the primeval giant Ymir a “*hrímkalda jötun*.” The first word stems from *hrím*, “frost” or “rime” (and also sometimes “soot”), which makes it related to *gríma*, “mask,” that gives yet another name for Odin — Grimnir, “Wearing the mask.” *Gríma* also forms a kenning for “a night” and the word “*grimmd*,” “cruelty.” Possibly, these words are in some relation due to transitional vocalization of letters “h” and “g” in Germanic languages. Both roots *hrím* and *gríma* make up such two-root words as *hrím-frosinn* and *grimmdarfrost*, “covered with rime” and “bitter frost” respectively. The second root “frost” stands for a firm, obvious coldness, while putting in front of its past participle (*frosinn*) the noun *hrím* dilutes its coldness to the state of hoar-frost, rime, “light morning frosts.” On the other side, adding the root *gríma* intensifies coldness to the state of being severe, stinging, and unbearable. And the kenning for “a night” refers to the night frosts, a relentless coldness during the time of a “concealed” sun.

The second root of *hrímkalda* — *kalda* — stands for the cold, but not the frosty cold. *Hrímkalda* is rime-cold, the rainy and snowy weather, when everything becomes hoary, but not frozen, let alone to its full depth. This is “weak” weather, already-not-warm and yet-not-frosty, like twilight on the coast with the wind that doesn't freeze, yet chills to the marrow. With regard to the Jötunnar, “*hrímkaldar*” means rather unremarkable, indistinct as compared to a more intense “frost”;

“intermediate-therefore-repulsive” what makes it contextually close to the meaning of “thurs” — “dull,” “morose,” and “gloomy weather.” For “morose” is not “dreadful.” Even a handsome man may suddenly turn sullen, scaring or perplexing us with his odd dull and gloomy look.

Another Icelandic word translated as giant, titan is Jötun or Jötna, a masculine noun from the strong verb “eta,” meaning “to eat,” “to eat up.” Therefore the name Jötnar stands for the “gorging,” “devouring.” As long as this process gives name to them, it might be inferred that such endless devouring is provoked by an endless hunger that is shortage, deficiency, which cannot be satisfied. Eating is an act of appropriating, placing food or anything that sinks in the mouth into oneself, into a cramped chthonic womb. Jötnar are “cold-blooded” creatures, icy and suffering an endless hunger, shortage, deficit — according to their nature. But the question is: why is a Jötunn called hrímkalda, mildly-cold, non-frosty instead of hot, which would be natural if it comes to devouring things and hiding them in the womb? It is supposed to be hot where things are digested, being treated with heat and acids to be broken down. But Jötnar are hrímkalda, rime-giants. A constant hunger, essential indigence coupled with not hot but a cold womb, present a chthonic appropriative nature of these giants in Germanic myth. Their perception is the perception of devouring, even fire is perceived as merely the fastest and most ravenous devourer of all (see “The Ballad of Alvis”; the tale of Thor’s travel to Utgard in the *Prose Edda* book *Gylfaginning*, chapter 44). The Jötnar devour all things in existence without digesting, they only hide, appropriate to their wombs with no purpose of remaking, converting things into something new, they cannot help but shove everything into their buried rocky rime bosoms, they act only by operation of indigence. Translating the simple, as it seems, statement that Ymir was a rime giant, we tend to use a simple image, which our mind promptly offers of a gigantic creature with blue skin covered with hoarfrost and ice. But doing so, we miss the essential understanding of this mythological figure. In “The Prophecy of the Völva,” she states

that the first entities to emerge from the Gaping Abyss were Jötnar, the devouring. But is it possible for them, as for any other figures and things, to emerge prior to their essence, and to become what they are, to become essential afterwards? Were this the case, certain entities would have emerged, which later, in the process of devouring, would have become “the devouring creatures,” Jötnar, therefore obtaining their essence. But the Völva is unambiguous: Ek man jötna — “Jötnar I remember” — that is, those-who-are-already-Jötnar. So the essence of “the devouring Titans” is not constant eating upon their emergence; by which they gain their name and nature, but the other way around: Jötnar emerge only because and when a devouring indigent essence present. A Jötunn is a Jötunn because he *devours*, or rather he is-as-the-devouring. He exists-in-devouring; in other words, the material incarnation of a Jötunn surges to meet its essence, which is “to-be-through-devouring.”

So, hrímkalda jötun, the rime giant, is to be understood as “one who devours [things] in his poverty and conceals them in the rime-frosty entrails of the earth.” So, concealing of things is what the emergence of the “already-devouring” directly owes to. Ymir is the chief giant, or the first one, according to some sources. Slaying him, the Aesir create the world. It is described as re-naming his body parts: the bones become mountains; the skull becomes the heavens; the brain becomes the clouds, etc. What we clearly observe here is a common Indo-European motif of the proto-being dismemberment and fashioning the world out of his parts (see the myths of the cosmic man Purusha) and also a common magical practice of enchanting through the name, naming and re-naming things, casting a spell over one thing by giving it a name, and thus — the essence, of another thing. According to this, Ymir is pictured as an anthropomorphous creature, whose anatomic structure can be disassembled into separate organs, which can be assigned a new, elemental, rather than organic, nature. But following the understanding exposed above, Ymir appears to be of not biological, anthropomorphic, organic or natural nature. His

nature is to conceal things in the cold bowels of the Earth through devouring them in his poverty. The devoured things are not digested, but only deprived of their own essence and life in the lightless realm, in some sort of [a transient] nonexistence, denial of things' present being, of their representation as "here I am, alive and functioning, etc." From this point of view, the slaying of Ymir, who was honoured as the main devourer, and further fashioning of the world — is discharging of the concealed in the womb after the death of the "devouring poverty." Ymir's scale is better understood given the fact that from his concealing womb the whole Germanic Cosmos comes out in its ordered form. To draw an analogy with re-naming magic dealing with Ymir's body parts, we may say that, if the essence of Jötunn's unparted existence is "to-conceal-through-eating-out-of-poverty," then his death is the opposite: the revealing-through-non-concealment of the holistic integrity of things. What has been deprivation, reduction to a sort of nonexistence (non-presence), upon death turns into (being renamed) sufficiency, abundance, bringing everything to an ordered presence — which is the main content of the Greek term "κόσμος," Cosmos.

It is the Aesir who eliminate poverty, bringing Cosmos to an order and presence, a natural abundance. Now that we know more about the nature of the conflict between the Jötnar and the Aesir, we may notice that the metahistorical Titanomachy of the Aesir and Jötnar is the battle of the Gods and on the one hand and the indigence, deprivation, concealment-as-appropriation of the light by the chthonic Earth, concealment of the order of the universe (making it merely disappear or being scattered), the attacks of the "devourers" against non-concealed being — on the other. Once again we encounter war in the very foundation of the world. Characteristic traits of swallowing Titans can be plainly observed in the figures of the wolf Fenrir and the dog Garm who swallow the sun, the moon, and Odin during Ragnarök. The same traits can be found in a more distant reflection in folklore — in the grim (if read not sanitized, without modern

adaptations) European fairy tale “Little Red Riding Hood,” where the Big Bad Wolf swallows her and her grandmother whole.

The word Þurs in Old Icelandic means either “giant” or “sullenness.” Etymologically the root goes back to the Teutonic *thurs, from the Proto-Indo-European *ters, which means “dry.” The modern English “thirst” originates from the same root, the verb “thirst” has the shade of want, indigence — a typical Titanic trait of the Titans.

The rune þ which expresses the letter þ and the phoneme *th, is called Thurisaz and has a common meaning of the thorn. It is also the simplest pictogram of the thorn. There are popular beliefs that thorns (called “thurs”) prevent women in childbirth from easily delivering a child,⁴ so special spells must be used to avoid such a problem. Having phonetic and semantic similarity, Þurs and Thurisaz began to merge into one notion.

In modern Germanic-Scandinavian Heathenry there is a vicious usage of the rune þ as an abbreviation for the name Thor, due to a phonetic equivalence of the first syllables; this rune is often drawn on pendants with the hammer of Thor. Actually it sets Thor beforehand in position of a loser, because his talisman-weapon bears the rune-name of his sworn enemies, who, therefore, are set in the position of winners. In Icelandic there is the word þora meaning “to dare,” “to have the courage to,” which is much closer to Thor as he is a bellicose As-Guard (the Protector). Possibly, modern confusion and misuse of the rune þ in application to Thor lies in the similarity of the first letters in the words þorn and þora and the phonetic identity of their first syllables with the name Thor. Thor is etymologically descended from the Proto-Germanic *thunaraz — “thunder,” same as the German “Donnar.”

In the struggle of the fiery thunderer Thor and the rime giants echoes the distant initial conflict of Niflheim and Muspelheim, of Ice as a passive freezing element and Fire as an active and belligerent

4 See Icelandic and Norwegian runic song (Runakvædi).

motive element⁵. The fact that Thor defeats countless numbers of *hrímthurs*, that is mediocre-giants, so-so-giants, morose beefy morons, suggests that not only mighty Titans oppose the element of Fire and the Divine, but also outright mediocrity, irresolute sullen “giants.” Hence a comparison inevitably comes to mind with mediocre men, with the irresolute dull “last race” depicted by Friedrich Nietzsche, those who confront Zarathustra “and blink.” *Hrímthurs* are *hrím-maðr*, men-hoar, men-soot.

But the main difference between the Germanic-Scandinavian Titanomachy and the Greek one is that the Germans place a crucial and truly substantial battle of the Aesir against the *Jötnar* and *thurs* at the eschatological end of time, in Ragnarök. Recognizing the metahistorical status of the Titanomachy in both cases and the permanent nature of war between the Aesir and the *Thurses*, it would be a mistake not to take into account the different timing of wars in cosmological cycles. The Greeks see the fall of the Titans and the Gods gaining a foothold on Olympus at the dawn of the Cosmos. It forms their pattern, icon, and guideline for the further inner and outer struggle. But the Germans know that the battle between the Aesir and the *Thurses* is only to come, and the Gods’ episodic mythological conflicts with the *Jötnar* or the metahistorical struggle of the Divine and the Titanic — these are only an overture, a preparation for the final battle on the field of Vigrid. And this battle is not a simple and easy overcoming of the Titans. It is tragic, *the Gods die in it*.

If the history of Germanic myth is comprehended as a whole, it may be seen as a constant growth, intensification of a foreboding of the end, as a gradual densening of fabric of conflict and dramatic events that make the *Endkampf* come closer and closer. The crucial

5 It is noteworthy that in the Russian “заморозить” (“to freeze”) the Indo-European root *mor, *mar/mare is heard, which stands for “death,” “a ghost from the world of the dead,” “apparition.” It descends into such Russian words as у-морить (kill, starve to death), за-морить (tire out), за-морыш (starveling), мор (pestilence, murrain), the name of the Goddess of the Death Mara/Morena; the English “nightmare” (which is a calque from the French *couchemar*).

events set in the Iron Wood when the giantess Angrboda, “the one who brings grief,” gives birth (by Loki) to three Titan-monsters who were to be directly connected with the tragic fate of the Asir and the world: the wolf Fenrir, the Midgard Serpent Jörmungandr — an embodiment of the ocean, and the female jötun Hel, the ruler of Hel — the underworld, yet another realm of the dead.

Jörmungandr, literally — “the world’s worm,” called “the sea-thread” in kennings for Loki, is a typical embodiment of the primary waters and the World’s ocean, which surrounds the Middle World — Midgard. He also grasps his own tail, thereby being an ouroboros and, consequently, associated with time, which in this case is understood as a heavy, tedious, hypochthonic (below ground level, bottom-dwelling, oozy) time-as-tedium, as a burden of a constant drowsy state.

Fenrir is involved in the key myth, where the Aesir, having learned about the wolf’s role in their fatal destiny, venture to put him into chains. And, as a game, to test his strength, they put him repeatedly into harder and harder chains, which he tears easily. So they resort to a magic ruse, creating fetters out of supposedly impossible things (the sound of a cat’s footfall, the roots of a mountain, the breath of a fish, etc.). Fenrir lets the binding put onto him but requests some of the Aesir to put his right arm into the wolf’s mouth as a pledge. Týr (Tiu, Tiwas) agrees and eventually loses his arm, as Fenrir bites it off when finding he is unable to escape. Týr’s gesture reveals a dramatic fate of this God: Týr is an ancient Germanic God of justice and war (a just war), whose name brings forth such a word as “tyr,” meaning “a God-warrior.” However, later he loses his function and is dethroned by the cult of the frenzied warrior Odin. Týr as a witting deceiver and a violator of the vow, even if it was given for the sake of higher objectives and deferment of the Aesir’s fate, loses the eligibility to administer justice and ability to fight in full force — this is what Loki points out during Loki’s quarrel (*Lokasenna*). In the final battle Týr overcomes the chthonic dog Garm, who is considered to be a tempered figure of Fenrir

by some scholars. Fenrir is to withstand Odin in the battle to come. Garm and Fenrir both are connected to the primary and common act of swallowing the sun from the sky, which proclaims Ragnarök has broken out.

Regarding Hel, there is a stereotypical aberration that she is the Goddess of the realm of the dead and of Death. But she is I) not a Goddess, but more of a giantess by her nature, II) not a Goddess of Death, that is an open-towards-death and death-bringing figure. She is a mere steward of one of the after-worlds in Germanic-Scandinavian tradition. She is depicted as twofaced, with one face being dead and the other — alive, she is bent and sullen (þurs). Her realm of the dead has been contrasted to Valhalla as the upper world since, at least Snorri Sturluson's times, akin to Christian Hell and Paradise. Though Hel is not a place of suffering, it is a gloomy, morose space to dwell between reincarnations. Nothing happens there, souls just like shadows are wandering around icy blocks and cold poisonous rivers. It is worth saying that not only commoners are taken to Hel but also some warriors and even the Aesir, for example Baldr with Nanna and, supposedly, Hod. In its lack of developments, life and light, Hel's resemblance to the modern world fascinates, for it is the world of meaningless vanity of the last people.

During Ragnarök the Aesir are to confront these monstrous Titans on the field of Vigrid. The Icelandic word *Vígríðr* consists of two roots *víg* and *ríðr* that is “killing” and a strong form of the verb “to ride (astraddle).” So the Aesir and the thurs are gathering on the field named “the field where riders are galloping to kill each other.” This is a directly untranslatable pan of Icelandic kennings. An approximate poetic translation might be “the death ride” or “the field of the death's gallop,” which is more about war as Dance of Death, dance macabre, rather than the horse ride.

The next act of the tragedy is the death of Baldr, scarcely referred to in the *Poetic Edda* poems “The Prophecy of the *Völva*” and “Baldr's Dreams” and recounted in detail in the *Prose Edda* book *Gylfaginning*

(“The beguiling of Gylfi”). After disturbing prophetic dreams of Baldr’s early death, his mother Frigg makes every object in the world vow not to hurt Baldr who was the most beautiful and clear of all the Aesir. The only exception was made to a little sprout of mistletoe which “I thought to be too young to ask the oath of.”⁶

The invulnerability of Baldr has become a common amusement among the Aesir, who threw all sorts of weapons at him but causing him no harm. Loki wormed the secret of mistletoe out of Frigg, pulled it up and made a wand out of it. Then he instigated blind Hod to shoot a wand at Baldr, and this shot guided by Loki killed Baldr, directing the wrath of the Aesir at Hod and Loki.

In the story of Baldr there are obvious parallels that make the supposition possible that Loki’s complicity in the murder was a revenge for fettering his son Fenrir.⁷ Similar are the circumstances of the Aesir indulging in the pastime of trying the future victim’s omnipotency (tearing fetters apart) and invulnerability (from any weapon). Also the key role is played by mutilated Gods — Týr who loses a hand upon the discovery of the God’s deception and Hod who, being blind, also loses his life, being killed by Váli as revenge for Baldr. And so as Fenrir was Loki’s son, Baldr was Odin’s. In both cases the victim was a son whose fate is related to the threshold and resolution of Ragnarök: Fenrir is to be freed from fetters at the onset of Ragnarök, and Baldr is to resurrect after the *Endkampf*.

The key moment of the swelling conflict between Uranus’s sky and the chthonic under-Earth, the Divine and the Titanic is Loki’s Wrangling (*Lokasenna*), after which Ragnarök sets in. The versatility of this poem in the *Poetic Edda* gives rise to many talks concerning its origins (some claim its originated late under the influence of Christianity with the view of defamation of the old Gods) and contents (the relativity of morality as seen in the difference between modern

6 See the *Prose Edda* by Snorri Sturluson, Gylfaginning, XLIX.

7 For other versions see И.О. Нерпеев, «Образ Бальдра в контексте древнескандинавского культа Одина».

morality and the ancient one, and human morality and the Gods' — cf. *Quod licet Jovi, non licet bovi.*) Some claim that the Gods establish the proper rules for people by perpetrating the exorbitant, undue, extraordinary, by which they secure measured, due, and ordinary in the world.⁸ *Lokasenna* as a text plays a significant role in rereading the Divine figures and the figure of the instigator of the whole wrangling, Loki, whose nature is also ambiguous and problematically ambivalent. In this scene Loki makes his definite choice about which side he will take during Ragnarök, and this is not the side of the Aesir. This is why he comes to the feast given by Aegir to divert the Aesir from the killing of Baldr and starts a wrangling, hurling invectives and assaulting each of the Aesir and asynjur as well as the Vanir, calling their vices and misconducts, bringing a retaliatory anger. The culmination of the wrangling comes when Loki owns that he is guilty of Baldr's murder and Thor upon his arrival at the feast banishes Loki from the gathering. The Aesir chase and catch him in the appearance of a salmon, he is bound to rocks and a serpent is placed above his face, so that venom drips over it. His wife Sigyn tries to catch the venom. Thus Loki partially repeats the fate of his son Fenrir — just like him he is chained by the Aesir, and is to be freed from the fetters at Ragnarök.

The word Ragnarök (*Ragnarökr*) consists of two roots: *ragna*, from *regin* — the sovereign, king, God and *rök* — the fate, predestination. Ragnarök is the fate of the Gods, their given predestination. Another spelling of Ragnarök(k)r, found in *Lokasenna* and in the *Prose Edda*, descends from *rök(k)r* (“twilight”) and enables a more poetic translation, “Twilight of the Gods” used by Richard Wagner. Its aesthetic and romantic appeal nevertheless shouldn't be taken into account when it comes to the ongoing clarification of the origins of the term. Still, on the other hand, we may interpret the “twilight” as a word that is characteristic of the West, as the place of sunset, where the sun sinks

8 See A. Я., Гуревич «Эдда и сага».

behind the horizon,⁹ the land of evening and twilight, the German *Abendland*. Thus twilight and Ragnarök approach each other in such a sense that Ragnarök is the sinking of the Aesir, the rulers, particularly in the West, the realm of sunset, sinking here and now, in the twilight of modern times.

Ragnarök sets in as a destruction of the order in all nine worlds of the Cosmos. “The Prophecy of the Völva” recounts a tale of a common discord and decay, which is often found in Indo-European myths:

45.
 Brothers shall fight
 and fell each other,
 And sisters’ sons
 shall kinship stain;
 Hard is it on earth,
 with mighty whoredom;
 Axe-time, sword-time,
 shields are sundered,
 Wind-time, wolf-time,
 ere the world falls;
 Nor ever shall men
 each other spare.

45.
 Bræðr munu berjask
 ok at bönum verðask,
 munu systrungar
 sífjum spilla;
 hart er í heimi,
 hórdómur mikill,
 skeggöld, skalmöld,
 skildir ro klofnir,
 vindöld, vargöld,
 áðr veröld steypisk;
 mun engi maðr
 öðrum þyrma.

The picture is amplified with cockcrow, which rouses Odin’s forces and the dead of Hel. The split cracks Yggdrasil and the guard of the rainbow bridge Bifröst, Heimdallr, blows Gjallarhorn to announce Ragnarök’s onset. Finally *the End is coming to an end*, the time of the long-awaited battle comes.

Prior to that, the 48th stanza of The Prophecy of the Völva states:

9 In Russian the words “the west” and “to sink down” sound alike, thus provoking numerous puns — *translator’s note*.

48.

How fare the Gods?
 how fare the elves?
 All Jötunnheim groans,
 the Gods are at council;
 Loud roar the dwarfs
 by the doors of stone,
 The masters of the rocks:
 would you know yet more?

48.

Hvat er með ásum?
 Hvat er með alfum?
 Gnýr allr Jötunheimr,
 æsir ro á þingi,
 stynja dvergar
 fyr steindurum,
 veggbergs vísir.
 Vituð ér enn — eða hvat?

The *völva* asks “Hvat er með ásum?” / “How fare the Gods?” This question of the *Völva* means that there was some hitch, a question before the Gods — «Hvat er...?» — in the moment when the End came to its denouement. What makes the Gods stop and the *völva* ask? Before this moment we encountered numerous examples of the Gods trying to delay the course of events and Ragnarök: fettering Fenrir, providing Baldr with invulnerability, appeasement of swearing Loki with speeches. But nothing of these made a significant change in the course of *riç ragna*. Here is an important suggestion: “æsir ro á þingi” — “the Gods are at council (*Thing*).” A *thing* is an assembly of free men, warriors carrying weapons, around the fire, the bonfire for law-speaking, for solving disputes, including by dint of the sword and shield, which was not rare, for passing resolutions and coming to collective decisions. Two aspects are essential: the *thing* (the *althing*) is attended only by I) the free; and II) the armed men. The *thing* is a warriors’ assembly by the fire — the Divine and bellicose element, which implements itself also through combat, at which and by the dint of which verity is revealed. So at the threshold of the *Endkampf*, the Aesir gather for a warriors’ assembly to decide on a *certain issue*. The variant of the word *regin* in the Gothic language is *ragin* with the meaning, besides “Gods” and “might,” “the council” and “the resolution.” In the context of Ragnarök, the issue of such a council may only be participation or non-involvement in the battle. And as long as the battle is being of the Germanic people, Germanic-Scandinavian Gods,

the *thing* of the Aesir is called up to answer the only question: “*to be or not to be*,” “to fight or to evade the battle.” The decision of the Aesir before Ragnarök is a solemn and fundamental decision *to be*, to be what they are (*Selbst*), that is to go to meet death, to face it.¹⁰ In the world of men this eschatological decision of the Gods, final decision as it was the last one, manifests itself throughout history as Germanic belligerent nature, their will *to be* — to face enemies, to open-towards-death, to fight and to die [being taken posthumously to the ranks of Odin’s *einherjars*, thus accepting a new but the same decision on being as a battle-being]. But the Aesir take the decision “*to be*” not for the people, not for some good intentions to save the human race or the universe, not for compassion for the weak — it is more characteristic of the third agricultural estate or the Semitic messianic idea of a pending saviour. The Gods take the decision concerning only *themselves* and only for *themselves*. They do not care about people at all.

“To be” is understood not as a mere material or existential, in Sartre’s sense, “presence,”¹¹ but as “*spewing out an exuberant existence in life here-and-now*”; to be authentic *Dasein*. When the Aesir and people decide to be, the dwarfs decide to whine and run for refuge — *dvergar stynja*. People who decide “not to be” cannot be considered men. The 51st stanza of “The Prophecy of the Völva” states:

10 The reader should return to this passage again after the chapter “Being toward Death.”

11 The most vulgar version of the redemption of the meaninglessness of existence Jean-Paul Sartre offers in the programmatic novel *Nausea*.

51.

O'er the sea from the north
 there sails a ship
 With the people of Hel,
 at the helm stands Loki;
 After the wolf
 do wild men follow,
 And with them the brother
 of Byleist goes.

51.

Kjól ferr austan,
 koma munu Múspells
 of lög lýðir,
 en Loki stýrir;
 fara fiðmegir
 með freka allir,
 þeim er bróðir
 Býleists í för.

This stanza gives an account of Loki guiding the ship from the East, from Muspell against the Gods and accompanying him are not the thurs but people — lýðir. These are the last people in terms of Friedrich Nietzsche, who oppose the Gods not using weaponry, but being monotonous, possessed by office work, pottering about in new technical gadgets, appliances, inventions. They do not attack point-blank, but rather through reposts in social networks and blogs, through filling in countless bureaucratic papers, ordering coffee, watching football matches, or attending subcultural concerts. These unremarkable, featureless people are inhabitants of Hel. In fact, according to one version, Loki leads a crew of the dead on Naglfar captained by the Jötunn Hrym. It bears reference to the Titanic or Prometheus's "working" humanity, in terms of Ernst Jünger. The role of this Titanic humanity for *Dasein*'s authenticity is not less than that of the Gods. In the roar of machine-tools and other machinery, in streams of media and blogposting, the Gods do not live and are not present.

The fate of the Gods on the battlefield resolves in their death: Fenrir swallows Odin, Vidar avenges his father (some scholars assume Vidar to be a heiti of Odin himself). Thor smashes the skull of Jörmungandr, but gets a poisonous bite himself. Týr opposes Garmr, and each becomes the other's slayer; the same is true of Loki and Heimdallr. Freyr (Yngvi) loses to Surtr. The latter finalizes the battle by stumping the world tree Yggdrasil with the fiery sword, therefore destroying the universe with fire, making the sphere of being collapse.

Surtr's slashing gesture is a mirror closure of the cosmogonic cycle set in by the conflict of icy Niflheim against fiery Muspelheim. What has been due — *ṛoc* — is done.

The being of the German and his Gods is directed towards the end, Ragnarök, the fate and death. To be is to be at war and *to die at war*. To live is to prepare for war, to prepare for the *fair death*, for not every death is true and merited to be authentic. A Germanic man, a warrior coming into frenzy on the battlefield, facing his enemy lives just at that moment. The rest of his life is taken as a deposit from the battle and death. Speaking of the Aesir — they too live lives that are deposited with their fate, Ragnarök. *The universe as a whole exists not for the sake of a "good life," but it borrows its existence from its own end, its death at the Endkampf.* This is precisely what the choice "*to be*" means for the Germans and the Aesir — to resolve to engage in war, to dare to engage in war, to fight and to die. The whole life of all nine worlds of Yggdrasil is war preparations.

Here again we encounter a similarity between the Hellenistic understanding of the Titanomachy and the Germanic Ragnarök. The similarity is not close, but in the distance "the beginning of the world — the end of the world." But not only at the beginning and at the end — ever, that is literally here-and-now. And the battlefield of this polemos is man according to his nature. Man at war, man *at thought*.

Three Types of Warlike Thinking

Warlike thinking presupposes the existence of the opposition "friend or foe," which was one of the axes of Carl Schmitt's works. What we see here is a duality in world-view and thinking, the binary opposition of "we" against "them," "foes"; the fact that there might be several foes does not make this binary opposition multiple.

We find the attitude towards the enemy expressed in the following words by the Italian traditionalist Julius Evola to be antecedent and normative:

... Traditional States did not need all this. They did not create a chauvinist pathos and near psychosis in order to mobilize their troops and boost their morale. This was obtained by the pure principle of the imperium and by the reference to principles of loyalty and honor. Clearly defined goals were established for a necessary war, which was waged in a detached manner, hence without any room for hatred and contempt among combatants.

The same aristocratism of spirit and of waging the war is expressed by Ernst Jünger in his biographical work *Storm of Steel* about his days as a private and officer during World War I. Close to them stands the German theorist of law and *jus belli* Carl Schmitt, Ernst Jünger's close friend, who was in correspondence with Martin Heidegger and Julius Evola. All of them were representatives of the conservative revolutionary movement. Carl Schmitt introduced a fundamental for the sphere of the Political distinction "friend/foe," which bears existential (in the higher meaning of this term) and equipollent features. The very act of choosing a friend is a reflection from the enemy and this act is politics itself, its beginning. An enemy is the one who is to be annihilated, otherwise you will be annihilated by him. Such an existential and military-political structure fully corresponds to the belligerent nature of the Germanic Logos. This structure dictates the necessity for an enemy, for his existence makes it possible to identify oneself and to make a political choice of a friend. At the same time, the pair "friend-foe" lacks any racial or chauvinistic connotation despite the fact that Schmitt was a contemporary of the Third Reich and one of its leading lawyers. An enemy always is. It may change, for it is a chosen figure in its essence, but it cannot be not. An enemy and a friend are structural figures, not ideological or propagandistic derivatives and minions. An enemy exists just because it cannot be the other way. If there is no enemy — something is wrong with this world, it must be a simulacrum of the Political, and of the overall reality.

This normative appreciation of the foe, the friend, and war has two derivatives which are distorted in paradigmatic and historical aspects.

The first is the phenomenon of religious wars, which broke out as a consequence of the establishment of creationistic, namely Judaeo-Christian, religion in Europe. The glaring examples are crusades and Muslim conquests in the Asian Near East and the Balkans. Their distinguishing practice was compulsion of enemies under the threat of killing to adopt Christianity (or Islam). Having acquainted oneself with certain tenets of the Abrahamic religions, one naturally saw enemies in the heathens and heretics. Thus the phenomenon of the religious war lies in a strategic “bracket”: conversion of infidels to the true faith or to ashes. The sacral sanction is given to wage war *in the name of God* against those who have different names or understanding of God and, therefore, are demonized. Betrayal of one’s identity in favour of baptism or accepting *shahada* changes the status of this demonized “sub-human” to a man finally enjoying full rights, he becomes a “friend” not “foe” and may eventually victimize his former fellows, now “foes.” From the heathen point of view, the key-note of the political and military practice of Abrahamism is betrayal as a paradigm that descends from Eve, Cain, and Judas. As an example, one may recall the story of the Exodus of the first Christian community from Judea as a refusal to share a common fate with the rest of the Jews during yet another insurgency and its suppression by Rome. Another example — the right of a Muslim to lie about his confession while in captivity in order to save his life. De facto and de jure he is still recognized by sharia as a faithful Muslim.

The second derivative is a phenomenon of the modern era, Modernity and is fully implemented in the binary opposition 1|0. A more than revealing example of its military and political implementation is the practice of the genocide of the indigenous peoples of North America and Asia by English colonists. While Judaeo-Christian logic suggests an enemy a choice “either-or,” the Indians were deprived even of such choice. They were categorized without a moment’s hesitation as a sort of animals by the modernized church and science and were systematically extirpated without any chance to gain the status of the

human. No wonder that the phenomena of genocide and slavery of the Modern era differ drastically from warfare and slavery in Rome or Scandinavia. This paradigm has no room for war, but only for a methodical and technical slaughter.

On the aggravation of machinery's role as means of mass destruction, estranged from war's existence, not appreciating the enemy as such, but as impersonal hostile manpower — vividly wrote time and again Ernst Jünger in *Storm of Steel*, “Reflections” of World War II, and *The Worker*.

The perception of Τεχνη as the West's destiny and the urge to neglect being is profoundly substantiated and sharply pictured in Martin Heidegger's philosophy. In line with F.G. Jünger's perception of machinery as the embodiment of the Titanic, and indisputable recognition of machinery as nihilism, we may conclude that the original aristocratic war degenerates into a Titanic, mechanical, nihilistic slaughter. And people on both sides of the line of battle may fairly be called livestock for they have been withdrawing from the existential element of war further and further, being alienated from it by cabins, cockpits, handles, knobs, switches, interfaces, drones and such.

Understanding war as mere slaughter, a priori, condemns all one's efforts to get closer to the Emptiness of Nothing, even immersed into the element of nihilism, just like in Zeno's famous aporia of Achilles and the turtle. Τεχνη is not a certain finished state, but rather an *ever changing process*, technologization, upgrade, abnormal growth of gadget tissue around man (the Internet of things to name a recent development) and, finally, the disposal of man in favor of his prosthesis, neuronet artificial intelligence, or digitized consciousness. Such an approach dooms the one who tries to grasp Nothing and *Beyng*, to ladle the abyss with a sieve, just multiplying nihilism, while the knowledge of Nothing and *Beyng* is altogether forgotten and buried under the obstruction of the world's rotten flesh.

Understanding *Beyng* and *Nihil* in the course of Abrahamism and its “religious” war will not help neither. What we encounter here

is identification of being with God, who is different by nature from either *Nihil* and the world and man, and interaction between these authorities is not trivial, there are no straight and open paths.

An aristocratic and equippollent attitude towards war, characterized by existential openness without scorn, seems to be more effective in grasping *Beyng* and Nothing. But here again we encounter a problem which has to do not with a strategy within the situation of battlefield opposition, but with the opposition itself. In other words, while the question of being, the *decision to be* is taken at the *Thing* and directly connected with war, grasping *Beyng* and Nothing in a warlike manner, by brute-force, does not work. Dual thinking retreats, gives in to attempts to think, to appropriate (in the German and Icelandic languages the verbal root “eign”) Nothing and the element of being by Mind. At this point we have come to the realization that a bellicose mind may be absorbed into the element of *beyng*, may manifest *beyng*, get close to death, but it gives in to *thinking beyng*. Thus, we have come close to the question of nondual thinking of *beyng* and Nothing, of manifesting-and-concealment of being in existence, of grasping “the essence” of Nothing.

The Play of the Two Logoi of Europe

The German Logos begins from the German-Scandinavian archaic and its own beginnings. The warlike God-ancestor Tuisto and the ecstatic Odin-AllFather make up two poles in the structure of this Logos.

The historic homeland of the proto-Germanic tribes is the territory of modern Denmark, Sweden and the South of Norway from the Bronze Age, where they later settle on the European part of the continent.

At the turn of the II–III centuries BC Germanic tribes enter into military contact with Rome, which gives rise to the interweaving of two Logos, more precisely, destinies. The relations between the

Germans and the Latino-Hellenes¹² are ambivalent: on the one hand, these are strictly military conflicts, battles, the struggle for power or freedom, but on the other—the Germans embody the scenario of the game dispute-learning. They actively adopt the features and experience of the Latins in many areas and then inherit their imperial and intellectual functions of the center of Europe. In the course of the historical changes in the Latin Logos, mainly associated with the establishment of Christianity, which they “monopolize” through the institution of the pontificate and the Vatican, relations with the Germans change, they become more refined and dialectical.

The archaic stage in the formation of the Germanic tribes and the first major tribal unions went under the patronage of the warlike Tuisto—the Sky God and the Father. Metaphysically, this corresponds to the era of Tiw-Tyr up to the time when he was replaced by Odin.

By the second half of the II century BC, Rome successfully completed the Punic wars. For Rome, the confrontation with Carthage was of a fundamental nature, Carthage was a “significant other” and an absolute enemy (C. Schmitt) of Rome. Wars and victories in them predetermined many sides of the Roman state and society, and of the Latin identity as a whole. Rome established its power in the Mediterranean, including the Northern coast of Africa and a part of Spain.

However, by the end of the century, the Romans first encounter the raids of Germanic tribes from the North. Until the end of the century, the Romans face the raids of the Cimbri and Teutons on the Rhine and in Gaul, where they gain their first success. In 109–101 BC, General Gaius Marius repels the onslaught of the Germans from the North and inflicts a major defeat on the union of the Cimbri, Teutons and Helvetians at Vercellae. Thus the Romans discover a new force,

12 We consider the Roman Empire as carriers of implicit Hellenism, developed in the specific context of the Romanesque culture, traditions and structures. Hellenism and Latins are not identical, but in solidarity and in general express the Mediterranean fateful pole of young Europe.

which will become the new “significant other” for Rome for the next age, fiercely challenging its claim to power over the continent.

Serious success was brought to Rome by Gaius Julius Caesar’s campaigns in the 50s BC in Gaul and Germany, which he described in the “Commentaries on The Gallic War.” Caesar crosses the Rhine many times, defeating Ariovisto and Vercingetorix, the leader of the Gauls, subduing the whole of Gaul.

Emperor Augustus, the successor of Julius, decides on the expansion of the Roman Empire along the entire Rhine and up to the Elbe, during which the generals Tiberius and Drusus Germanicus distinguished themselves. The latter imposed a tribute on the Northern Frisians. Rome establishes its power over the Alps. But in the XI century AD, the Germans inflict a crushing defeat on the legions of Quintilius Varus in the Teutoburg forest, as reported by Tacitus. This event gave rise to German history and the struggle for the independence from Rome, which took place again during the reformation. The defeat of Varus causes public mourning in Rome, and the Emperor laments: “Quintilius Varus, give me back my legions!” In the forest battle, the Union of the Germans was led by Arminius of the Cherusci tribe, an educated leader who knew Latin and Roman military art. Arminius becomes one of Germany’s national heroes. It is believed that the Germans sacrificed the defeated Romans to their Gods, hanging their bodies on the trees—a trait peculiar to Odin’s cult.

After Teutoburg, Arminius continues the war with Germanicus and defeats the German leader Marbod, an ally of Rome. Having outlived Germanicus for two years, Arminius dies at the hands of conspirators. In the figure of Arminius, we see that the Germans do not just oppose the Romans, but they actively study their military science and get involved in the dialectical play-wrangle, during which they learn how to overcome the powerful enemy with his own methods and weapons on their own territory in their native space of forests, wetlands and mountains.

Until the Migration Period, Rome more or less kept control over German lands constantly torn by the conflicts of changing alliances of the Germanic tribes against each other and Rome. Then occur the Marcomannic Wars. The Germans adopt the order of the Romans to an even greater extent, keeping the love of war as the dominant feature of their relationship.

The last Emperor of the united Roman Empire, previously torn by contradictions between Rome and Constantinople, becomes Theodosius I, who established Christianity as the official religion of the Empire. After his death in 395 the Empire disintegrates into the Western Roman Empire and the Eastern Roman Empire, or Byzantium. After the establishment of Christianity and the separation of the once unified Empire, the Germans have their historical revenge: the Vandals and the Ostrogoths repeatedly rob the city of Rome itself, whose territories were reduced to Italy, and interfere in its politics and the affairs of the dynasty. The German Odoacer strikes a fatal blow to the Western Roman Empire in 476, overthrowing Romulus Augustus from the throne. From this moment Italy loses independence and exists as a feudal state or province of other empires.

Thus ends the great round of the military game: the German barbarians, who were originally scattered tribes, eventually inflict a crushing defeat on their enslavers, simultaneously borrowing a lot from their enemies-teachers. Further play unfolds not only as a military conflict between peoples and states, but also engages the intellectual and cultural sphere. The fall of the Western Roman Empire means that, as a people and a state, the Romans give way to the Germans.

In the V century, the Merovingian dynasty and their Frankish Kingdom, covering the vast lands of the former Empire, gains power. At the end of the same century, king Clovis converted to Christianity and became the first Catholic king; the German pagan tradition hides itself in popular beliefs and localizes in the Scandinavian pole of the Logos.

From the Merovingian family comes Charles the Great, who greatly increased the Kingdom's possessions and strengthened the power of the Franks. In 800 in Rome, Pope Leo III crowned Charles Emperor and Augustus of the Roman Empire by the grace of God.¹³ Thus, one part of the Germans began the restoration of the Empire based on Christianity — an element of the Latin Logos with a centre in Rome.¹⁴

In the structure of relations between the Roman-Greek and the German Logos, the Franks and Charlemagne act as the heirs of the ideas of the *oecumene* and the political unity of Europe, previously embodied in Rome. Replicating Rome, the Empire of Charles once again faces the militant Germans in the face of the Danes, challenging the Empire's influence in the North Sea. In this situation, we see that history repeats itself. Some strengthen power in the centre of Europe, others create new obstacles in the North, but both sides are now Germans; now they are the ethnic core of history.

From the VIII to the XI century, continental Europe is invaded by numerous Normans, the Vikings, who express the paradigmatic model of the invasion of "German barbarians" from the North. At that time, the Vikings were carriers of German-Scandinavian Heathenry and the cult of Odin. Thus, the Scandinavian pole of the German Logos made its presence known in history leaving a significant trace: the Vikings founded a state in Sicily; in the North of France, they

13 It is noteworthy that before that Pope Leo III fled to the North to Paderborn, a small German city near the Teutoburg Forest, in the vicinity of which Charles destroyed the Saxon sanctuary of Irminsul. Also this place is known for its natural sanctuary of Exterstein and the castle of Wewelsburg that was built later.

14 Christianity as a variation of creationism contains a strong component of Neoplatonism (the Hellenic element), and at the same time a number of structural intentions of Judaism and creationism in general, which shifts all further derivatives of this paradigm several levels below the pagan standard. The craving for manifestationism remains with poets and mystics, but in general Christianity is the father of Modernism, which we discussed in detail in the book "Polemos." Therefore, speaking of the Roman-Greek Logos, it should be understood that we are talking about the state of this Logos already shifted towards the Iron Age, about anti-Rome.

founded Normandy — the space of the knightly ethos (the trace of the German *Männerbund*); they sailed to the coast of Africa, they traded with Muslim Arabs, and they founded the first settlements in Iceland, Greenland and the East coast of America.

According to the Norman theory, they founded the royal dynasty in Russia in the person of Rurik. As the opponents of the Roman spirit, the Vikings are mentioned in English prayers: “From the wrath of the Northmen, O Lord, deliver us.” The Viking phenomenon can be seen as the last outbreak of authentic pagan existence opposing Christianity in the German Logos. For the continental Imperial Catholic pole of Germany, the Normans act as a distant shadow of themselves of the Roman-German wars period. The Christianization of Scandinavia lasts from the X century to the XIII century. At first, the warlike Scandinavians perceive Christ as just another God who generously bestows his followers and jarls with victories. In the early stages, their baptism is of a purely external nature, while in fact the Scandinavians remain heathens who now worship one more God who gives them victories.¹⁵ A deeper doctrinal and conscious perception of Christianity comes much later. And until today, the Northern countries retain a profound and pronounced dual faith and reverence to the old customs.

The final restoration of the Empire by the Germans is accomplished by Otto the Great, anointed by Pope John XII, who founded the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation in the 10th century (later named *Sacrum Imperium Romanum Nationis Germanicae*, or the First Reich), which existed until 1806. Throughout its history, the German Empire has maintained a militant ethos and expansionism, and the history of the First Reich covers the most important events within the German Logos and the process of strengthening the connection of the German spirit and history with the fate of Europe.

15 For more on the baptism of Northern Europe, see the chronicle of Adam of Bremen / “German Annals and Chronicles of the X–XI Centuries.”

Religious identity is the dominant factor in medieval Europe. The German Empire is united not only politically, but also ideologically: it carries Catholicism led by the papacy in the Vatican. Considering the Holy Roman Empire already as the expression of the Logos of Europe, we will again find the conflict between Rome (the Latin spirit) and Germany in politics and, in the most distinct form, in the two parties—the Guelphs and Ghibellines. The Guelphs were the nobility of Swabia and Bavaria supported by merchants; they advocated the absolute supremacy of the Pope in political matters of the state. The Ghibellines, descended from the Staufen family and supported by the nobility, advocated the primacy of the Emperor's power over the Church. The conflict between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines was the main political background of the Empire until the XV–XVI centuries and is reflected in Dante and Machiavelli. The Ghibellines were backed by the emperors Frederick I and Frederick II, fiercely at war with the Popes, chivalry and even poets and minnesingers.¹⁶ In the XV century, the Hohenstaufen dynasty was replaced by the Habsburg dynasty in the person of Frederick III, who consistently supported the Popes. So, the Guelphs were victorious in this confrontation.

The conflict between the Guelphs and Ghibellines reflects the conflict between Rome (Vatican, the Church and the Pope) and the Germans (the Empire and the Emperor, dynasticism as the warrior ethos) always seeking freedom and autonomy from the Southern government, and ideally also dreaming of power over it.¹⁷ In the future, this conflict will also manifest itself in the religious sphere.

Within the borders of the Holy Roman Empire, against the background of the struggle of the Guelphs and Ghibellines as an ongoing conflict of the South and the North, Romans and Germans, a work of a quite different nature was being done by the Rhineland mystics—Eckhart, Tauler, Suso. In the body of Christianity, but based on

¹⁶ See Walther von der Vogelweide's poems.

¹⁷ In modern history, the position of the Ghibellines was firmly supported by Julius Evola.

Hellenic Neoplatonism, they revived structures of relations between God and man, and the Creator and the world, pagan in their nature (manifestationism). At the political level, the relationship between the poles constituting European identity was expressed in the conflict, but in theology, mysticism and philosophy, the Germans have accomplished the synthesis of the Hellenic and Germanic beginnings of the present European Logos. In ancient times, the Rhine served as the border between Roman and German territories; in the Middle Ages it became a space where philosophical and noetic bridges are built. This synthesis was further supported by the ideologists of the German Renaissance and the fathers of classical philosophy: F. Schelling, J. Fichte and F. G. Hegel.

Rhineland mysticism anticipated a number of provisions of the Reformation — initially a purely German phenomenon, which influenced the destiny of all Europe in religious, political and social spheres. The Reformation movement starts in 1517 with Luther's announcement of his "95 theses" against the Catholic Church. They are supported and developed by Thomas Müntzer — the leader of the peasants, Jean Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli.¹⁸

Protestant criticism of Catholicism goes hand in hand with the demand for political reforms, which corresponds to the spirit of the Middle Ages. Among the main theses are the abolition of the mediating institution of the Church and the Pope, the translation of the Bible and Scriptures into national languages, the correction of dogmatic provisions in accordance with the spirit of the early Christian community, general humanization and secularization; and all that accompanied by increasing eschatological expectations of the Second Coming and the support of the Protestants from the local nobility and the emerging bourgeoisie.

18 See Mircea Eliade, *A History of Faith and Religious Ideas*, vol. 3.

This movement results in a series of peasant and urban uprisings and military clashes, supported by local rulers in their desire to isolate themselves from the Empire or the power of the Pope.

The German spirit in the structure of the reformation is embodied in the desire for independence from the Latin throne and even from its language of worship, its mediation between man and God. The deep political confrontation between Rome and the Germans breaks into the religious sphere, giving a new impetus to political differences.

The ideas of the Rhineland mystics and Ghibellines are similar to Protestant ideas of the sanctification of worldly life, direct contact with God and the subordination of the Church to the Imperial throne. But the ideologists of the reformation — Luther, Calvin and Zwingli — are already carriers of Modernity. Meister Eckhart and Johannes Tauler insisted on the supremacy of the inner man (the hidden Master), who in his ground (*Grund*) identifies with the Divine, and already from this position he hallows the worldly deeds, bringing the light from the super-Being into the world. The Rhineland mystics, despite their extravagance, remain within the canonical framework and do not revolt against it politically; they do their quiet work in the bosom of the Church.

In the Reformation, the interpretation and implementation of these provisions move closer to political necessity and materialism, in which we can trace the spirit of Renaissance humanism. The direct opposite of Eckhart and Tauler is the Protestant thesis of the rigid predestination of fate and retribution during one's lifetime, from which follows the well-known position that a rich man is virtuous and marked by God — that is, he has not only economic but also moral right and superiority. In this Protestantism lays the foundations of the capitalist ethics of Modernity. In fact, it is the elimination of the third man of Tauler in favour of the first two: the animal and the man of property.

As a result of the Reformation, a new school of Christianity is formed — Protestantism, represented in a wide range of directions

(Lutheranism, Calvinism, Anglicanism, Anabaptism, etc.). Following the spirit of early Christian communities, Protestantism reforms theology and spares it a number of provisions, which are the features of theological “dual faith” and relics of pagan life and culture in the bosom of the Church. During the Reformation, Christianity is purified from many pagan layers. In this way there comes genuine Christianization of Europe; it is much closer in spirit to the original creationism and its upcoming son — Modernity.¹⁹ The spirit of Luther defeats the spirit of the Rhine. The Protestant ethos is devoid of the aesthetics and ecstasy of both Catholicism and the German spirit as a whole, it is practically sterilized both from the external manifestation of ecstasy and from the internal penetration into the deep Divine Self, *enstasis*.

An exception from the general character of Protestant theologians is Jakob Böhme, who lived in the XVI century. He continued the line of Eckhart and Tauler, seeking to “reform” the Reformation (in fact — to add it with a conservative Neoplatonic element) in the field of theology, to give the liberating spirit a deep supra-Divine dimension, which — perhaps — would change the vector of Reformation and the fate of Germany and Europe as a whole.

The conflict between the Vatican, Prince-electors and the Reformation movement led to the Peace of Augsburg, which was intended to put an end to the conflict and to delineate the spheres of influence of Christian denominations in the Empire. The Augsburg agreement solves the political problem of the division of power within the state, but does not touch upon the confessional contradictions that go by the wayside and continue to smoulder. The Reformation covers the Scandinavian countries from the North of Germany, deeply rooted in them.

The unresolved problems lead to the beginning of the Thirty Years’ War in 1618, which changed the entire political system of Europe to

¹⁹ For more details, see Askr Svarte, *Polemos*.

the modern one. All significant religious denominations and currents and many countries are involved in the struggle for power in the Holy Roman Empire, and hence for influence on the entire continent. The war ends in 1648 with the signing of the peace of Westphalia, which lays the foundations of the continental world order still existing today. The medieval principle of religious identity, which was at the forefront, is replaced by the principle of the sovereignty of national states in the modern concept of “nation,” different from *Volk*. Several principles of the nation are formed: the French and English ones, most modern in spirit, and the German one, including more conservative features. Religious tolerance, secular society and humanism are proclaimed. The implicit pro-manifestationist Hellenic-Germanic synthesis of medieval times and the Rhineland mystics are defeated by a purer creationism of the Protestant kind, which rapidly clears the way to modernity. The Logos of Europe and the Logos of Germany are deceived and pushed to the periphery by the anti-European tendencies of the final Christianization and modernization, which has reached its zenith in the rival country of Germany, France.

The expression of the German spirit at the next stage is the movement of Romanticism. The representatives of Romanticism have a dual attitude to Enlightenment and Modernism: on the one hand, they accept its natural sciences and social regulations, but on the other hand, they glorify the old days of the Middle Ages and Antiquity, praising the pagan spirit of the old Gods. This can be interpreted as an attempt to try on both the new and the old through the sacralization of the Enlightenment by the ideals of Antiquity — though not in the direction of theology, which has lost its influence, but in the spheres of poetry, culture and philosophy. Among the most vivid representatives of Romanticism are Johann Gottfried Herder, the author of the idea of *Volksgeist* — the national spirit; Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Friedrich Schiller (the members of the *Sturm und Drang* movement), the poets Novalis and Hölderlin, and the collectors of German folklore, the Brothers Grimm. They are also contemporaries and partly forerunners

of classical German philosophy. In Romanticism and subsequent philosophy, the final synthesis and reconciliation of Hellenism and the Germanic spirit is accomplished, especially in poetry.

The opposition to Modernity and the deep reverence for Antiquity create a powerful pagan mood in the movement of Romanticism, so strong that in this era—the end of the XVIII and XIX centuries—the first sprouts of the new German Heathenry begin to appear. Researchers associate this with a special reading of *Germania* by Tacitus, in line with the patriotic humanism of the Germans. And also with the Renaissance in Scandinavia and the rediscovery of the Eddas; with the activities of the Brothers Grimm, the genius of Richard Wagner, who put the epic of the Nibelungs to music, and partly with the anti-Jewish spirit of Nietzsche's Zarathustra.²⁰ German Romanticism is a key point in the history of all modern German-Scandinavian pagan movements in Europe and the United States. Since the nineteenth century, Heathenry interprets itself as another antithesis to the Christian spirit as a whole, but de facto it carries a fair amount of modernist infiltrations and affects. Because of this, mainly it does not conflict with naturalism and modern positivist science, remaining in the space of culture and marginality.

The French Revolution of 1789 marks the final entry of France into the Modern Era under the slogan of secular masonry "*Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité.*" After a series of unsuccessful wars with the French, Napoleon Bonaparte, having strengthened his power and military success, inflicts a crushing defeat on the Holy Roman Empire at Austerlitz in 1805. The Empire will cease to exist in a year.

The Empire falls into many principalities, which were founded by the territorial division following the results of the Thirty Years' War. Germany is again united in 1871 by the forces of Prussia coming back to the arena of history, becoming the German Empire or the Second Reich. The ruler of the state becomes Otto von Bismarck,

²⁰ See "Norse revival: Transformations of Germanic Neopaganism" by Stefanie von Schnurbein.

with the support of William I of the Hohenzollern Dynasty. Formally, this historical period of German statehood covers the Second Reich (1871–1918), the Weimar Republic (1918–1933) and the Third Reich (1933–1945), inherently replacing each other.

In the period of fragmentation and lack of a unified state and culture in the XIX century, the great philosophers Fichte, Schelling and Hegel conceptualize the entire history of the West and its philosophy from the pre-Socratics to themselves and their historical moment. Hegel forms his teaching about the Spirit, the peak of whose unfolding, according to his views, falls at his philosophy as crowning the whole of Western thought. The idea of the “end of history,” and all Hegel’s philosophy in general, has a fundamental influence on culture, and especially politics. The materialistic interpretation of Hegel by Karl Marx is the basis of all left-wing political theories; the right-wing Hegelianism embodies the Italian philosopher Giovanni Gentile; at the end of the twentieth century, Francis Fukuyama proclaims (hastily and profoundly wrongly) the “end of history” as the triumph of liberal democracy on a global scale.

In the absence of the State, the classics of German philosophy put forward a program of a great philosophy for the coming of the future great state, which is later built by Bismarck. Thus, philosophers and romantic poets anticipate and justify the political and military aspects of the German Logos in the XIX century. This strictly corresponds to the dual nature of the “German medal” with a militant solar obverse and ecstatic twilight reverse.

By 1914, the German Empire enters into an Alliance with Austria, in which Russia also takes part for a short time. In the same year, Germany declares war on the Entente, consisting of France, England, Russia and their allies. Germany is supported by the Ottoman Empire. The First World War draws countries of almost all continents into its orbit. In 1915, after a successful campaign led by the Germans, the war becomes a war of attrition. Friedrich Georg and Ernst Jünger fight

among its soldiers on the German-French and English fronts; Ernst writes his famous memories of war *Storm of Steel*.

The policy of attrition leads to the surrender of Germany and the allies. The peace treaty is signed in Versailles in 1919, restricting the defeated Germans in the military and economic spheres. During a number of revolutions (November in Germany, February and October in Russia) and as a result of the war, the Russian Empire, the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires and the Ottoman Empire disappear from the world political map. Germany becomes a Republic. The division of the parties in the First World War is significant: the more conservative empires of Europe are trying to create an alliance and to oppose the more modern and secular powers of the West; the attempt to involve Russia, an even more agrarian-conservative country than Germany, fails and will fail again in the Second World War.

The Weimar in-betweenness is marked by a growing interest in Heathenry and the ancient heritage of Germany, but this interest blends in with the general picture of occult and esoteric organizations and movements of the early XX century.

At this time, the circle of Stefan George is actively working; Martin Heidegger publishes his *Being and Time*. The official politics is dominated by the leftists, but the popularity of “nationalist” (völkisch) movements and parties is rapidly growing. Behind the scenes, the national folk pro-pagan ideas converge with the political right-wing program. Among such movements there appears the Nazi Party, which includes corporal A. Hitler as one of its members.

In these same years, there appears the movement of the Conservative Revolution—right-wing in spirit, but qualitatively different from the subsequent social-biological racism of the Third Reich. The proponents of the Conservative Revolution advocated the Prussian agenda in patriotism; in the sphere of religion many adhered to Catholicism (although not without interest in paganism) or secular views; and the general concepts were the rejection of communism, liberalism, democracy, the rejection of the Enlightenment, progress

and Spengler's "decline of the West." At different times, the followers of this movement were Arthur Moeller van den Bruck (the ideologist), the Jünger brothers, Julius Evola, Stefan George, Carl Schmitt, Martin Heidegger, Claus von Stauffenberg (a participant in the failed assassination of A. Hitler) and Oswald Spengler.

The movement of the Conservative Revolution can be seen as a completely autonomous German realization of the philosophy of traditionalism in the light of its military aspect, later combined with the original traditionalism in the person of J. Evola. Historically, the conservative movement of the Weimar Republic fell into the shadow of Nazism and is mistakenly regarded as its direct ideological forerunner, which is aggravated by the involvement of some of its participants in the politics of the Third Reich and the Nazi Party in its early stage. Thus, Carl Schmitt becomes one of the leading lawyers of the Reich, Ernst Jünger goes to the front again, but remains in the state of "inner emigration" and stays on the periphery of war; Martin Heidegger engages in Nazi rhetoric at the University of Freiburg, but within a year he leaves the rector's post and distances himself from Nazism. Further events have shown how fundamental and irreversible were the differences between the ideology of conservative traditionalists and National Socialism.

In 1933, President Hindenburg appoints Adolf Hitler as Reich Chancellor, and the history of the Third Reich is conventionally counted from this event. The Third Empire is thought by ideologists as a Thousand-Year Reich or the Last Reich, in which there are clear references to Hegel. The chains of Versailles are rejected in favour of rapid militarization of the economy and social reforms in the spirit of National Socialism, ethnic and racial segregation and repressions. At the heart of Nazi ideology lies a fragmentary synthesis of purely modern, positivist scientific racial and biological ideas and occult background, which was localized in the depths of Heinrich Himmler's structures — the Ahnenerbe, SS, Lebensborn and others.

In the period of Nazi Germany, to justify its own identity and exclusiveness, ideology actively refers to the motives of *völkisch* and Heathenry. But instead of the latter, the Reich employs a mere simulacrum of spiritualism which is the continental root of the modern New Age. Himmler favours syncretic mythology, Guido von List, Helena Blavatsky and Karl Maria Wiligut, who borrow the images of the Norse traditions for decorating their ideas, radically different from the letter and spirit of the authentic myth. During the same period, the first head of Ahnenerbe was Hermann Wirth, for only a short time, as his views were not radical enough for the party. Continental German pagan traditionalism shares the tragic fate of the Conservative Revolution in the postwar period.

Germany declares the West (England and France) and Bolshevik Communism in Russia its enemies. Along with Fascist Italy (the Union of Rome and the Germans) and Imperial Japan, the right-conservative alliance of the impending war is formed. Carl Gustav Jung, in his essay *Wotan*, writes that Germany was captured and possessed by the spirit of Wotan — the God of War. But the ideological context indicates that we are dealing with Wotan's negative, suicidal madness, the obsession of the negative will. Suicide or self-sacrifice as such is not something negative and undesirable, *but it must be properly comprehended, felt through and realized at the moment of dying*. Heidegger points out that the spirit of Modernity and the Gestalt of E. Jünger's Worker is too strong in National Socialism, so it is unable to defeat liberalism and Communism, in which this spirit is embodied in purer forms. *Germany of the Third Reich contains too many unresolved contradictions and effects of Modernity in its ideological structure*. That is why it makes so many mistakes in the choice of support points, and that is why the Conservative Revolution and traditionalism are discarded in favour of vulgar scientific racism and a simulacrum of esotericism. Therefore, all significant figures and thinkers are excluded from politics by the Führer or themselves retreat to the internal positions of detachment from the affairs of the party and the state.

In World War II, Germany and the Axis Powers suffer a crushing defeat by the forces of Modernity in the face of the USSR and the coalition of allies: the United States, Canada, England and France.

During half a century, the Germans suffer the collapse of two Reichs in the furnaces of the two World Wars that they initiated. It plunges the Germans into a deep existential shock and affects the subsequent history of the German Logos. The two unsuccessful global wars undermine its military aspect and puts an end to the romantic and conservative dreams of the XIX–early XX centuries, as well as to the return of *beyng* into history, which Martin Heidegger was so hopeful about. For the Germans, and, more broadly, for all Germans, the scarcest times have come, devoid of any landmarks.

After the war, the Germans are forced to repent and undergo denazification. The state is divided into occupation zones by the victors. There an ideology is established. grotesque to the point of absurdity, the opposite of National Socialism and conservatism — left-liberal democracy and postmodernist politics of identity, multiculturalism and “cultural Marxism” of the Frankfurt school. Topics related to German identity are tabooed or blurred by a new attitude towards them, in full compliance with postmodernist irony. Thus, in modern Germany, it is not difficult to find a biography of Hitler and a guide to the “Führer’s Berlin” in any souvenir shop, but all potential places of interest for right-wing followers are destroyed and closed from access or turned into monuments to the victims of war and the Holocaust. Only condemning and skeptical discourses are valid in regard to conservative politics and traditionalism, and pagan themes are acceptable only as a form of social leisure, along with the most absurd quasi-spiritual and hallucinogenic doctrines of the New Age. Political correctness and the left-wing establishment block the discourse of revival and reassessment of post-war history. The situation is milder in Scandinavia, which is less affected by continental events.

At the end of XX–beginning of XXI centuries, Germany exists as the economic centre of the European Union and the defender of the

left liberal ideology of the destruction of large identities: religious, ethnic and national. The German people, who have always longed for great ideas and achievements — freedom from Rome, the restoration of the Roman Empire, the creation of great philosophy and poetry, the perfect State, wars and victories, the return of *beyng* — are invited to implement the plebeian idea of the state of the general consumer, social welfare, and multicultural & gender diversity. In other words, we are talking about comfort and tolerance, cozy existence in the microscopic world of the average person, completely devoid of any ideas. In the history of the German Logos there comes a pause of forgetting one's self, a period of the Titanic non-authenticity of *Dasein*. The Germans do not fight, do not think, do not believe in their Gods. This concerns both the continent and Scandinavia passively receiving the waves of history. And together with Germany, this oblivion covers the whole of Europe and its Logos. Formally, life and the passage of time continue, but nothing happens there. Man exists by mechanical inertia.

The War at the Heart of Seyn

First of all, it is necessary to clarify the nuances of the translation of the words “Sein” and “Seyn.” Both of them mean “being,” but the second form is an outdated dialect of the German language. The noun “Sein” (being) is formed from the verb *sein* (to be) and bears the imprint of processuality, which is consistent with the old form “быти” (“byti”) in the Russian language. Also in German the words “being” (German “*Sein*,” Russian «бытие») and “the existing,” “be-ing”²¹ (German “*Seiende*,” Russian “сущее,” “suscheye”) are cognate, which is lost in the Russian language. For M. Heidegger, the difference between *Sein* and *Seyn* is extremely important, so there arises the question of the

21 In different translations, including the ones cited here, Heidegger's concept of “*Seiende*” is usually conveyed by the words “existence,” “beings” or “be-ing.” I prefer the form “be-ing” as the most accurate way to transmit the continuous nature of “*Seiende*” in English — *translator's note*.

correct formulation of this term. The Russian translator of Heidegger, A. Shurbelev, offers two ways of conveying the accents of the distinction between *Sein* and *Seyn* through the word endings: *бытие* and *бытиё* respectively. But later he offers an older form of the word “being” — *бытие*, which, on the one hand, displays the terminological difference in the Russian language, and on the other hand, retains a more ancient sound, which was important for Heidegger. The situation is similar in English, where *Sein* and *Seyn* are translated as *Being* and *Beyng*.

Remaining loyal to tradition and emphasizing the “antiquity,” the rootedness and power of *Seyn*, Heidegger applies to it not the standard German *ist* (is), but the obsolete verb form *wesen*, *west*. Further we will use the English form of *Beyng* for *Seyn*, except for those places where the text is saturated with German words — there we will keep it untranslated. There we should remember the verbal nature of this *beyng*. In cited fragments, the difference between *Seyn*-*beyng* and *Sein*-being is conveyed by writing *Seyn* as “Being” with a capital letter in accordance with the translations.

* * *

The oblivion of *Seyn*-*Beyng* lies at the basis of Martin Heidegger’s fundamental ontology and, according to him, represents the tragic fate of Western European thinking, which stems from the early Greek thinkers’ mistaken identification of *beyng* (*Seyn*) with the essence of being as a special essence-in-the-most-general-sense²². This identification gives rise to the perception of being as a special, but being: the highest and the most universal being (*meta*-physics as what is *above* the natural level, and the Gods as the highest being and the source of everything in the manifestationist view; the onto-theology of Tradition and later, the idealism of Plato), which Heidegger denotes

22 See *Being and Time* and “Heraclitus” by Martin Heidegger, “Martin Heidegger. The Last God” and “Martin Heidegger: The Philosophy of Another Beginning” by Alexander Dugin.

by the word *Sein*, *being*. At the same time, *beyng* is also forgotten as something that is neither be-ing (*Seiende*) nor non-be-ing (non-*Seiende*), and that he, in order to distinguish these instances, calls it by the word *Seyn*, the old dialect form of the word “beyng.”

Heidegger has not just completed the entire Western philosophy — this was previously done by Nietzsche honestly proclaiming the “death of God,” the triumph of European nihilism and the will to power as the basis of life — but also he interpreted it as the End that had already happened and is not subject to revision or questioning like “has it already happened?” — “It happened a long time ago.” This death of Western European philosophy crowns the final obliteration of the question of the truth of *beyng*, so complete that no one knows and remembers that humanity “has forgotten something.” But in this fundamental and tragic oblivion, which predetermined the whole fate of Western thought and history with its tragedies, wars, the growing nihilism of *τεχνη* and alienation of human *be-ing* (*Seiende*, *existing*) from *being*, Heidegger sees the message of *beyng* itself, which tells us about itself in its own concealment. Here Heidegger — as a German and as a man of the German Logos living at the peak of the military activity of Germany of the XX century, that is, entirely involved in warlike thinking and war Logos — calls to consider the message of *beyng* in its concealment as its manifestation, and at the same time claims that this is the same action — that is, he calls us to overcome dualism and see the history of the obliteration of *beyng* in a dual way.

Considering the saying of Heraclitus “growth favours concealment”²³, M. Heidegger shows that the seemingly apparent contradiction is actually the problem of conventional thinking and its inability to think properly. Resorting to “sedatives,” the mind tries to comprehend the contradiction through dialectics as a process of disconcealment, which is then replaced by concealment, like spring

23 A better-known translation is “nature loves to hide,” but Heidegger translates it closer to the Greek meaning and thinking; earlier he interprets the first word “growth,” “up-growth” (Greek. Φυσις) as “non-concealment” or “disclosure.”

and autumn are a natural growth cycle; or as a violation of the logical laws of identity $A = A$, — that is, “disconcealment” cannot be identical to “concealment” as its opposite; or as a sequence: first goes disconcealment (birth), then life itself, and then concealment (dying) as three different stages. Once again, let us express our solidarity with Heidegger’s criticism of conventional thinking and modern “sedatives” for the Mind. The non-dual understanding of contradictions questions the nature of the dual and dynamic Mind — constantly chattering, as M. Heidegger puts it — and brings it to its own borders, which, for the dualistic Mind, means questioning its own Self.

The structure of the manifested Seiende-be-ing from the Seyn-beyng is one of the key concepts for Heidegger — the fourfold, *das Geviert*.

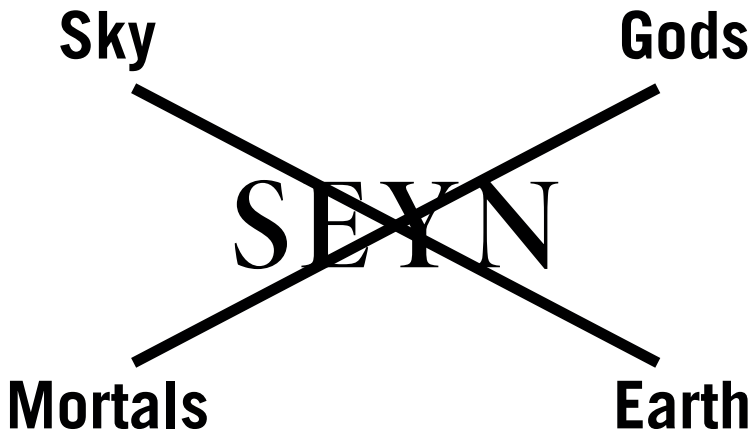


Figure 2.

Seyn-beyng reveals itself *in* and *through* das Geviert; at the same time, it also hides itself *in* and *through* the fourfold. Here again we face the manifestation-and-concealment directly, and let the conjunction “and” between the two words not confuse us and lead us into the dialectics and the coexistence of the two phenomena. We can even express this one-and-the-same-action in speech as “manifestation-concealment.”

Seyn-beyng is not exactly identical to *das Geviert*, but is manifested in it too. Beyng manifests itself in all of the four at the same time, not dialectically but also not hierarchically like in Plato with his cosmic hierarchy. The fourfold is highlighted from Seyn-beyng — and highlights Seyn-beyng itself — as four instances on two axes, Sky–Earth and Gods–Mortals. Also Heidegger sometimes identifies and replaces the word “Sky” with “World” — *die Welt*, in the meaning close to the Greek *Cosmos* as an ordered universe; later Heidegger identified *die Welt* and *das Geviert*, which is of great importance for the further nuancing of our “approaching” thought. Regarding the Gods, Heidegger does not make any definite statement, whether we are talking about one God (Gott) or Gods (Götter or the Divine, Göttliche); we will return to this later. The relationship between Sky and Earth, the Divine/the Gods, and mortals is war, and Seyn-beyng is located exactly at the intersection of the two axes of war; moreover, *das Geviert* of war is constituted exactly *from Seyn-beyng and by it as itself*. It is not the intersection of the two axes of war that is superimposed on Seyn as if from above, but it is from Seyn that the axes appear as its highlighting — and at the ends of these axes, Sky, Earth, Gods and Mortals are constituted.

Despite the extremely concise and reduced exposition of the scheme, we can notice that it simultaneously contains Heidegger’s call to understand the manifestation-[and]-concealment of Seyn-beyng in *das Geviert* in a non-dual way and the assertion of the fourfold consisting of two axes of war connecting the pairs Sky–Earth and Gods–Mortals. In other words, one can see the “one-ning,” the uniting, in beyng and its manifestation as non-duality, and “many” in its manifestation-concealment in the warlike *das Geviert* — but as “the one many.”

At the same time, Seyn is not “crucified” on the fourfold like on a cross, neither should it be corresponded to the Wheel of the Year (the Celtic cross) and their semantics; that is, *das Geviert* is thought only fundamentally ontologically, without involving allegories and

associations of mythologies that express a different, metaphysical vision.

As the revealed-concealed Sein-being (Heidegger applies the fourfold to Sein too), *das Geviert* embodies the warlike nature of the German Logos, its Dasein, its history and its thinking. The inclusion of war in the basis of the fourfold is meaningful from the point of view of the warlike nature of the Germans.

War is involved in Seyn-beyng with a great emphasis on the “concealment” in the pair of disclosure-concealment—that is, as Sein-being. The fate of beyng is oblivion, although it is in some way “primary” and “eternal,” “all-present-in-concealment,” be-yng-in-concealment.

Here we must make an important remark on the nature and origin of the *thing*, also recalling the statement of Heraclitus about *polemos*. The German word “*Ding*,” as well as the English “thing,” comes from the word *þing*—*Thing*, a military gathering of free men at arms by the light of a fire. In the Russian language, the situation with the word “thing” (*vesch*, “вещь”) is similar: it is cognate with the word “вече” (*Veche*)—a gathering of warriors and elders for the discussion of military affairs. Thus, *vesch* is something that is brought up at a *Veche*, and *thing* is what is brought up at a *Thing*. Or, paraphrasing the Völva’s words, *þing á þingi* is “a thing at a *Veche*.” *Thing/Ding* is a matter about which an assembly of warriors at the *veche* or *þing* have decided *to be*. In the centre of the fire of *das Geviert*, Seyn-beyng manifests-in-concealment in things. The world is a decision at a *þingi*, at a *veche*, or — πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι...

Discussing the ideas of Heraclitus, M. Heidegger cites the story where the philosopher was waiting for his guests by the fire, basking in its warmth, and greeted them with the words “for here too the Gods are present.”²⁴ Fire, according to Heidegger, is the place where the non-ordinary breaks through and pours into the ordinary.

²⁴ See M. Heidegger, “Heraclitus.”

Speaking of the fact that war places more accent on the “concealment” in the disconcealment-concealment pair — that is, asserts dual thinking — we will also note that we are more interested in the, let us say, non-accentuated and non-dual perspective of being. And Heidegger gives an important explication of this perspective, no less warlike but less charged by the militarists themselves, and thus close to the element of pure thinking:

καὶ ἐνταῦθα: “and here,” and precisely here, in all the inconspicuousness of the familiar (das Geheure) exists the unusual, characteristic of those who by their shining reveal themselves in the familiar, who are themselves the shining (die Hereinscheinende). This means: where I am, a thinker, the plain is adjacent to the ultimately bright in its disclosure. Where I am, everything that seems to exclude each other comes together. Here, in the sphere of the thinker, everything that seems to oppose each other and exclude each other; that is, everything that is turned *against* each other at the same time is what is turned *to* each other. Perhaps this turning-to-other must exist from the very beginning, so that one had the possibility of turning *against* the other. Where this turning-to prevails, there is a discord (ἔρις). Thus, the thinker is close to the one who is in inner discord (Streithafte).²⁵

The thinker is also involved in war and inconsistency, discord and duality, but he is involved in a different way than a warrior. The warrior is immersed there and thus embodies the element of war, staying in the “friend/enemy” duality, while the thinker “*is near*” — that is, he conceives war and duality from non-duality; he sees and thinks discord in its discord-ness, and in it, in the -ness, he sees the opposing sides. In *das Geviert*, the two major axes of war lie between Sky and Earth, and between the Godly and the human.

The Sky highlights things and brings openness and order into the world, thus becoming synonymous to the Cosmos. The Sky is looking at the world, and this look reveals and illuminates, organizes and gives measure to everything. And each people (*Volk*) has its own

²⁵ See M. Heidegger, “Heraclitus.”

Sky, different from the Sky of other peoples; hence — and this is an axiom — each Sky sets its own unique, not universal, order for each people. Something that we have previously called “language” in pagan traditionalist extended interpretation.

The understanding of the Earth is close to the understanding of matter, as what makes things present, tangible, solid, dense and objective. While the Sky is open, illuminates everything and brings clarity, the Earth is closed, it absorbs things and, in a sense, devours them; remember the Icelandic *eta*. The Sky highlights and organizes, the Earth makes things present as objects and things (be-ing), but it also absorbs them into itself, conceals and obscures them. This movement of the revealing Sky and the concealing Earth is the axis of the war of Sky–Earth, their struggle closely connected with the peoples that stand *on their own earth and under their own sky*.

Much more difficult is the case with the axis of the Godly/Gods and mortals. Heidegger thought of Gods outside of any religions at all, without even giving them any names in the structure of *das Geviert*; he consciously rejected metaphysics, and this is the postulate of his philosophy. The key difference between Gods and men lies in their relation to beyng. Gods need beyng as the decision to be, and they also need a philosophy of being. Gods are a special beyng which is also a special being (Sein), but they are nothing like the Gods “familiar”²⁶ to us, who grant people something, punish them for something or teach them something. While people — thinkers and philosophers — are the guardians of the truth of beyng. And in this fundamental ability, they are interesting to the Gods as those who are in need of beyng. Also, the fundamental difference between Gods and men is that Gods are essentially immortal while men are mortal, and this mortality of men is the basis of their authentic *Dasein* as being-towards-death. Beyng constitutes the two poles of this axis: Gods are those who need beyng, and men are those whom this beyng needs for the sake of its truth.

26 If today it is possible to speak of any “familiar” Gods at all, outside texts and rational or religious ethnographic studies.

The war of Gods and men is not so straightforward; Gods can meet philosophers, thinkers and poets in their delicate, subtle and sensitive *inviting* thinking. However, ordinary, rational and crude people, who constantly require something from the Gods, only scare them away by their brutality and barbarism, and the Gods go away from where Jünger's colossal *der Arbeiter* reigns— or, in Heidegger's term, *das Man*, the technical man estranged from the question of the truth of being.

If man defeats the Gods, they leave the world (*die Welt*), turning it into a field of work and nihilism. But if the Gods defeat man, then man becomes deified as he reveals his inner God— δαίμων, the Daimon. Such is the unusual war between Gods and men. The Gods must win this war in order to reveal the inner Daimon in man, to make man the guardian of the truth of the being they need, and thus to highlight his victory in his defeat.

The warrior and the thinker understand war differently, but in any case, the being of a warrior and the being of a thinker are a part of war through immersion in its essence and through being close to it. War and the related destiny (fate) and death are the basis of the authentic *Dasein* to the Germans—soldiers, priests, poets and philosophers. *Dasein* becomes non-authentic only when sugary, patient pacifism takes the throne, followed by a total rejection of all dichotomies and conflicts in politics and thinking. Then the structure of *das Geviert* is destroyed, and war as the nature of the German Logos fades in the twilight of the approaching night.

IV

The God of Wonder and Poetry

WE HAVE DESCRIBED the normal nature of being of the Germans and their Gods, the Aesir, which is the decision to be at war and to be open to their fate-as-death. And there are certain nuances here. The perception of the character and nature of the Germans and our Gods that we have described corresponds to the military caste, the second class in the three-part system of Georges Dumézil and among Indo-European peoples in general. In the Germanic tribes it is expressed most clearly—from the archaic times to the last centuries, the Germans have mostly been a nation of the second caste. Martin Heidegger, looking back at the history of European and German thinking, says that the Germans were a nation of poets and thinkers. Thus, the sphere of the third caste is thematized least of all: the main course of history goes through the fulfilment of the natures of the second and first higher castes.

We are concerned with the image of war, death and the question of being in the first caste in the context of the German Logos. It is about the understanding of war, death and being a priest, thinker and philosopher. Since the German-Scandinavian myth, as well as the Logos, is mainly warlike—from its mythology and Gods to history—the figures, images, practices and functions of priests are not so clearly

expressed in the myths and German societies and often exist in the form of “sketches,” implication and evasion.

The key figure of the German-Scandinavian tradition is the As Odin, who combines two functions, military and priestly; we will dwell on the latter in more detail. We should always keep Odin’s ambivalence in mind. Much of what applies to his myths, attributes, functions and actions can be understood both from the military and priestly perspective, with the exception of certain unambiguous plots.

Like all gods, Odin is known by a multitude of names, many of which are kennings, but the most used are *Alföðr*, the All-Father as the supreme patriarchal (ancestral) and cosmic title of the Supreme As and military leader; and *Óðinn*. The second comes from the word *oðr*, which has the meaning of the adjective or adverb “furious” and “furiously,” “inspired” and “ecstatic” or “frenzied,” as well as the masculine noun “poetry” (in Russian it is a feminine word). Óðinn the Furious is widely known by the continental German name of Wotan, from the ancient German root **wuot* — “rage.” The etymology of the name of the Supreme As refers to military frenzy and rage (cou-rage) on the battlefield, including the furious ecstasy of special military castes — berserkers and ulfserkers. The word *oðr* carries the meaning of inspiration and poetry, closely related to the warlike nature of the Germans. If there is an idea, then it is warlike; if there is poetry, then there are songs of heroes and Gods, deeds and battles, betrayal and due revenge. The ecstasy also refers to the priestly-shamanic¹ function and symbolism of Odin, as indicated by his name *Sveigðir* — “the Swaying” or “the Swinging,” that is, swaying like a shaman in an ecstatic dance, a ritual or trance. A different context of the word *Sveigðir* indicates that Odin swings like a hanged man, i.e. the man from the myth of his self-sacrifice on the Yggdrasil. The names of *Farmr galga* (the Burden of the Gallows), *Geiguðr* and *Hangi* (the Hanged man) also point not

1 “Shamanism” in the Scandinavian tradition is usually understood as the ecstatic practice of *seiðr*. We use the Turkic word “shaman” and its derivatives as a generic word. See more in M. Eliade “Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy.”

to the military but priestly dimension of the Allfather. Odin, as the As of frenzy, rage and inspiration, patronizes warriors' rage and fury in battle, as well as thinking, poetry and shamanic ecstatic practices. Here we can suggest an idea about the nature of the special alliterative verse, most vividly embodied in the Germanic languages, where the frequently repeated phonemes of words immerse the reader, the singer and the listener in a state of trance with their rhythms and accents²; alliteration, the peak of German magical and poetic verse, is the way it is precisely because such is its [poetry's] God — the Furious and Ecstatic Odin, the As of inspiration and skalds.

Oðr

Let us dwell on the origin of poetry, as the myth of the metamorphosis and the deeds of Odin will reveal the thinking of the first caste in the German Logos.

Snorri devotes an entire section of the “Younger Edda” to the history and the enlightening principle of poetry, in particular the kenings. Along with retelling myths, he gives didactic instructions in practical versification. Some researchers believe that as far back as in Snorri's era most of the meanings of the Pagan German-Scandinavian myth were unclear to the author, and his presentation bears the traces of the medieval paradigm of thinking. It can be noticed exactly in those places where Snorri teaches poetry and interprets the kenings' play. However, we are mainly interested in the mythological framework of the acquisition of poetry, which is expounded on in the “Language of Poetry.”

In full compliance with the spirit of the German Logos, the origin of poetry is found next to war. The conflicting clans of the Aesir and the Vanir make peace, which is marked by the symbolic spitting of

2 Speaking more broadly—not only about ritual poetics in tradition, but also about poetry in general—we can focus on the rhythmic-ecstatic function of poetry expressed in different structures, rhymes or refrains.

both sides into a vat³. From the “saliva of peace,” the Aesir create a man of extraordinary wisdom — Kvasir. At this point, poetry as such has not appeared yet, but its advent is expected, and its discovery is prepared, related to the war between the two clans of Gods, solved by the emergence of the wisest of men; the war of the Gods creates man and wisdom.

The wandering Kvasir visits two dwarfs (German *Zwerg*, Danish *dværg*) — Fjalar and Galar. In the German tradition, dwarfs are chthonic creatures; their habitation and way of life are associated with the earth’s interior. The dwarfs killed Kvasir and drained his blood into the cauldron *Odroerir* (*Óðrerir*, “the Inspiring One”) and the bowls *Son* (*Són*, “Payback”) and *Bodn* (*Boðn*, “Vessel”). The dwarfs tell the Aesir that Kvasir has drowned in his own wisdom, as he had it in such abundance.

This part of the introduction to the discovery of poetry points to the conflict between the Divine (for Kvasir is the wisest child of the Aesir and the Vanir) on the one hand, and the chthonic, devoid of beauty and wisdom, on the other. The dwarfs do not dispute or quarrel with Kvasir, they just treacherously kill and bleed him. As mythological entities, dwarfs are small people, literally and allegorically; they are not Titans as *Jötunns* and *Thurses*, among which one may sometimes meet those who are not devoid of erudition, but rather a tribe of greedy, dodgy grubbers, who are often exploited by different creatures for their purposes in the myths. Kvasir — wisdom — is murdered by the dwarfs, and his blood is drained into *Odroerir*. And here, in this fragment of the murder of the wisest of men, there first appears the word *óðr*, which means “poetry” and is associated with inspiration and the name of *Odin*.

But, having revealed itself and having become apparent in its here-presence as the combination of wisdom and inspiration, poetry still says nothing about itself and through itself. The dwarfs do not

3 In the ethno-sociological perspective, scientists believe that the Aesir in the myth correspond to the Germanic tribes, and the Vanir to the Slavic.

become skalds and they do not get smarter from the brewed Mead of Poetry — they simply greedily keep it untouched, the way they got it, in full accordance with their nature. The dwarfs are inherently unable to produce poetry; they can kill Kvasir and fill their lore with his wisdom-blood, but nothing more. Poetry does not live in them, but is only greedily stored as an object, a thing that is already present but not manifested and, roughly speaking, not functioning in the language and the word. Instead of poetry, the dwarfs continue to kill other guests — Gilligr the giant and his wife. And only under the threat of death, they bribe the giant's son Suttung with the Mead from the blood of Kvasir. But Suttung too, being a giant, only hides the Mead in a different place without touching it. Poetry is roughly passed from hand to hand, wandering in the dungeons' insides, but does not find its voice. This corresponds to the devouring and appropriating nature of the Jotnar, which we discussed above. Suttung appoints his daughter Gunnlöd to guard the Mead.

Now begins the second act of the myth, which talks about the finding of poetry in the journey of Odin, under the name Bölverkr (Villain). We will skip the retelling of this small story and focus on its key aspects. In this myth, Odin-Bölverkr acts as a trickster; he cunningly kills the slaves of the Jötunn Baugi, Suttung's brother, thereby making him his debtor right before the onset of winter. Employing deception, the Divine forces hungry poverty [related by kinship to the same poverty that swallowed the Mead of Poetry] to disclose its inner reserves in order to extract the Mead of Poetry. Odin the As wants to receive the Mead of Wisdom present in the chthonic passive concealment. In other words: the Divine is involved in the disclosure of the concealed poetry; however, not by the military method as Thor would do, but by cunning. Throughout the plot there never appears any sword or another weapon.

The Mead is hidden under a rock, and Odin makes Baugi drill the rock with a drill named Rati. The drill with a name of its own is a typical magical artifact, it is not just "some drill," but "*er Rati heitir.*"

The name Rati, according to Asgeir Magnusson, goes back to the verb *rata*, which means “journey” or “travel,” and in some forms also “wandering,” “the fall” and “the descent”⁴. In the context of the myth it is correct to interpret it by a complex construction of “a down-descending-journey.”

Bölverkr turns into a snake and penetrates the rock through a down-leading hole. Under the rock, he spends three nights with Gunnlöð, as a result of which he is entitled to three sips of the Mead of Poetry. In three sips, Odin drinks Odroerir, Bodn and Son, taking possession of all the Mead; then he turns into an eagle, flies rapidly to Asgard and spits the Mead into the bowl prepared by the Aesir. So the Mead concealed by lack and scarcity becomes unconcealed by the power of Godly cunning, revealed to all in the Divine gift of abundance, brought out of the concealing cold of the earth into the light of the Aesir.

This story is notable for the abundance of characters and details related to descent, immersion, chthonicity and night. Odin works for Baugi instead of the slaves, whom he killed himself until winter when he demands his payment. Winter is the time of the half-year night in the North, and metaphysically it is the Night of the Year, the descent of the sun to its lowest point of Yule. The Mead is also hidden below, underground, in a cold place without light, in the insides of a Jötunn. The owner of the Mead is the Jötunn Suttungr, it is guarded by Gunnlöð, and the Jötunn Baugi inadvertently helps Bölverkr — Odin is entirely surrounded by the Titanic, which he easily outplays with his cunning, though. The drill Rati tells us of the descent of the Godly down into the earth, repeating the descent of the sun over the horizon to be born again after Yule. Odin spends three nights with Gunnlöð, which corresponds to the three days of the Winter Solstice at its lowest point. Odin descends under the rock in the image of a snake, an animal always related to the chthonic and feminine semantic range. At

4 See *Islensk Orðsifjasbok*, *Orðabok Haskolans*, Asgeir Blöndal Magnusson.

the same time, the Jötunn Baugi makes a typical Titanic move trying to fool and kill Odin in the form of a snake in a very stupid way. And then, Odin leaves the rock taking the form of a soaring eagle—the royal bird.

In fact, the plot of the myth is based on a set of words of the common semantic range: winter, death, descent, dungeon, Titans, imprisonment, murder and even the name of Bölverkr. The erotic overtones of the three nights that Odin spent with Gunnlod, though not directly expressed, are also connected with it; Eros is always ambivalent, light and dark⁵. The only things that do not fit into the prevailing semantics are Odin-as-the-Divine and the Mead of Poetry-as-Wisdom of the Divine source. On the surface, there lies the traditionalist interpretation of the gaining of wisdom through initiation and the descent-as-dying, resonating with the night part of the annual cycle, Yule.

* * *

Martin Heidegger highly esteemed the great German poet Hölderlin, and, following him, pointed out that poetry rises to the same height as philosophy but on another mountain peak: they are two peaks of thinking. Let us see what M. Heidegger writes about the nature of ποιησις:

... ποιησις: to bring the bringing of beings [Seiende] as beings from out of concealment and into appearance in unconcealment. Still today, we use the worn-down foreign word “poesy”/“poetic” in the sense of composing poems. The doctrine and theory of the poetic arts is called “poetics.” For the Greeks, poeticizing is also already a ποιησις, a “making” (das Machen): but what is actually made thereby is what is brought-forth in the sense of coming to shine forth in the poetically-said word, and thereby continuing to shine, ever anew, in the word. In the same way, “to do” (das Tun) is akin to stepping into appearance and allowing to appear. Ποιεῖν and ποιησις — bringing-forth/placing-forth — brings forth and places forth into unconcealment what before this had not yet appeared. Ποιεῖν is primarily

5 On the possible relationship of the words “battle” and “bed,” see the article by A. E. Mankov “German etymology: old Icelandic *Böð* “battle” and *Beðr* “bed.”

thought along the lines of a human comportment. In this sense, ποιήσις is essentially opposed to φύσις. Φύσις designates emerging-from-out-of-itself, allowing to go-forth, to bring-forth in the original sense of bringing. Ποίησις is the bring-forth executed by the human...⁶

Heidegger says that poetry is *the doing*, praxis (πραξις), but always coupled with φύσις, which is λεγειν — the original concentration on the Logos. But φύσις is the natural ascent, such as the growing of trees, mountains and all beings, while ποίησις is the human action of bringing beings (Seiende) forth into the openness of manifested being; the poet is not just a “rhymester” — this is the destiny of those who picked up the “Mead of Poetry” that came from the Odin-Eagle’s backside. The poet has a special connection with the word, which is both the Logos as “the saying,” and as its original meaning — “gathering” or “collection.” Further, Heidegger says:

Since the word, performing the original and primal unconcealment, “concentrates” (collects) the unconcealed as such, the saying concentration becomes a kind of λεγειν, and that is why λεγειν, being “collection,” also means “saying.” Originally, although in a fundamentally different way, thinking and poetry are the same thing: the concentrating-in-the-word bringing-forth of the world into word.

Thinking (philosophy) and poetry are different, but the same: the highlighting and the transmutation of the world into word; the two ways of relation to being and its Logos: questioning and glorifying. Heidegger brings poetry closer to praxis; therefore, a different concentration on λέγειν, which in turn is the concentration of the soul on the Logos, is pure contemplation, θεωρεῖν. The praxis of poetry is the human act of collecting and bringing-forth, conducting the unconcealed being into the word. Further we will focus on the origin of the “word” itself and on its defining features, and meanwhile let us talk

6 See M. Heidegger, “Heraclitus” / Logos. Translated by Julia Goesser Assaiante and S. Montgomery Ewegen.

about the origin of poetry: the origin of Poetry as such and poetry as skaldic praxis.

There is something artisan in poetry, but not technical. In the word “pro-duction” we hear the cultural noise of production departments, conveyor belts and presses, although its meaning implies “conducting” something by a certain path into the world, as a parent leads a child holding it by the hand. This fits together with the didactics of Snorri in skaldic poetry. But while this “pro-duction” is a human act of bringing-forth the world into word and bringing-it-here into the unconcealed present-at-hand as *right here*, then the considered myth in some way reveals to us the nature of Poetry itself as it is.

Before poetry became man’s praxis — that is, before Odin in the image of an eagle spat the Mead of Poetry into the cauldron and it became available to the chosen people, the skalds — it had been concealed in hidden presence in the chthonic depths, in the seclusion of the cold scarcity of the Titanic nature. In other words, poetry was hidden and placed into the unconcealment of its being; it *was in non-being*. The action or the praxis of pro-duction, the bringing-forth of poetry from the non-being to the non-concealed being is carried out by a God. That is, initially a God, Odin the As, performs the praxis of placing-here of the being of poetry into the unconcealed, after which it is shifted to a lower level, and poetry becomes the praxis of man — the bringing-forth of the world into word. And this Divine praxis is carried out by a militant and ecstatic God.

The figure of trickster Odin, who embodies the strategy of victory through cunning, tells us something essentially new about the German Logos and the thinking of the supreme non-military type. He kills, steals and deceives the Jötunns, he goes under a mask-name, he turns into a chthonic beast and a solar bird — judging by many details and signs, we are facing a shaman, the figure of the circle of the Dionysian Logos, absorbing the solar and the chthonic extremes as his dimensions. Poetry and poetic wisdom are extracted by Odin,

a Dionysian deity, from the cold, dark concealment of the eternally meager earth that conceals everything.

But poetry, being closely associated with the Aesir and the Vanir and especially with Odin, in all its manifestations is a matter of only few people, the skalds. What does Martin Heidegger tell us, claiming that the human praxis of poetry is the bringing-forth of the world into word?

In his poem “The Word” (*das Wort*), the German poet Stefan George expresses — referring to a figure of the German myth! — the truth of poetry:

From dream or distance, I would bring To my land's border some strange thing	Wunder von ferne oder Traum Bracht ich an meines Landes Saum
Then wait until the grey Norn came, and from her well fished out its name	Und harrte, bis die graue Norn Den Namen fand in ihrem Born
Then I could take good hold of it,	Drauf konnt ich's greifen, dicht und stark
And now, all round, it flowers bright...	Nun blüht und glänzt es durch die Mark...
Once, from a voyage blessed with luck I brought a fragile gemstone back	Einst langt ich an nach guter Fahrt Mit einem Kleinod reich und zart
She looked and looked and said: “It's clear there's no name waiting for that here”	Sie suchte lang und gab mir kund: “So schläft hier nichts auf tiefem Grund”
Whereon it slipped out of my hand, And never came to grace my land	Worauf es meiner Hand entrann Und nie mein Land den Schatz gewann

I learned the rules through suffering: So lernt ich traurig den Verzicht:
Where no word is, can be no thing.⁷ Kein Ding sei, wo das Wort gebricht.

The translation of the line “Wunder von Ferne oder Traum” into English may sound like “A wonder from afar or [from] a dream.” The word “Traum” is also translated as “wish,” “daydream” or “reverie.”

Heidegger draws attention to this poem by George, asking the question “what is the word, since it is capable of such”? And further he says: “But word does not substantiate things. Word allows things to be present as things.” This is the special magic of the word — bringing a thing to presence as such, allowing the thing to be as it is in the language. At that, the thing can originate even from a fairy-tale, fantasy or dream (*Traum*).

The second verse allows a traditionalist interpretation too: someone addresses a grey-haired (grey) Norn, *die graue Norn*, one of the three women weaving the threads of fate, so that she would find at the bottom of a stream the word for something brought from afar or from a dream. The old Norn is possibly *Urðr*, whose name means “what became or happened” and is related to the old Icelandic verb *verða* — “to become,” “to be.” From this word stems the name of the second Norn, *Verðanði* — “what is becoming” (present continuous), and the third Norn’s name, *Skuld*, means “what should become.”

So first she finds the word and picks it up from the bottom, and the thing becomes existing. A new, unknown thing can become being and someone’s own, because we are talking about bringing it from somewhere to its native land (*mein Land*) if a legitimizing word is found for it in the past, in Tradition. Here we come close to the nuances of the language purism that we discussed above. If the suitable word is not found at the bottom, the thing dissolves and, as we can assume, this may be a new thing that has no equivalent in Tradition, or just an empty simulacrum exposed.

7 Translated from German by Sheenagh Pugh.

In the question of the existence of a thing, the word plays a key role. A thing is what has been considered and declared a *Veche* or *Thing* (*Ding*), and the word must be revealed there. There is a well-known custom of the presence of skalds at *Things* and in the service of kings, which indicates the relationship of the *Althing* to the authorities and the praxis of poetry. The Russian word “thing” (*vesch*), in addition to the closest and defining connection with the word “Veche,” goes back to the proto-Slavic *vekt, which means the same: something that is expressed in a word, something that is spoken and present in the word. The root itself goes back to the Indo-European stem *wek, meaning “to speak,” which is associated with the late Latin “vox” and Indian “vac”⁸.

In his poem, S. George keenly conveys the descent of the Norns down to the bottom of the stream, underwater, into the ipochthonic regions, in search of words for things. The Divine seer withdraws the word from the concealment of the Jötunns’ bowels and brings it to the light — and, most importantly, to the thing. At the same time, here the meaning of this act — the descent of the divine into the chthonic behind the word-for-thing — is superimposed on the poetic exposition of this meaning in George, as otherwise it is impossible to talk about the essence of poetry as the extraction of the word from non-existence, from chthonic captivity.

In his own manner, George retells the essence of the myth of finding the Mead of Poetry. We see the same structural pattern here: the Godly, the descent into the dungeons, the extraction of the word, the dark poetic manner (*von Ferne oder Traum?*). A special knowledge is revealed to us. Martin Heidegger says it is the bitter knowledge of forbiddance: where there is no word, no things can be. Poetic praxis (the practice of poetry in the noble sense of it) draws words from non-presence — non-being — and these words lead things to being. This can be added with the traditionalist concept that poetry is initially

8 See more about the hierarchy of manifestation of the ideal and material aspects of the universe through speech (vac, vach) in the doctrine of Kashmir Shaivism.

focused on glorifying Gods, spirits and heroes: in this way, they are brought into being. Poetry is a sacred praxis of invoking Gods and endowing them with *beyng*⁹.

Such is the essence of poetry as a human activity: taking its source from the Gods: taking words from non-existence and bringing them into presence for the being of things in the world, or bringing-forth being into words.

Numerous *heiti* and *kennings* in skaldic poetry, which take a significant part of the Edda of Snorri, are designed to obscure poetry for direct understanding. Poetry is not transparent and clear like an exact set of mathematically pure concepts, words, and categories that can be seen through like a sheet to the light and do not allow misinterpretation, and which can be combined in a machine-like manner like in Orwell. German skaldic poetry, wise and divine in its origin, has nothing in common with the cold hungry Jötunn's entrails; its darkness is of a different kind — it reflects the Dionysian principle of metamorphoses and evasion, ambiguity, symbolism and rhythmic alliterative play with being in words¹⁰. The As of poetry is Odin, so it is ecstatic, metamorphous and metaphorical. The play of *heiti* and *kennings* deliberately gives no direct and unambiguous ways, but only entangles the lines into numerous rhythmic patterns of knots and interpretations of metaphors, allegories and hints.

Warriors love it when skalds sing songs of their battles, heroic deeds and glory, but the skaldic craft cannot be purely military — this is the business of poets, shamans and sages. Poetry contains not the war-like darkness and tortuosity of speech and thought, and not the solar

9 This is also said in the end of the “Visions of Gullvi” from Snorri’s Edda, Chapter 54.

10 With this definition, we can look not only at poetry but also at authentic Scandinavian animal styles of ornaments (such as Urness, Mammen, Broa, Jelling and Ringerike styles), which, as a form of intricate and sophisticated graphic language, were widely used in crafts, carving, jewelry and graphics.

harmony of war and word; poetry reflects the metamorphoses and the trickster's cunning of Odin's shamanic aspect. This reveals one of the facets of a different German thinking—dark, ornate, metaphorical and poetic. This thinking and word tell us a lot about German historical militancy, but in their nature they are not militaristic in any way. In poetic wisdom we transgress from warlike to another German thinking (or turn to another one of its faces, which is difficult to hold in view).

Hölderlin

The embodiment of the German spirit in poetry was Friedrich Hölderlin, a representative of romanticism and the poet of poets of Germany, a close ideological friend of Schelling and Hegel, acquainted with Fichte; his poetry had a considerable influence on Nietzsche and Heidegger. In Hölderlin, several threads come together in a knot: Hellenic and Germanic spirit, philosophy and poetry in their essential intimacy, rejection of modernity and the search for a home in Antiquity, the tragedy of personal destiny and the rapid decline of Germany and Europe in the Modernity of the nineteenth century.

Martin Heidegger considers Hölderlin as the starting and final point in the search for the essence of poetry in his eponymous essay¹¹. He suggests listening and reflecting on what the poet says about the “matter” of speech through which the poetry is expressed. The phonetics and grammar of speech are only the first level of saying, the external manifestation of the language. Heidegger finds the path to the deep essence of speech in the fragment of Hölderlin's verse, where he writes:

Man has been through many things,
 And given many names to the heavenly,
 Since we have become conversation,
 Now able to listen to each other.

11 See M. Heidegger, “Hölderlin and The Essence of Poetry.”

The key phrase is the definition of what is man, in whom Heidegger implicitly reveals the existentials of *Dasein* — *Mit-Sein* (being-with) and *Rede* (speech). Hölderlin speaks about “us” who listen to each other. But at the same time, apart from “we” and “listen,” there is the most important thing: speech, or “conversation.”

Hölderlin, and later Heidegger, identifies poetry with the sacred (*das Heilige*). Focusing on the beginning of the line “since...”, Heidegger himself begins to speak poetically, wondering about the moment of this “since then.” We are a conversation since the very beginning, when the say-ing starts to unfold — the process of revealing of being in the unconcealed, and thus this saying is both original (ontological, world-forming) and specifically historical. Man begins to speak, but he is encouraged to it by the Gods and their questioning, which refers us to the structure of *das Geviert*. The originality of speech connects world-forming with the historicity of being and the anxious questioning of the Gods about their being:

Since our being is conversation, man has been through a lot and has named many of the gods. Since speech is actually happening as conversation, the gods gain the word, and a certain World appears. But it should again be noted: the presence of the gods and the appearance of the world are not merely a consequence of the fulfilment of speech, they are contemporaneous with it. And this to the extent that it is precisely in the naming of the gods and in the word-capturing of the World that the real conversation consists — the conversation which we ourselves are.

But the gods can enter into the word only when they themselves request us and put [us] under their Request. The word that names the gods is always the response to such a request. This answer arises every time from the responsibility of fate. It is only when the gods speak of our being-here that we first enter into the sphere of deciding whether we will please the gods or appear inconsistent before them.

Here we can draw a special anthropology of man: in his being-here, he is a poetic conversation or speech. In another fragment, Hölderlin says that “[f]ull of merit, yet poetically, man dwells on this earth.”

This places man [poet] between (*zwischen*) Gods and men. But such an inter-being is a poetic living between the Gods and people on the axis of the fourfold. The poet in this “between” acts as a witness of the truth of *beyng* and as one who brings things into be-ing, as one who says-out the word, speech or conversation, as the Gods’ neighbour. Hölderlin speaks of the Sky and Earth in poems and elegies (“To Aether,” “Traveller,” “Germany,” “Homeland”). Thus, the poet finds himself at the intersection of the two axes of the fourfold. As well as the philosopher, one of the few representatives of the people, he testifies the truth of all things.

Heidegger emphasizes that Hölderlin stands not only “in-between” as it is inherent to the nature of poetry, but also between the old Gods, who have already left, and the Last God who has not yet come. Hölderlin — and any poet today — lives in scarce times.

Hence comes the poet’s anti-modernism, his desire to find his homeland in the sacred; Heidegger identifies this desire as the discovery of this “scarce time” or the in-between time of the Gods.

In his poem “Germany,” Hölderlin writes:

Truly you are gods, gods in the past days!
 You are now gone, but you had been.
 I do not beg and neither I reject.
 Though all is over and the day has faded,
 Your priest still carries everywhere with him
 Your temple and your image, and your rites,
 In a dark country, in a lightless land.

The old Gods are gone, but the poet still calls them, hears their questioning in the silence of the question itself. The Gods most revered by Hölderlin are Aether (Zeus, or the Supreme Deity) and Earth (Nerthus, Nature), and Dionysus¹².

Hölderlin describes the departure of the old world as the twilight of the day; in place of Germany there appears a “dark country.” But

12 See Guardini R., “Hölderlin. Weltbild und Frömmigkeit.”

the poet sees this nightfall as a special—existential-historical, as Heidegger puts it—sign of the Gods. A romanticist too, Novalis sang of death and solace of the poet in darkness in his “Hymns to the Night.” There the Night appears as a solace and an apophatic homeland; man comes there as to a place different from the profane world of daytime rationality. The Gods have gone, and daylight has become senseless without Apollo. But the Night:

Blest be the everlasting Night,
 And blest the endless slumber!
 We are heated with the day too bright,
 And withered up with cumber!
 We're weary of that life abroad:
 Come, we will now go home to God!¹³

This is echoed by Hölderlin in his poem “The Night”:

Out of the land of mocking fools who toil
 On empty ghosts in vain, to you he flees,
 The vanity and turmoil of the world
 The virtuous one abandons, seeking peace.

Only with you the soul will find how divine,
 Oh Peace, you will become for it one day,
 With whose false light so many altars shine
 Where countless sacrifices have been made.

In the essay “What Are Poets For?” dedicated to Hölderlin’s elegy “Bread and Wine,” Heidegger calls the nightfall of godforsakenness a *fall into the abyss* (*Abgrund*)¹⁴. The question “and what are poets for in scarce time?” is answered by Heine, the interlocutor of the poet:

But they are, you say, like the wine-god’s holy priests,
 Who wander from land to land in the sacred night.

13 Translated by George MacDonald. See also Novalis, “Hymns to the night.”

14 See Martin Heidegger, “Poetry, language, thought” / “What are poets for?”

The God of wine is Dionysus descending to Hades. Poets are his priests, who are mortal, unlike the immortal Gods. Therefore, they feel the falling into the Abyss more vividly, but perceive it not as a Titanic abyss of matter. In the night, poets find solace, but now the Night of the World is coming, both historically and metaphysically — *and poets descend into it to see its sacredness, to make the Abyss holy and glowing with its dark light*. The priest is defeated, but all the same he discovers the image of his revered Gods everywhere, and he performs the ritual and sanctifies their altar. [Even in defeat, the priest does not lose.]

Mentioning the old Gods, Novalis still stands for the ideals of the Christian Middle Ages, while Hölderlin finds his spiritual homeland on the shores of Ancient Greece. This is the entire specifics of German romanticism, which gives a powerful impetus to the revival of the Pagan Germanic spirit in general; researchers of contemporary paganism and pagan thinkers themselves trace their roots back to it, and also it is inherited by the philosophers of classicism; in Schelling, Hölderlin's poetic intuitions converge with the neo-Platonic philosophy of the Rhineland mystics. In the works of Hölderlin, the Gods of the Greeks and his Gods inspire and speak the German language, becoming figures kindred to the Germans.

Hölderlin's personal night comes at the age of thirty: he is overcome by madness, spending the rest of his days in his tower in Tübingen. Heidegger points out Hölderlin's ambivalent definition of poetry; he writes that it is "the most innocent of all occupations" and at the same time "the most dangerous of assets" that gives man Godlike freedom. The poet of poets, the expresser of the deep essence of poetry as such, merging the Hellenic and the German spirit that descends into the Night of the World, Hölderlin pays a fair price for his sensitivity to the word and silence of the Gods — his sanity. Heidegger notes this too, pointing out the words from Hölderlin's "Empedocles": "The one through whom the spirit speaks must part betimes."

Who is the God of Madness of the Hellenes but the intoxicating Dionysus, who descended to Hades and returned into the daylight?

In the German myth he is known under the name of *Glapsviðr* — the Depriver of Reason, the God of Poetry who knows the truth of the coming Twilight.

The Πολιτεία of the Poets: George-Kreis

Presenting his theory of an ideal State, Plato categorically concludes that poets and myth-makers should be expelled from it. This thesis corresponds to the strictly hierarchical, mechanistic state of Plato: poets tell tales and teach young people dubious morality. From the point of view of language, Plato is right; by their anthropological and ontological nature, poets belong to the border between Sun and Twilight, they violate the order of sentences and the form of words — they *play* with them. Poetry itself carries an intoxicating and tragic rhythm, which is obviously of not much use for the warrior class in the Platonic utopia. The distance between politics and poetics stated by Plato remained for centuries. Until the 1900s, when Germany formed a circle of admirers inspired by the magnetic charisma of the poet Stefan George.

Born near the Rhine in 1868, George publishes three collections of poems, including the famous “Algabal,” already in the early 1890s. Aesthetic sensuality and fascination with antiquity, including Rome and the “cursed” emperors, along with the introduction of his own grammatical rules and signs, permeate his work, which quickly attracts attention. It is noteworthy that George is born in a family of winemakers — in fact, “marked by the seal” of Dionysus¹⁵.

Stefan George’s circle is a peculiar intellectual phenomenon on the map of Germany of the first half of the XX century. Around him there gathers a community of poets and writers, who published their works in George’s almanac. Not everyone passes the rigorous selection by the Master, as they start to call George. By the end of the 1900s, “the worthy ones” related to George and his circle form a vast network of societies, clubs and individuals, covering the whole of Germany. For

15 See Robert E. Norton, *Secret Germany: Stefan George and His Circle*.

everyone, George acts as a teacher, a mentor, a leader (he anticipated the use of the German word “Führer”) and the heart of the movement. He often moves around the country, meeting his followers, arranging readings of the classics and listening to young poets. In his almanac, the elect are published among such masters as d’Annunzio, Mallarmé, Hofmannsthal, and others. In 1910, the “Yearbook for the Spiritual Movement” began to be published.

At the initial stage, Nietzsche plays a special role in the worldview of George and his Circle. Later, the Master transforms the idea of the circle from “art for art’s sake” to the education of a special aesthetic and *political* elite. The circle includes historians, teachers, journalists and publishers. Years later, the place of Nietzsche is slowly but naturally taken by Plato and his teaching¹⁶.

Stefan George cultivated a special attitude to the prominent figures of Dante, Shakespeare, Nietzsche, Hölderlin and Plato, along with Caesar and Frederick II. The Circle’s approach differed from the academic one with which they actively debated (K. Hildebrandt about U. Wilamowitz, the works of F. Gundolf on Shakespeare and the romantics). The great figures — the *Gestalts* — should not be dissected, as academic scholars do, but perceived as icons and contemplated (in the original meaning of the Greek θεωρία) — experienced directly. In the George-Kreis, the great ones became demigods. Such a sensual, aesthetic and poetic approach predetermined the antimodernism of the Circle and George’s rejection of the zeitgeist of Europe of his time. Politically, Georgeans were close to the movement of the Conservative Revolution (one of them was Claus von Stauffenberg, a participant in an assassination attempt on Hitler), emerging from the sphere of poetry to the general ideological horizon.

Here we can see an element of play in the relations of the Hellenic and Germanic: Plato expelled poets from his State, but in Germany it is the poets who established a cult of the ancient thinker in order

16 See Mikhail Mayatsky, “The Debate about Plato: Stefan George’s Circle and the German Academia.”

to foster the philosophical-poetic elite of the future Germany. This is the special German spirit, demonstrating the proximity of poetry to power and to the Ruler able to overcome Plato's distance. At the same time, the general atmosphere and outlook of the George-Kreis were close to the Hellenic tradition and aesthetics. George himself felt rejected Prussian Protestantism, remaining on the Catholic side, but sought to overcome the Christian dualism between body and soul. To denote this primordial state of oneness close to deification, he uses the German word *Leib* — "Body." Michael Mayatsky translated this word as "flesh," which would be *Fleisch* in German. But flesh is too material and substantial (Aristotle's wood, Askar and Embla), while the body is the unity of soul and flesh, it is a whole. Mayatsky quotes a passage from George:

The knower has three steps to pass. Only the mad believe that one can step over birth and flesh [body, *Leib*].

Three is the Platonic structure of the soul's chariot driven by two horses and the helmsman. The triple structure can be also found in the Rhineland mystics Meister Eckhart and Johannes Tauler. And then:

Friedemann expresses this idea central for Georgeans in a corresponding form, without any punctuation signs splitting the unity: "Man was still engulfed in divine contemplation indivisible and round: spirit word and feeling were all One perfect flesh indivisible in cosmic cohesion."

The unity of man is the theosis of God performed by Odin-Vili-Ve in the Eddas. When the Gods cease to contemplate (to engulf, to hold, to think) man, he falls into parts, the lower of which is really just possessed flesh, the pure physicality of Gilles Deleuze's rhizome and swarming shadows (Icelandic *skuggja*).

In the period of the Weimar Republic, the Circle assumes the features of an Order, attaching more and more value to *politeia* and engaging in the intellectual support of the evolving right nationalist discourse. A significant part in this was played by a member of the

party Kurt Hildebrandt and his monograph “Plato. The Struggle of Spirit for Power.”

George was ahead of history in his dream of the Third Reich, which he — contrary to the subsequent events — thought of as a spiritual Empire (Reich) that would replace the second Christian Empire, which came after the Pagan one, in their historical synthesis of a single Body. In anticipation of its coming, the Circle develops the idea of a “Secret Germany.” The roots of the imaginary Kingdom (Reich) can be found in the Symbolist movement characterized by anti-realist and anti-bourgeois features, whose representative George was at the dawn of its formation. In fact, the wide network of communities and individualists of Stefan George’s Circle, encompassing representatives of various directions, actually *was* this “Secret Germany,” bringing up the future elite as instructed by Plato.

The word “secret” has a strong connotation with the meaning of “concealed.” Together with anti-modernism and poetry at the core of the philosophy of Stefan George and his Circle, this makes it complementary to the zeitgeist as an immersion into the Night, described by Novalis and Hölderlin. In the twilight of the Evening Country, George acts as an adept of German and, in a broader sense, European authenticity and identity, the carrier of the synthesis of Hellenism and the German spirit in the doctrine of “Secret Germany.” Max Weber — a contemporary of George completely opposed to his entire worldview, who had, nevertheless, always noted his poetic genius — aptly described the era of Modernity as the *disenchantment* of the world, the departure of the sacred and the flattening of all meanings and higher dimensions. George’s goal was to enchant the world again.¹⁷

The Third Reich and the Second World War shattered the aspirations of the Circle for the revival of Germany. The connection of the Georgeans with the Nazis and the consonance of their early ideas with the course of the party determined their post-war place on the

¹⁷ Ibid.

periphery of the intellectual field. Despite this, the circle of George left an extensive poetic heritage, and its polemics with academic scholasticism have not passed without a trace.

Michail Mayatsky mentions a futile attempt of K. Sommer to fit Martin Heidegger and his interpretation of Plato into the Georgan context. Undoubtedly, Heidegger was familiar with the works of George and wrote a quintessential essay on his poem "Das Wort." Heidegger and George share a common spirit of anti-modernism and the anticipation of the Conservative Revolution, as well as their innovative attitude to Antiquity and its new interpretation. But Heidegger was not a member of the Circle and did not maintain the cult of Plato in his provisions of the history of *Beyng*, paying more attention to the Pre-Socratics. In his "Black Notebooks," Heidegger is skeptical about the "romantic" attempts of the Georgians to revive the State of Plato in the body of the Nazi Reich¹⁸. This assessment concerns not only the political shortsightedness of the Circle, but also the fact that in the history of the oblivion of *beyng*, Plato is the one who marks the end of the First Beginning and determines the structure of all subsequent thinking of the West and its history. Therefore, on the one hand, the program of politics as the education on the basis of Plato means traditionalist restoration, but on the other hand, it means the return of the same. Plato closes the access to the apophatic *beyng*-Nothingness, placing the world of Ideas at the highest floor of space hierarchies. Therefore, the agenda of politics-as-education on the basis of Plato is, on the one hand, a traditionalist restoration, but on the other, the return of the same.

It is important that Plato was raised to the banners of an outstanding poet, and the first decade of the Circle was pointedly poetic. This beautiful gesture is one of the sunset flashes of the German Logos as the synthesis of the entire West in its Sunset. One can only guess what poetic and political horizons Stefan George and his Circle could

18 See M. Heidegger, "Reflections II–VI (Black Notebooks, 1931–1938)."

have revealed if they had resorted to *Neoplatonism* and kept a distance from the Thousand-Year Reich.

Today, Secret Germany and its adepts remain in concealment.

Wisdom, Ecstasy, Death

Let us return to the word *Oðr* — inspiration, thought, poetry, *Odroerir*, and Odin's name of *Oðr*, the human incarnation known in myths as the only spouse of Freya. It is believed that Freya taught Odin-*Oðr* the magic of *Seidr*, and then he left her. This short episode gives rise to numerous interpretations, but we are mostly interested in the question of the understanding and etymology of the word *Oðr* (sometimes anglicized as *Od*).

Under the name of *Oðr*, Odin receives the knowledge of *Seiðr* — shamanic magic practices. Ethnosociologists point out that it is highly probable that in mythology under the name of the *Vanir* appear the oldest Slavic tribes; thus, shamanic practices are assimilated by the Germans as the *Aesir* from the Slavs as the *Vanir*, which corresponds to the myth of the man Odin/*Oðr* and the woman-vanadis Freya. The taking of a woman from a captured or subordinate people into the aristocratic family of victors is a typical ethno-sociological feature of militant tribes, especially nomadic ones.

The name *Oðr*, according to Magnusson, is a variation of the name *Oðinn*; that is, etymologically it goes back to the same meaning of frenzy and inspiration. Besides, one of the forms of this name is *Oður*, which coincides with the noun *oður*: poetry, poem, the “entering the state of rabies” (*æðigangur*); and the adverb *oður*: recklessly, fiercely, eagerly, quickly, abnormally. (The Russian language suggests a phonetically consonant equivalent — the word “*odur*” (“stupor”), “*oduriet*” (“to lose one's mind”) and so on, meaning the loss of sober reason and some altered and unhealthy state of mind. As C. Cleary notes, it is impossible to come to insight or inspiration through logical reasoning and rationality, it always enters us from the outside, and

ex-stasis is the out-of-itself-standing as inspiration¹⁹. The etymology and the connotations of the name Oðr confirm and recognize the semantic range of Odin's names — poetry, frenzy, and shamanism: they all name each other, flow into each other and cause the essence of each other. When we say “poetry,” we should hear “obsession,” “ecstasy,” the “swaying” [alliteration] of the God Odin. And the same is true for the pronunciation of other words from the circle: one affects and makes all the others sound. We should not leave out the presence of death, however remote it may be, related to the poetry and ecstatic shamanism of Odin-Oðr: from the rich semantic environment in the myth of the theft of the Mead of Poetry to the fact that the human hypostasis of Odin, Oðr, is considered dead after the marriage with Freya — a master of Seidrr and the Goddess of Death. Moreover, Seidrr is considered as a practice associated with women; in *Lokasenna*, Loki accuses Odin of “femininity” for performing a ritual dance. This points out the transgressive component of the Logos of Odin and ecstatic practice.

Odin's vividly expressed thirst for knowledge and wisdom is also atypical for a warrior, and the path there almost always runs through death or is surrounded by its symbols. In order to avoid superficial interpretations of people of military nature as an “unintelligent” antithesis to people of other nature, it should be noted that this is a question of different wisdom of the castes, their specific knowledge and its reflection in consciousness. Our interest lies in the specifics of Odin's thirst for knowledge and thinking, whose features are ecstasies and poetics as a confusing Dionysian language.

In his conversations with Völva and Vafþrúðnir, Odin, speaking under different names, is particularly interested in the fate of the Gods: what awaits the world, the Aesir and the Vanir? The knowledge that Odin seeks is focused on the theme of the End and Death, on Ragnarök. To know the fate of the Gods is to know that they will die;

19 See Collin Cleary, “The Gifts of Odin and his Brothers.”

even more existentially closer to *Dasein* for Odin is to know that He himself will die. According to Heidegger²⁰, *Dasein* — human here-being, being-presence — is fundamentally final, and thus man is mortal, and his life is *sein-zum-Tode*, being-to-death. In the case of Germanic mythology and the position of the Germanic Gods, their being is also being-to-death, and this is most clearly realized by Odin, who aspires to this knowledge of the end of everything and everyone.

Death is present in the whole complex of Odin's myths and worship. In the myths, the acquisition of wisdom is framed by the chthonic, and therefore associated with the areas of death, symbolism and the explicit presence of death. The Elder Edda starts with a conversation of Odin and Völva, whom he had raised from the dead; in the dispute with Vafþrúðnir, the stake is the loser's head, and Vafþrúðnir admits his defeat when it comes to the death of the Gods and what Odin whispered to the dead Baldr. The whole myth of the Younger Edda about the acquisition of the Mead of Poetry is marked by death and constant murders. For Geirrödr, the meeting with Odin after hearing his speeches under the name of Grimnir, ends with a quick and inglorious death.

Death, suicide and human sacrifice are significant features of Odin's cult. Odin is maddened by death, he is obsessed with it. But not obsessed like a beast, which is so obsessed in its possession that it is unaware of its obsession as such. Odin's obsession with death is like thirst — the desire for the knowledge of death and of death itself, through which speaks the thirst for wisdom.

20 It is noteworthy that M. Heidegger himself is also sometimes called a "Swabian shaman" or "magician" for his "esoteric" language and enchanting word play.

Names

Among the words that give things being, it is necessary to highlight such a category as the name. A name is not just a word that brings a thing into existence or leads it to its *being*. Every name, of course, is a word, but not every word is a name as the name of God or a personal name. The name is both a manifestation of an entity in its quality (nature, function) and at the same time a limitation, a definition of the limit of the thing: what it can be and what it cannot be. In other words, the name is always a term, a limit and at the same time a name — it is the existential destiny of the named being, a reflection of its nature in the world.

The name is not final and not solid. The name is a symbol, which means that it holistically refers to something else, to surrounding meanings, contexts, plots, coincidences and associations. Heidegger says that the word refers to the Gods, and the Gods themselves may enter the word only when it is spoken by man as a response to their direct, pre-worded question. The yet nameless Gods ask man, and, answering, he gives them the word to enter into being. This is one of the reasons why Gods are many-named, and still neither of their names nor their totality cover the whole essence of God.

Let us turn to some names of the As Odin which determine some of his manifestations that are of interest to us in the light of the discovery of a different thinking in the German Logos and the grasping of its Emptiness.

Fjallgeiguðr, the God of Appearances, and Grimnir, Hidden under the Mask — these names indicate that Odin appears in mythology under many faces, constantly changing appearances, pretending and *calling himself by other names* in order to *conceal his own identity*. This feature expressed in the names suggests that behind all of them and behind Odin, whom Icelanders or continental Teutons and Scandinavians knew as the Ecstatic or Frenzied, there is void. Something that cannot be expressed by a name. As soon as “Odin”

is given some name, there manifests one of the key aspects of his essence. All the names of “Odin” (the-inexpressible-hidden-behind-all-his-names) manifest his various aspects into being; that is, into the verbal existential presence in this world and its being (*Sein*). Gradually peeling off all Odin’s names like onion layers — that is, withdrawing all his manifestations from being — we will not reach any certain centerpiece, an ultimate indivisible core. We will rather find nothing — an emptiness, an absence of word. But on top of this particular *being-not*, Odin is wrapped in many manifestations into word-being: Odin’s “*being-not*” (non-presence) manifests itself through his “*it is*” (presence) as a set of many names-manifestations.

Odin has a speaking name: Svipall — the Changing, which perfectly reflects what we have just said. Another name close to this one is Glapsviðr — the Misleading (leading into illusion or simulacrum). Odin is the embodiment of the illusion of his presence. And this illusion is ecstatic and frenzied by inspiration (oðr).

The daylight reason, the rational Mind, is unable to look directly at the nameless, non-present, concealed behind the manifestations of words. In order to grasp “Odin” beyond names — beyond the sphere of “it is” — the usual daylight warrior-like thinking of the Mind that draws a distinction between “its own” and “not its own” must give way to another strategy of thinking — wonder. Wonder is the “stepping-out-of-the-Mind,” and in its Dionysian transgressive ecstasy it is possible not to remain in the depths of a certain “word” for naming the non-present centre of Odin, but the existence from this non-present center as one’s *Selbst* (I).

The divine triad of Odin-Hoenir-Lóðurr creates people out of wood, and among other gifts, they are endowed with Odr (Oðr) — inspiration; thus by their nature they are Odin’s heirs. Man is the border between being and Nothingness. Heidegger says that man is the shepherd of being. The praxis of poetry fits into this image, but what is wonder for man as a border between being and Nothingness?

Wonder is the practice of *imitatio Dei* in an ecstatic ritual or contemplation, a different way of thinking. The Mind cannot grasp the emptiness and catch it by the word; it cannot contemplate it directly before itself. But as abundant words and speech — manifestations of the language — hide in it the emptiness of its centre, so wonder is the turning of the Mind from the word and speech to the nameless and speechless. From the cataphatic existence in being to the apophatic *Selbst*.

For everyday thinking — the daylight mode of the Mind — such wonder and the attempt to steer the thinking in its direction causes Horror. Horror is one of Odin's names, *Yggr*. The inability of the Mind to endure the direct contemplation of Nothingness leads it to a constant movement from *nothing* to *something*; *Nothingness horrifies the Mind into something*. The Mind is constantly in the process of de-scription, be-speaking and pre-conditioning of the unconditioned nothing: thus words are born, along with language, speech, images, things, and everything that makes the world manifest, present and be-ing. Hence come the multiple names of the Frenzied and the extreme complexity of the path towards what is beyond words in the understanding of the Divine. In this case, we can also talk not only about the Mind, but also about human existence, presence and being-here — *Dasein*²¹.

From the point of view of the daylight consciousness, the entering into wonder as the amazed state of Mind is regarded as dying and entering one's non-being (albeit temporary, like the intoxication of ecstasy or frenzy). Thus, the majority of Odin's names are related to death in its various aspects.

21 See A. Dugin, "Martin Heidegger. The Last God. / Part 2. Chapter 10. Russian Dasein and its existentials."

War, Dispute, Play

Being is War, to be is to be at war. War is the father of everything. This is the dominant German view of the world and being in it. But this vision reflects the nature and vision of the second caste, which firmly dominates the structure of Germanic societies and their Logos. Closely considering Odin's myths of the first caste, we found that this view is based on other strategies of thinking and attitude to being. But how are these strategies related to war and militancy, and how are they conjugated in the sphere of historical and ontological war?

The figure of Odin tells us that warrior thinking and shamanic or ecstatic thinking — two different paradigms and strategies — have something in common. They are united as two disparate parts connected by a thread running around and binding them into an integral composition. Obviously, this is not the unity that we see in the figure of Odin; this unity is not a posterior sum of two different parts that had existed separately before they were united.

The figure of Odin includes warrior aspects and myths, his cult is related to war and focused on battle and death. But at the same time Odin himself is a trickster, a shamanic and ecstatic figure also focused on death. All the warlike aspects manifested in the many names of Odin take root in the unmanifested and wordless Nothingness. From the unspeakable centre of Nothingness, out of that Emptiness through its de-scription comes the here-bringing of images and things, some of which are warlike, and other shamanic and poetic. The unity of the warlike and the shamanic and ecstatic in Odin is due to their origin in the Void as the endowment of the word with being. The military and the ecstatic are united not by the fact that they are the names of Odin in their presence, but in what is the non-present Emptiness of the Divine Centre [from which they manifest themselves].

In myths and real military praxis, the military and the ecstatic in their manifestations should be seen as syzygian. Syzygy (σύζυγος in Greek) means conjunction or connection. The syzygian figure of

Odin is an ecstatic warrior (berserker, ulfserker, warlike oðr) and a shaman king (konung). Historically, the German is most known and understandable to us as a warrior spreading his militancy, will and power on the neighbouring tribes, peoples and states. In the warrior/shaman syzygy, the militant part is dominant; it is historically facing us, covering, wrapping (and hiding?) its other part from the bright daylight and from attention — the ecstatic, shamanic and transgressive part. In the light of day and history, the Germans show the world — the *In-der-Welt-Sein*²² — their warlike side. But in themselves, in facing the inner German self, they are ecstatic, and within them there hides a languishing, shaking *something*, which is a taboo and a secret for themselves. And Loki in *Lokasenna*, bringing the dark and concealed into the light for all at the feast to see, blames not only what he extracts and presents to the Aesir and Vanir but also the concealment itself. The Aesir are not only “sinful” through their own “sins” but even more by the very fact of concealment; the problem is not so much in deeds as in the fact that this side of the Divine is suppressed. Continuing this reasoning, we find that the transgressiveness of this ecstatic concealed part of the Germanic Logos in its essence is based on the out-of-mind wonder; that is, on the path leading beyond the Word, on the way from *something* to *nothing*, to the Emptiness of the Divine.

But the side of the Germans that faces the world expresses militancy. Behind it lies ecstasy and the desire for the knowledge of death. How does war conjugate when the German turns from the outside world to his inner world? One of the options is the suppression of the ecstatic and transgressive, bringing the light of day into the twilight of the mind; in fact, here begins the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud

22 Being-in-the-world is one of the existentials of *Dasein*. It is extremely important that being-in-the-world is the existential (derivative) of *Dasein* itself, that is, being-here is primary or central, and it is like being-in-the-world. Hence the impossibility to think the world as something independent, “objective” and existing separately from the thinking presence of *Dasein*.

and the work with the unconscious in order to interpret, heal and lead a person to a “normal” state. This option does not suit us and cannot be considered seriously as an acceptable strategy. Here the militant principle is substituted for the Titanic one. A warrior enters into a fighting rage, a frenzy, an inspiration with war and battle. At this time of the battle, he is in an altered state of consciousness, engulfed in the exaltation of battle and flooded by ecstatic intoxication. The lighter side facing the world draws its strength and “sprouts” from the darkness of the concealed part. Freudianism, as well as psychoanalysis, which developed on its basis, psychiatry, calls to eliminate the dark twilight sphere and leave only one part, rational and tamed — and, in a sense, castrated and dispassionate.

Let us return to Heraclitus: “πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι....” Polemos is war, its very nature. The word “polemics,” which means “argument” or “dispute,” derives from this word. In the Poetic Edda, the form of a questioning dialogue and dispute, where the stake is the head of one of the participants, is very frequent. Two of these disputes should be noted. The first is the Speech of Vafþrúðnir where Odin and the Jötunn Vafþrúðnir compete in wisdom finding out who knows more about all the realms, the Gods, and the world’s fate. At the end of the dispute, Odin wins by a cunning trick that could be called dishonest by a warrior — he asks Vafþrúðnir what only he knows in all the worlds: about the words spoken to Baldr on his death-bed.

The second dispute is the meeting of Thor and Alvis the dwarf, who stakes his head in case of loss, and in case of victory requires to take Thor’s daughter as wife. And here the argument is won by cunning too: Thor spins it out till dawn, and Alvis does not notice the first rays of sunlight, which turn him into stone.

In both cases, the victory is achieved not by battle but through polemics and cunning. Such a strategy, being generally acceptable for Odin, is totally uncharacteristic of Thor; here we see a kind of an outrageous, transgressive deviation from the strict warrior paradigm in the direction of tricksterism and deception. Vafþrúðnir and Alvis

are chthonic figures; here continues the same mythic dichotomy between the Gods and the Titans (and less dangerous but more pernicious dwarfs), but here the Titans are defeated by cunning and tricks. Before Vafþrúðnir dies, he exclaims that he ventured a struggle with the wisest — with Odin himself. But Odin overcomes him by an unfair sleight. Thor admits that Alvið's breast holds a lot of knowledge, but he is defeated by cunning. The endings of the polemics tell us that it is not about the actual power of knowledge and the volume of wisdom, but about the cunning and trickery that allow to deceive the Titans and bring them to death. Though Alvið knows a lot, he still does not recognize the tricks that bring him to his end.

A war of armies turns into a debate — a competition in knowledge, deception and trickery. A contest and a duel here turns into a mutual questioning of wisdom, of the destinies of the Gods and the world. And this controversy is surrounded by death as in the topics discussed, so in the outcome of the dispute — someone is going to die. The thinkers participate in the war in the form of a dispute, martial ideas, knowledge and wisdom. The wisdom of the Aesir is more complete than the knowledge of the Jötunns and dwarfs; it comes from another source and has different qualities. The Aesir know what to do with the Mead of Poetry while the Jötunns only keep it in their bowels. The Aesir give the Mead to the people, and thus appear scalds and the ecstatic Dionysian poetry, praising the Gods and ridiculing the futility of the Thurses, Jötunns and dwarfs.

This verse from the Speeches of the High One (*Hávamál*) can serve as a formula of a philosophical polemic, which is not a dispute but Odin's instructions for people. The High One points out that people need the Aesir's instructions while the Jötunns do not. The Jötunns live without law and without order — they do not know what is right or wrong and do whatever comes into their head, as in the myth of the Mead of Poetry.

164.

Now the sayings of the High One
 are uttered in the hall
 for the weal of men,
 for the woe of Jötuns,
 Hail, thou who hast spoken!
 Hail, thou that knowest!
 Hail, ye that have hearkened!
 Use, thou who hast learned!

164.

Nú eru Háva mál
 kveðin Háva höllu í,
 allþörf ýta sonum,
 óþörf jötna sonum;
 heill sá, er kvað,
 heill sá, er kann,
 njóti sá, er nam,
 heilir, þeirs hlýddu.

These polemics involving the staking of one's head and tricksterish knavery reveal obvious features of a game, which has long been considered the sister of war²³. The dispute as a deadly game is best seen in the argument of Thor and Alvíss, which clearly started in a comical manner: the mighty As Thor listens to threats and demands of the dwarf Alvíss!

But the perception of war as a play requires a certain detachment from the elements of the real battlefield or confrontation. Such a detachment appears when one turns from the outer world to the inner being, in the dark side of the sisygy figure of Odin facing the Void.

A game or a play (Latin *ludus*) means competition or training, and later also “performance” or “entertainment” — for example, a gladiators' fight. The Icelandic word for “game,” *leika*, is the base of the verb “to experience joy or pleasure.” The German word for “game,” *Spiel*, is the second root of the internationally used word *Endspiel*, which means “final” or “denouement.” *Endspiel* is also a military term meaning a decisive battle — the final scene in the theater of war²⁴. *Endspiel*

23 As for the late perception of the game as something “childish” or “silly,” or the pedagogical interpretation of the game as an initial learning process, again for children, we discard them as completely irrelevant to our consideration and the original understanding of the game as a special theurgy, magic or controversy.

24 The expression “theater of war” refers to the sphere of the Dionysian, for the theater, originally appearing in Greece, is under the aegis of Dionysus. One of the meanings of the Icelandic word *leika* is “an actor” or “to play” (as in “to play a role”).

is also used in an ancient war game — chess. Since ancient times, in Scandinavia there exists a similar military game *hnefatafl*, brought also to Ancient Rus, where it is known as *tavlei* from the Latin word *tabula* — “board.” The Gods themselves play *tafl*, and they find this game in the grass after Ragnarök. In the game of war, the thinker and the konung or strategist converge. The controversy becomes one of the forms of game cheating beyond the reach of Jötunn, and therefore German Titans lose the game.

For the first caste, being-at-war turns into a play, a dispute, a war of wisdom and ideas.

The Priest, the Philosopher and Thinking

And here we approach an important problem: the gap between the two types of people who occupy the top floors of the caste hierarchy — the priest and the philosopher.

The impossibility of direct identification of these figures immediately catches the eye. In Ancient Greece, we can see that the figure of the philosopher, the famous first Seven Sages, appears there much later than the already existing priestly function and caste, according to J. Dumezil. The convergence of the priest and the philosopher can be found in Indian society, when a sadhu or a yogin may be a profound interpreter or founder of a darshan, but the Indian Logos is significantly different from the European one we are interested in and cannot be brought into consideration.

Who is the priest, what is priesthood?²⁵ The superficial view of modern man first associates it with the phenomena of magic, sorcery and so on. To what extent is magic a private priestly sphere of activity? It is not. Magic actions, spells, charms and rituals were available and carried out by all members of the community. The simplest protective *visas*, spells, or amulets were widely distributed even among the

25 In Scandinavia, a priest is a *goði*, a poet is a *skald*. *Galdr* is a type of magic which can be literally translated as “to sing [a spell].”

agricultural classes, where they have survived to our time. A warrior could also charm their sword and shield by carving a runic inscription on his sword hilt or blade and doing battle magic. Women rather preferred divination magic. All this, as well as more complex specific rituals, was also available to the priests of the cults of this or that As or Vanr. Magic saturates all society, it is not localized and not concentrated in the hands of only priests. Ordinary people can perform magical acts within the limits of their caste interests and skills; regarding priests, it can be assumed that their knowledge in this area was perhaps wider than that of farmers or kings. The attempt to link magic and priesthood gave us nothing; magic is not a specific priestly act, but is inherent to priests just like all others.

By nature, the priest is closer to the Gods; he transfers (*tradere*) the sacred into the world and society, and he speaks and sings [*μῦθος*, *galdr*] the sacred myth. These are his main features—the natural orientation towards the Divine and the transfer, interpretation and implementation of the connection between the Gods and their will and people, between Heaven and Earth. In this light, magic, divination and priestly rituals are interpreted—they are sacro-centric. For the priesthood, the being of the world, all the nine worlds, is Divine and orderly in its harmony. The Gods are also being, its source is the perspective of Theo-ontology. And this perspective, which Martin Heidegger considers a duplication of one be-ing above another, the prefix meta- in the word “metaphysics”²⁶. The Gods are also be-ing, but be-ing of certain quality, order and location in the world. The metaphysical interpretation of be-ing is a shift to a lower level, a mistake in the question of the truth of beyng, according to Heidegger: first, beyng is concealed by Heaven and the Gods (God), and with Plato the Gods conceal themselves behind eternal ideas; beyng becomes forgotten and alienated.

²⁶ See M. Heidegger, “The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics.”

Here comes the philosopher and philosophy as a question about the truth of beyng. Is a philosopher a mage? He is not. Is the philosopher a priest of any God? Yes and no. The philosopher knows about the Gods, he remembers them and is present along with them, he praises them and makes sacrifices, but his original questioning is focused on the truth of beyng. The Gods are not pure beyng, but they are related to it by questioning, as well as people. The gods are interested in beyng, and man (philosopher) is its shepherd. For the priesthood, the question of beyng finds its answers within the Gods and the sacred, while for the philosopher, beyng is a question both for the Gods and for himself.

We came close to calling things by their proper names: for the priesthood, the truth of being is the Divine sacred, which is the Sein-being of the world. The philosopher knows *another sacral: the question of the truth of beyng, which concerns him as much as the Gods*. The sacral of the priest is the knowledge *of the Gods*, but the Gods themselves have *their own vibrant sacred*, which is also known to a special breed of people — philosophers. The sacred Seyn is before and without the Gods, the pure element from which the Gods derive their sacredness. In the case of the priest and the philosopher, we are dealing with two different depths of the sacred.

Everything that concerns myth and tradition rests on be-ing, be it matter or a special kind of be-ing — the Gods and the Divine, from which in monistic mythology everything comes. This is metaphysical human thinking. But in ecstasy, a philosopher opens (can open) the Divine thinking about the other, about what is neither material nor is in any other way: through it, beyng opens. But the Gods/God are neither beyng, nor pure tangible be-ing.

Gods and man are two kinds of special be-ing that are concerned with beyng. The questioning of priests is confined to be-ing, whether it be the be-ing of material things or the be-ing of the Gods. In this perspective, beyng appears as non-be-ing, something not belonging to the manifested world, as Nothingness.

We see two types of the sacred: Sein-being of metaphysics, Gods and ideas, and Seyn-beyng as Nothingness. Both are being, but being as Sein is limited to the metaphysics of different manifestations, while beyng as Seyn is paradoxically “present-here” as Nothing, as nothing-of-this-world, but permeating it and bringing it to existence. In Heidegger’s language, the division into Sein/Seyn appears later, in early works only Sein is used. The introduction of the old form of the word “being,” Seyn, is due to the emphasis of the difference and the indication of the profundity of the question of true beyng. Sein and Seyn are not two different autonomous beings, but one being in different accents and modes of questioning; Seyn is beyng in its fundamental ontological understanding (in the understanding of Heidegger himself), and Sein is an ontic and ontological (metaphysical) understanding of the same beyng.

Being is always present in language in the form of predicates: German *ist, wesen, west*, English *is/was*, Icelandic *er/ert/var*, Russian *бы/есть/суть*, and so on. In a language we always deal with being, it is present in the constructions of the language and permeates it. At the same time, the use of the predicate of being is better preserved in the Germanic languages, and in Russian it is almost lost in the course of its development. Through these verbs, being is emphasized in the language; “language is the house of being,” says Martin Heidegger²⁷.

What is the correspondence between philosophy and myth conveyed by the priesthood? In Plato and the Greeks, we see the opposition of philosophy to myth, logos to Mythos. In *The Republic*, Plato opposes myths that teach citizens fiction and not something good and harmonious. Plato reaches the conclusion that poets should be expelled from the ideal state. This reveals the philosopher’s radical solar Apollonianism; he cannot stand poets close to the twilight realms, who show too much freedom in their handling of words and language

²⁷ But in his diaries M. Heidegger warns that the reduction of the question of Beyng to only the verbal link leads away from the problem. See M. Heidegger “Reflections II–VI (Black Notebooks 1931–1938).”

and summon phantasms into presence, confusing young people and leading them astray from the path of duty and good. With all that, Plato does not forget about the Gods, does not call for theomachy or atheism, but the role of the Gods in his utopia is insignificant.

Another approach would be mytho-sophy or philo-mythy, that is, in the wisdom of the myth or the love of myth or tradition, to the union of mythical and philosophical knowledge as different noncontroversial hypostases of wisdom, reflecting, manifesting and disrupting, permeating and speaking to each other. This approach was implemented by Emperor Julian the Faithful and his Neoplatonic cult of Helios, or Plotinus and neoplatonics. We use the same approach — Dionysian, open to immersion and the search for commonalities and differences, the search for Emptiness hidden behind the manifestations of entities. The word “myth” (the Ancient Greek μῦθος) means “story” or “narrative.” Regardless of the “reality” or “non-reality” of what the poet or the storyteller tells. And we do not “believe or disbelieve” this story, but listen to it and listen to what speaks itself out in it, and to the above — the quiet and speechlessness that allow [by guiding the legend into the openness of silence] the myth to be told.

The priest is closer to the poet, he invokes the Deity in verse, urges it to manifestation as presence-here. The priest is closer to a practitioner (praxis as human activity), the magician, the Theurgist. But the philosopher contemplates, his praxis is theoresis, contemplation and proper thinking about the truth of beyng. The poet brings being to things through word, makes them present by extracting words from the bowels of non-be-ing, like the Norns. The philosopher is concerned with the unconcealment of this beyng, directing his thinking into the non-concealment of its truth — that is, the achievement of the authenticity of the existence of here-being, Da-sein.

Heidegger repeatedly talks about the mutual interest of philosophers and poets in the existence of each other — for example, in this way:

Je seltener die Dichter, desto einsamer die Philosophen. / So ergeht die Zeit

The rarer are poets, the lonelier are philosophers. Thus time goes by.²⁸

We remember that poetry and philosophy rise to the same height on different mountain peaks²⁹. The ecstatic structure of German poetry, the etymological connection with the As Odin, with ecstasy and inspiration make the German-Scandinavian tradition threaded by its hidden inner part that feeds it on all levels but at the same time differs from the militaristic nature of the Germans manifested in the world.

Behind Odin's external manifestations — the names that make Him exist in the nine worlds — there is a non-existent apophatic centre, a Void that is also inherent to man. Man is the boundary between the world of things and Nothingness. From the Nothingness, the poet and the priest draw the words for the production of be-ing, through words in poetry and invocation of the Gods through spells and calling their names. The philosopher is aware of his liminality, being equally open both to be-ing and to Nothingness. Here we find the convergence of the priest, philosopher and poet — in their borderline nature and their link to Nothingness. But Nothingness, the German *Nichts*, is not be-ing, which means *nothing-of-the-things-being* and *nothing-of-the-existing*, and nothing of the be-ing even as Gods; Nothingness is the pure deep and living element of beyng as such. Out of Nothing-beyng through war-as-the-father-of-all there manifests the Fourfold (*das Geviert*).

Completing this circle, we come back to the following:

28 This verse from Heidegger's poem is recalled by the Orthodox philosopher Tatyana Goricheva from her personal correspondence with the philosopher.

29 In the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger reflects that it is possible to reach the top of one mountain only by jumping on it from the top of another, where a person, in turn, has already been put; that is, his nature is initially given to him. This tells us not only about the equality of the peaks [of poetry and philosophy], but also about the way of turning (moving) between them: it does not go through the descent-and-ascent, but through the jump and dart.

- (I) all the names of Odin make Him a God be-ing in different manifestations;
- (II) in his centre, Odin has no names and is not be-ing; there is Emptiness, and there is Nothing [of things that are];
- (III) this duality is inherent in man, making him the boundary between be-ing and Nothingness;
- (IV) the poet and the priest draw words from Nothingness to endow things with being;
- (V) the thinker is also focused on Nothingness and the bringing-forth of the word into being, however not in practice but in theory;
- (VI) Nothingness is the pure element of Seyn (*“das Seyn ist das Nichts,”* according to Heidegger);
- (VII) in his centre, beyond all names, Odin “bears” Nothingness-Seyn; man is the border between being and Seyn, man is the “shepherd of being”;
- (IX) God, man, poet, priest and philosopher have a common axis (“the closest peaks” of Hölderlin);
- (X) the thinking of the German first caste — priests, philosophers and poets — has common features and strategies when turned inwards.

* * *

Resume: the German Being-in-the-World is war, and war is the basis of beyng, but the element of beyng itself is Nothingness. The warrior daylight thinking is dual, it operates through oppositions and does not let the twilight thinking in. In the twilight zone, in the inner being of the German Logos, a different pole is found, which is hidden, concealed by the dominant daytime warrior discourse. The shamanic side of Odin is the paradigm of this inner German and his thinking.

The external manifestation of the cult of Odin is militancy and death in battle with his name on one's lips, the afterlife in Valhalla and the subsequent eschatological battle with the Jötunns in Ragnarök. The internal manifestation of Odin is the ecstatic, amazed shamanic dance in poetical rhythm of words-brought-here-from-Nothingness. For the outer cult, a glorious death is a death with a sword in hand, death in battle. For the inner manifestation, death is the acquisition of wisdom, it is going-out-of-mind perceived as one's own death. This allows us to better interpret the myth of Odin sacrificing himself to himself. Collin Cleary in the article "What God did Odin worship?" asks if the As in the person of Odin sacrificed himself to some other God, who is his own deeper and darker self? Cleary does not name him, but poses the question. In our immersion, we discovered that behind the many names of Odin a void is concealed, a Nothingness. And the same Nothingness is the element of being.

And again we find some duality, but not a dual opposition of the presence of the external and the concealed in the names of the manifested Odin and the unmanifested, non-present, nameless "Odin" as Emptiness. This God, dual in his origin, not being a sum of components, resides on the top of the German and Scandinavian Pantheon. Some researchers argue that the reign of the cult of Odin is the result of the late shift of the strict solar and military cult of As Thur that loses its power and its former status, which is reflected in the myths about the capture of Fenrir and the battle with the hound Garm as a mirrored and diminished reflection of the battle of Odin with the Wolf in Ragnarök.

The episode with Tyr illustrates that cunning and deception fail in the battle with the enemy when applied by a strictly militant God. The nature of Tyr is so alien to the strategy of tricksterism that if he resorts to an unfair maneuver he immediately loses everything, unlike Odin whose nature combines both ways. At the same time, the dark Odinic paradigm of thinking, when it comes into conflict with chthonic forces, still takes the Divine side and overcomes the Jötunns,

not by the power of the sword but by wisdom, cunning and tricksterism. The daylight external and nightly internal manifestations of the twilight German Logos [in the reign of Odin and his paradigm] are on the same side on the battlefield of Ragnarök.

Odin as the paradigm of the German-Scandinavian tradition and the German Logos constitutes both the bipolar German Sein/Seyn and the anthropology of the German as a boundary of being and Nothingness, its apophatic center. The change of the Apollonian Thur for the Dionysian Odin tells us that the German Logos is the Dionysian Logos, in which the manifestation of the existential Dasein of being-in-the-world (*In-der-Welt-Sein*) is of a warrior nature concealing the twilight zone.

For a militant German to be is to be-at-war; for a priestly German to be is to-be-in-ecstatic-dance, in wonder. For a philosopher of German blood and language to be is to contemplate (in theosis) their own Void or to face Nothing, or to think the unconcealment of the truth of beyng. These are the ways of the authentic existence of Dasein facing its finiteness.

To sum up, the four interconnected postulates of the other inner German thinking are as follows: the rhythmic concealing and narrating poetry, the ecstatic shamanic frenzy, the noetic transgression (wonder), and the desire for wisdom through death.

V

Being-Towards-Death

DASEIN IS FINITE. Da-sein is the being of man, his presence here, being-here. In other translations, Dasein is the presence, existence or being of man. And this being-here of man is finite. Mortality is a fundamental inherent feature of human existence. The gods are eternal and immortal, and only man knows that he is mortal and that he will die, that he can die at any moment. The awareness of one's mortality is the main definition of the essence of man as such: an existence facing its death and aware of its mortality. And this reality cannot be undone. The Dasein of man is mortal, and this is expressed in his existential Being-to-Death, *Sein-zum-Tode*.

But the knowledge and constant awareness of one's death, the constant standing face to face with death, is a traumatic and unbearable knowledge and existence. And man turns away from being-to-death, mortality does not fill his life, he moves away from its presence and begins to soften it. Here begins the difference in the existence of the being-here of man. Dasein can be "one's own" and "not one's own" (the word derives from the German and Icelandic words *eigene* and *uneigene*). The verb *eigene* means to appropriate and to make something one's own. In Russian, the word "property" (*sobstvennost*) includes the root "sob," which points to "I," "self," *selbst*, one's own. *Uneigene* is not-private, not one's own, "not mine."

In translation of these Heideggerian terms regarding Dasein, the words “authentic” and “non-authentic” are used. Dasein exists authentically when it is focused on Sein, on beingness, in the structure of Da-Sein. Man exists authentically only when his being-here is focused on the possibility of being. And to be always means to-be-to-death, as Dasein of man is the inevitability of his death.

The non-authentic existence of being-here makes one avert one’s eyes from death and makes them escape from the finiteness of life. In this mode, Dasein is non-authentic and not focused on its Self and the truth of its being-here. The non-authentic Dasein is a strategy of euphemisation of the problem of death. If a person exists as a person only when he is turned to death, then turning away from death — the non-authentic existence of Dasein — generates a certain sub-human existence, which Heidegger defined as *das Man* — “the anyone.” *Das Man* is a kind of man, as the word *man* in the Germanic languages means just “man” or “anyone,” but it is not a man (German: *Mann*) who *is*; it is someone who simply *exists* separately from his essence. It is the common “simple humanity,” a mass of individuals who have forgotten themselves. *Das Man* is the modern faceless and senseless man who has escaped from death and from being in the mediocrity of his mass nature.

In the best case scenario, though in general in the same case, a person thinks about the approaching death as the flow of his time to a certain point of death in the future or about the ways of the afterlife, if we are talking about the traditional worldview. These are two ways of thinking — before-death and after-death, but both of them ignore the point itself, the immediate moment of death not as the process of dying but as the instantly slashing here-death. This point of death must stand before thinking as a strong wall of the concentration of being. It is neither before-death nor after-death, but here-death that defines everything.

Death as the core of the authentic Dasein generates Horror (*Angst*). It is not the fear of something or the presence of something

terrible, but the objectless element of horror. When one is *afraid*, he is afraid of something present; he can find and comprehend the object and the cause of his fear, objectify and overcome it. The element of *horror*, on the contrary, is objectless, the cause and basis of horror cannot be grasped due to a lack of such, for this reason it is even more terrible, terrible to death.

The fear of death is the basic and generally the only human fear that is refracted into a variety of different phobias and psychopathologies softening and covering the primal horror in culture and society. Moreover, modern and post-modern culture profanes death and creates an ironic and ridiculous image of death as a person and as an event. The images and strategies of the “funny Death” in culture are designed to assist *das Man* in his flight from death, helping him to believe in his immortality in different variations or in that everything is meaningless and death does not put the question of being-here before man.

The cult of hedonism and entertainment absorb and interpret death as a form of leisure (game violence, murder, snuff movies, *A Serbian Film*, *Hostel*) or enjoyment (sadism, self-destruction and self-violence, suicide as an attention-seeking method, suicide as a “why not?”, snuff again, *Natural Born Killers*, etc.). It all blurs and clouds the here-death as the centre of concentration of attention and the way to *er-eigene des Da-Sein*.

In Germanic languages, death is denoted by words that originate from the Germanic root **daup̥u*: Icelandic *dauði*, German *Tod*, English *death*, Norwegian and Danish *død*, Gothic *daup̥s*. According to Magnusson, in Icelandic the word *dauður* (killed or dead) is related to the word *dá*, which means “to faint,” “to be unconscious,” “to be like in a dream.” That is, death is close to the state of non-consciousness limited in time, such as nighttime sleep. At the Icelandic pole of the German Logos, death is as if covered by fog (German *Nebel*); it is a little blurred, and therefore it seems that it is a dream and it “will

pass with time.” Does this ethereal misty cover of death exist in the German-Scandinavian tradition itself?

Death in German Tradition

In the Sayings of the High One, one refrain and one sense is twice repeated : everything dies; you are mortal; eternal life is in the glory of your deeds. The German-Scandinavian tradition in the speeches of its main warrior-shaman deity Odin instructs all people in the truth: you are mortal and everything will die.

76.

Cattle die,
and kinsmen die,
And so one dies one's self;
But a noble name
will never die,
If good renown one gets.

76.

Deyr fé,
deyja frændr,
deyr sjalfr it sama,
en orðstírr
deyr aldregi,
hveim er sér góðan getr.

77.

Cattle die,
and kinsmen die,
And so one dies one's self;
One thing now
that never dies,
The fame of a dead man's deeds.

77.

Deyr fé,
deyja frændr,
deyr sjalfr it sama,
ek veit einn,
at aldrei deyr:
dómr um dauðan hvern.

The German ethos is thanatocentric and warlike. All that interests the German in the world is war and death; a battle is a confrontation with one's face turned to death. Germanic warriors bring death to the world, they produce it. But this production does not have the capitalist factory nature familiar to us today. The production of death by warriors is a removal or a here-bringing of death on the edge of the sword and spear. Conquests, tributes, power, lands and women are secondary derivatives, “the deathly gifts” to those who incarnated it in the world and brought the harvest to the Valkyries.

The first line of each verse repeats: *Deyr fé*. What is *fé* in this line? The translation says it means “herds” or “cattle.” The rune *Fehu* \mathfrak{F} has the same meaning, which is also interpreted in the sense of “property” or “possessions”; it also stands at the head of the phonetic series of the Elder and Younger Futhark. It is similar to the α letter, which in turn dates back to the Phoenician “Aleph” with a similar meaning of “bull.” *Fé* is not only cattle or herds, but also wealth and well-being. And it is transient, mortal, it goes away like everything else. The first line of verses 76 and 77 can be interpreted as a direct indication of the futility of accumulating anything: first your cattle, which is your wealth, will die; then your family, and finally, you will be killed yourself.

Even skalds, speaking of events from the life of settlements, distant and near lands, heroes, konungs or ordinary people, are focused on feuds, death, revenge and executions. According to A. Gurevich, “The behavior in the face of death, the words spoken in the hour of death — that is what constantly preoccupies the Germans when they turn their thoughts to their characters”¹. The death of a hero at the end of a song or a saga is a beautiful, happy ending. A glorious death is better than a glorious life. In verse 77, the word *dómr* is used, which means “court, judgment.” This is an indication of the idea of posthumous judgment, which is held not by the Gods but by people — if the acts of a man were worthy and glorious, they (community, society) give him immortality in the body of society in the form of unfading glory and memory.

At a joint seminar with Heidegger on Heraclitus, Eugene Fink cites the 29th passage of Heraclitus:

αἰρεῦνται ἀντία ἐν γὰρ πάντων οἱ ἀριστοί, κλέος ἀέναον θνητῶν, οἱ δὲ
πολλοῖκεκόρηνται ὄκωσπερ κτήνεα.

1 See A. Y. Gurevich, “Edda and Saga.”

The best people renounce all for one goal, the eternal fame of mortals; but most people stuff themselves like cattle.²

Fink quotes this passage to consider the relationship between the One and the many. Glory is an aspiration to stand in the brilliance and light separate from the world of the majority, which refers to the images of the sun, fire and lightning (logos). The aristocratic aspiration to the light of glory is the way against the crowd and many; that is, the way towards the One.

For the German, there is only one worthy death — with a weapon in his hands. A straw death is shameful, a dishonorable death is shameful, an unavenged death is shameful. Even suicide as an honourable way out is acceptable and welcome. As reported by Latin historians, even women participate in the war and, if they have to retreat, prefer death by the sword of their own husbands to slavery or just staying alive.³ The German being is as tense as possible, focused on death and the whole world's finiteness; the German in the world is always looking for death, constantly thinking about it and how to die properly and worthily. And on this path he is patronized by his native Gods.

In the matter of death, the main As is Odin once again — he is the God who protects war and death in war; he is the leader of the Valkyries — the maidens who conduct the fallen Einheries to Valhalla for the battle of Ragnarök; he is the one who acquires wisdom through death, and he is the dying As of the German tradition, sacrificing himself to himself. Among the names of Odin, the vast majority are related to war, battle and death: Val-tyr, Val-föðr, Val-gautr and others. Odin absorbs and unites (as Alda-föðr, the All-father) the centre-lines of the German Logos: war, ecstasis and death.

The goddess of death is Freya the Vanadis, the leader of the Valkyries, bearing the names of the Lady of the Dead or the Mother

2 See M. Heidegger, E. Fink, "Heraclitus."

3 See "Ancient Germans. The History of Latin-German Wars in the Descriptions of Ancient Historians."

of the Fallen, the Widow, and the wife of the human manifestation of Odin — Oda. The Gods of death are a couple known as Valföðr and Valamoður.⁴ In this case, the female figure of the Goddess of Death manifests in two aspects of the upper castes: Freya is the leader of the Valkyries (the military aspect) and at the same time a master of Seiðr (the shamanic aspect); that is, she is structurally identical to the figure of Odin, taking into account the gender and clan (Vanadis) difference in the myth. In other words, we again meet the indissoluble connection of the daytime warrior and the nighttime ecstatic principles.

The view of death through the eyes of the priests is less expressed in the German tradition. The classic initiatory myth of Odin's self-sacrifice on the Yggdrasil, when he discovered the secret of the runes, is paradigmatic here. The traditionalist view says that in this caste death is always understood as initiation — the initiation into knowledge or a different state of being (spiritual ascent). From this point of view, the stories of arguments of the Aesir with the Jötunns and dwarfs become initiatic narratives like the myth of the Mead of Poetry and many other stories of descents into the lower worlds, journeys through the woods (Myrkviðr) and meetings with Jötunns and spirits. Here death acts as a guide and harbinger of change and knowledge if the hero stands the test. Otherwise, he will face an unenviable fate similar to the fate of Attar.

But this is the first part of the verse; the second part in different words tells one thing: by one's deeds, one can gain eternal glory, which is his immortality. Here the traditional euphemism of the warrior caste comes into force — finding immortality in the glory of one's deeds, heroism or tragic fate. Skalds will sing songs about the heroes and glorify them through the ages, bringing the essence of being-towards-death from the death itself to immortality through eternal glory.

4 Or Valföðr and Valkyrja as the original personal name of Freya. See N. A. Ganina, "Valkyrie: the Genesis of the Myth and the Specifics of the Ancient Germanic Areal Traditions."

For farmers and craftsmen (or, broadly speaking, the representatives of the third caste, according to Dumézil), the path to immortality runs through procreation. The ancestral cult, perhaps more vividly present in Russian than in German culture, grants immortality in one's descendants who will remember him and continue his bloodline in this world, which includes the practice of rebirth (*aptrburðr*) of the deceased through giving his name to his descendants.

Warriors' immortality also involves the cult of the heir, son and dynasty, as well as the avenging son, like Vidar, Vali and partly Fenrir. An example of the rebirth of a person in the family is Starkard from the "Gautreks Saga" or Tord from the "Saga of Tord the Scarecrow." But the outstanding warrior, hero and konung gain immortality in their own lifetimes through the "glory of worthy deeds" and their company. Death is moved away to the existential background already in the "Song of Atli" or "Lay of Atli," where the murdered Gunnar, thrown into a well full of snakes, and his torment are immediately glorified in song, because his fate is worthy to be told by skalds.

And this obscures the severity of the *Sein-zum-Tode*: existential, gradually bringing Dasein from authenticity to non-authenticity, when great fame starts resounding during one's lifetime, becomes an end in itself and is transmitted to the lower castes and groups in a deformed condition. Hence the "charm" of bourgeois success stories of the nouveau riche, along with the recent postmodernist discourse of "personal history" with its "five minutes of virtual fame."

Even the priestly perception of death as an initiation that promises knowledge in case of success and battles and feasts, the battle of Ragnarök and the skalds singing of their exploits and bravery. In the worst case, they are awaited in the dull underworld of the Titaness Hel, where souls will roam like shadows (basically, such is the modern world now).

The nerve of the German tradition is death and everything related to it; it connects everything. The German is equally thanatocentric in battle, in ecstasy, in life and in the afterlife (life *after* death). The

authenticity of Dasein is derived from this focus on death, but within the traditional metaphysics, at the very last and important moment of here-death, the mind slips from the edge of attention and loses its concentration on death, quickly switching to the afterlife.

A more subtle and intense attention to death than in warriors is found in priests and philosophers, but it is almost unexpressed in the tradition and is not draped in words. The myth of Odin's self-sacrifice is focused on his subsequent knowledge of the runes; that is, his death is clouded by the transition from the sacrifice to the runes. To whom does Odin sacrifice himself? Cleary's question could shed light on a different understanding of the myth, to leave the great finding of the runes for later and to concentrate entirely on the death and what it opens to us, — the Emptiness of Nothingness beyond all the names of Odin. To grasp this Nothingness, one needs to go-out-of-Mind, which means his death. And again we return to the words *dá* and *dauður*, for the ecstatic going-out-of-Mind is a kind of temporary staying outside the ordinary daylight consciousness, similar to a dream. A moment of the ecstatic dying *to* authenticity.

Gods and Death

Among the key definitions of the Gods, Heidegger indicates their immortality, along with their almost ephemeral lightness and timidity of man and his rudeness.

In the structure of *das Geviert*, Gods and people are located on the same axis, and between them is war, as well as in the basis of the four-fold. The traditionalist doctrine postulates an essential relationship between Gods and men. But Martin Heidegger notes an asymmetry in the natures of men and Gods. People are rough, crude and material, being located at the bottom of the cross of the fourfold, together with the Earth. And men are mortal. Gods are light-hearted, carefree, and they care very little for the people and their problems; they coexist with Heaven on top of the cross of *das Geviert*. And they are immortal.

The state of war between Gods and people is unusual and uncharacteristic of the world of Tradition. Yes, the Gods have never played the role of some entities too concerned with protecting humans; sometimes they made cruel jokes or tested people, but in general we cannot say that people and Gods are sworn enemies in the Tradition. Only heroes of semi-divine nature like Hercules struggle with the Gods, and their challenge is the affirmation of their heroic nature and the overcoming of man. As a reward, they are often finally deified. The situation becomes clear if we delve into Heidegger's thought in more detail. In the structure of *das Geviert*, life is located between Gods and people. The gods, says Heidegger, need *beyng*. It is not higher than the Gods, as the Gods themselves are not higher than *beyng*, but through it they are who they are. The gods derive their Divine being from *beyng*. And so they philosophize, as they are concentrated on *beyng* and making ontological decisions ("the Aesir at the *Thing*"). But *beyng* itself needs people as those who will guard and "shepherd" it. A man is a neighbour of *beyng* who dwells near it and bears witness to its truth. These two provisions — of Gods and men — constitute the fourfold together with the axis of Heaven and Earth.

Only a person authentically existing in *Da-Sein* can witness the truth of *beyng*, where all the attention of thinking and existence is focused on *Sein*. A non-authentic *Dasein* gives rise to a non-human crowd of *das Man*, the modern common person without qualities. Such *das Man* is brilliantly described by Nietzsche as "the last man who listens and blinks" in the speeches of Zarathustra. It is this last man who commits the murder of God, in which Nietzsche shows the final long-accomplished entrance of man into the modern emasculated era deprived of Tradition. This last person, to whose image we can also add the *Gestalt* of Ernst Jünger's Titanic Worker, is an open enemy of the Gods and of their order — of the world of Tradition. He violently attacks the Heaven with his Promethean machinery, and the delicate Gods flee from a world ruled by such a man and his production.

But as for authentically existing man, the Gods may encounter him in a different way. Man can catch a glimpse of their dance, their subtle presence in the forests, in the mountains and in river waters. He may face them and frighten them away, but he does not wish them death and destruction and he does not wish to drive them away. It is just that the Gods always flee from humans. While poets and philosophers themselves run away from the Gods, so as not to frighten them in their subtle being-here.

The escaping Gods are not dying Gods, and the cry “God is dead” rather reflects the crude naivety of *das Man*, who is actually the only one who has truly died because he has never lived (according to Yevgeny Golovin). Man who “killed” or drove the Gods away dies the inglorious bleak death as the bearer of an inauthentic existence. Gods are immortal, but man defeats them and drives from the World (*Welt*). But what if the Gods attack man?

The Gods attack effortlessly, as if they were *playing*. The Greeks, from Heraclitus to Socrates and Plato, spoke of a special entity guiding man, especially the philosopher — the *daimon*, from which the negative word “demon” and Christian possessions by demons are derived. *Daimon* is a God who leads man, captivates him and brings him to the contemplation of the revealed truth. When the Gods attack man, they awaken his *daimon*, his own Deity, which refrains and keeps him in the ecstasy of contemplation of the truth. Man loses the war because a God wakes up in him. And then man begins to philosophize. In order to overcome and to get rid of the Gods, man must dive into the elements of alienation, to accept materialism as a religion and machinery as his destiny, to clutter the nature and the world around with technology, production and gadgets, to see the world as a resource and the skies as something that must be conquered or littered with planes and satellites. The victory of man over the Gods is heavy, technical and rough — it is the Titanic victory of Prometheus. And the Gods? The Gods defeat man easily, *playfully*, just making a slight movement

in his direction — and then man is illuminated by the horror of the Divine Self.

But at the same time, man does not become immortal; his bodily mortality does not abandon him when the inner *Daimon* awakens. Thus, it can be seen that the experience of death is open to the Gods through man⁵, as the experience of Divine Eternity is open to man through the *Daimon*. This is evidenced by Heraclitus in his enigmatic fragment № 62, which should not be analyzed but rather contemplated:

ἀθάνατοι θνητοί, θνητοὶ ἀθάνατοι, ζῶντες τὸν ἐκείνων θάνατον, τὸν δὲ ἐκείνων βίον τεθνεῶτες.

Immortal mortals, mortal immortals, one living the others' death and dying the others' life.

The gods of *das Geviert* need *Seyn* to be themselves; the fire in the centre of the intersection of the Heaven–Earth and the Gods–man lines is their hearth around which they gather at the *thing*. Man guards this hearth fire of *Seyn*. But to make man something that he should be — that is, not *das Man*, “the last man” — the Gods attack him and awaken the *Daimon* in him. And then the philosophizing man can (this is still undetermined: he may decide or not) turn his thinking to death and to exist in *Dasein* authentically: to witness the truth of being and to be its shepherd.

Gods die when the real philosophizing man dies; they are banished by the “blinking worker.” But when the “last man” dies, it is only then that the real man lives — the Divine *Daimon* within him. Again, death is the key to the truth.

* * *

5 Despite the obvious parallel with the figure of Christ, ontologically and structurally we are talking about very different doctrines and paradigms, so just in case, we warn against the superficial involvement of this image in our context.

The Gods of Martin Heidegger do not belong to any tradition or religion; it is not the God of creationism and not the position of atheism or the mechanical deistic approach. Deities are metaphysical hierarchies of names. Although, judging by the description of Heidegger, his Gods resemble the graceful Gods of the Hellenic Apollonian harmony.

The Germanic Gods are more severe, they are organic to the harsh land over which they reside, on which the militant Germanic peoples live, and the gloomy Heaven where they live. A comparative glance can tell that the Germanic gods are more “Titanic,” they are clearly harder and harsher than the Gods of the soft and warm Hellas. Germany is all forests, swamps and mountains, Scandinavia is mountains, sea, ice and wasteland. The Gods of the Greeks are largely idle and detached, while the Aesir are more existentially tense; they are not the Gods of cloudless sunny days and games in the meadow and near the stream — they are the Gods of the eschatological twilight⁶. In the myth, the Germanic Gods are dying. All the attention of Odin, Thor, Heimdall, and closer to the climax, of all the Gods is focused on the fates of the Aesir and of the world, the *Endkampf*, which is inherited by the warlike Germanic peoples aspiring to fall on the field of battle, and to enter Valhalla and the field of Vigrid.

In the Hellenic tradition, there is only one dying and resurrecting God — Dionysus, and his death at the hands of the Titans who tore him apart has different interpretations, from the initiatic and shamanic understanding (the tearing of the shaman’s body by spirits) to the paradigmatic context of a special Logos. In the German-Scandinavian tradition, Odin is close to Dionysus — he is also a dying and resurrecting God of metamorphosis and ecstasy, but the Titans do not participate in the myth of his self-sacrifice on Yggdrasil. However, not only the rising Odin dies: in Ragnarök, so do all the Aesir and Vanir who come onto the field of Vigrid.

⁶ See the series of illustrations to Norse mythology by Arthur Rackham.

Does this mean that the Germanic Gods die completely, that after Ragnarök the world becomes godless, devoid of the sacred, *das Heilige*? The ending of the Prophecy of the Völva clearly and unambiguously tells us: after the death of many Aesir, many others will continue to live. Baldr, the As closest in image to the Olympians, and his antipod Höd will return from the concealment of Helheim. Hönir takes the lot of his brothers Odin and Lóðurr. The Aesir come together and re-arrange the world. Alive are also the people who took refuge in the woods, and even the Titans — the dragon Níðhöggr. The battle on the Vigrid field is the war that renews the world and the time cycle. It involves an agricultural motif: procreation as immortality and the return of Baldr as the God of Spring and the son of Odin; the immortal glory of warrior deeds and initiatory sacrifices (verses 60 and 64 of the Prophecy of Völva).

So who dies in Ragnarök? In Ragnarök, the Divine as such does not go anywhere, but the names of the Gods, the Aesir and the Vanir, the words that had led them to being, become silent and disappear in non-being together with the Gods. Some manifestations called by name-words leave the world, and others come.⁷ One of the answers is that the old generation of the Aesir and the Vanir are dying, and their place is taken by the young Gods. There comes a new cycle of time, a new structure of the nine worlds, new young Gods, and Odin hiding behind different names again.

⁷ Baldr as a Divine figure who appeared in the myth long before his reign.

VI

The Concealment of the Abyss

In the German-Scandinavian tradition, this topic is mentioned once, in the Poetic Edda, at the very beginning of the story of the Völva about the origin of the universe, and is quoted by Snorri in the Prose Edda. There is no greater attention and immersion into the theme of the Abyss in the historically known heritage of the German-Scandinavian tradition. But how exactly and in what context is the Abyss mentioned in the Edda? What does this remembrance of the beginning of the universe tell us in the light of the German Logos and the environment of its Emptiness? What exactly does the Völva say? She says:

3.
Of old was the age
when Ymir lived;
Sea nor cool waves
nor sand there were;
Earth had not been,
nor heaven above,
But a yawning gap,
and grass nowhere.

3.
Ár var alda
þar er Ýmir bygði,
vara sandr né sær
né svalar unnir,
jörð fannsk æva
né upphiminn,
gap var ginnunga,
en gras hvergi.

Gap var ginnunga or *Ginnungagap*—this name was assigned to the Abyss or Chaos that precedes the appearance of the Cosmos, the

universe, as in many Indo-European traditions. The original, pre-eternal entity described as “darkness,” “night [before the beginning of the world],” “ocean,” “water,” “abyss” is known in the Sumerian tradition as the embodiment of Tiamat, in the Greek one as Chaos, in shamanic myths as primal water, in the Chinese tradition as the primal being Hun-Dun, in various Hindu darshans as the Night of Brahma/Shiva, Parashiva in the aspect of Nirguna, etc. The Personified Chaos acts as a participant in myths about the appearance of the world through dismemberment (Hun-Dun) or coition with other, already secondary figures — Gods or Titans (Chaos, Tiamat, Shiva and Shakti). In Germanic mythology, Ginnungagap is not personified, it is not a figure of a myth, it is not involved in any events and is not later interpreted as the Great Mother, and in general is always beyond the narrative of the myth.¹ It is not dismembered like it happened with the late giant Ymir, from whose parts the Aesir created a structured universe. The abyss in the German tradition was simply there, and, without any rational logical cause and effect chain, as required by the modern consciousness of *das Man*, in the abyss there appeared the worlds Muspelheim and Niflheim, the difference and conflict between which generated life.

In all traditions, the primordial Night or Chaos appears at the dawn of cosmogony and no longer occupies the attention of ancient ancestors. The whole tradition is mainly focused on the events taking place in the ordered Cosmos; the myths are dominated by solar or, at least, lunar symbolism and orientation of society and culture. It is the Apollonian Logos and its exclusive directive and accent on the Cosmos, the vertical, order, harmony, being (Sein) and war. The Germanic tradition is no exception, so everything related to Ginnungagap is limited to a brief mention in the Eddas.

In the modern era, mainly in the second half of the XX century, the adepts of modern German-Scandinavian heathenry attempted

1 Perhaps, the continental German goddess Nerthus is closer to the image of the great Mother, but it is not developed in the myth either.

to turn the focus of the Tradition to this original entity. They are all united under the common name of the Left-Hand Path, although their doctrines and interpretations may differ significantly. The main characteristics of the Left-Hand Path are individuation, non-conformism, ecstasy and transgression. This sounds promising, or, at least, tells us about the similarities with the thinking of the priesthood. But the nuance is that in some cases the non-conformism of the Western school of the Left-Hand Path in modern Odinism is based on Christian and post-Christian (secular) conformism. This generates not something traditionalist but even more liberal and New Age syncretic teachings and images. This includes the attempts to “cross” the Path of the Left Hand with a simulacrum of Satanism and individual freedom, which is especially noticeable and prevalent in the paganism in the United States. According to W. Grimsson, the Western understanding of the Left-Hand Path is tightly connected with the subjective-objective dualism of Descartes, refracted in the light of the absolutely modern Satanism of the pop idol Anton LaVey. But in fact, the diversity of Western authors who explore the ways to the Abyss and the dark, previously hidden part of the German tradition reveals a monotony of approaches and limited thinking due to the heavy influence of the Modern and Postmodern *das Man* structures, through which only rare traditionalist guesses and theses about the internal dimension of the Germanic Logos filter through.² We have to admit that the mystical exoteric approach to the search for the path to the Abyss is irrelevant in the context of our maneuvers. In the context of traditionalism and modernity such approaches may be useful and interesting in the life stages of the German tradition, but they lead us away from the essence of words and language in the direction of mystical constructions and ritual praxis, while we are mainly interested in thinking and contemplation, theosis.

2 For a more detailed explanation of the nature of the Left-Hand Path and modern experience of its disclosure in the German-Scandinavian and other traditions, we refer the reader to the second volume of our work “Polemos.”

Engaging Etymology

The Greek word $\chi\acute{\alpha}\omicron\varsigma$ comes from the verb $\chi\acute{\alpha}\iota\nu\omega$, which means “to come asunder,” “to open,” “to gape.” $\chi\acute{\alpha}\omicron\varsigma$ is what is open, revealed, and it is an essential definition of the primal entity. That is, here, as in the case of the names of Odin or the words from the poem “The Word” by S. George, the word indicates a certain present characteristic of the original that has no characteristics, which are available for description. Chaos is $\chi\acute{\alpha}\omicron\varsigma$ only because it *gapes*, $\chi\acute{\alpha}\iota\nu\omega$.

What does the German-Scandinavian myth say about this? In the verse of the *Völva*, *Ginnungagap* is described as follows: *gap var ginnunga*. What is *gap*? What does *var* mean? What does the predicate *ginnunga* mean for the *gap*?

The word *gap* means the same as Greek $\chi\acute{\alpha}\omicron\varsigma$ —a gap, a rift, an empty space, a chasm. It is preserved in Scandinavian languages and modern English. Here we are faced with the same situation as the Hellenes—the situation of naming, bestowing a word to the abyss. But what does the construction of “*gap var*” mean? The word *var* is derived from the Icelandic verb *vera* (*að vera* is “to be” in English), which means “to be,” “to exist,” “to happen,” “to last.” The form *var* is the past simple form of the verb that usually speaks about events that happened before they are spoken about. The present tense of this verb is *er*. So, something was: the abyss was, the abyss happened, without any reasons or conditions—it simply and pre-temporarily entered into existence already in the form of a gap or an opening. There was the opening—*gap var*—and it was precisely because it opened apart and in this state found its existence in the word through *var*.

Why is the word “gap” used to indicate that something “came asunder” and was fixed in the word as such—revealed to the eye in its unfolding? This is how we understand a gap in everyday life: something, for example some fabric, was woven in one piece, and became torn as the result of some mistake. It was whole—and in a moment it became (the past tense again) torn with a gap of emptiness opened

in it. There is no temporary gradual process of “tearing” — the fabric is either whole or already with a gap that can increase or decrease, it is always either “not yet” or “already there.” In such a view, the whole fabric as a certain existence [or the fabric of a language, narrative or $\mu\acute{\upsilon}\theta\omicron\varsigma$] precedes the appearance of a gap that reveals the empty space to us — a gap of non-fabric, non-things, the emptiness of nothing.

Talking about the gap, we do not find any “canvas of being” prior to the very occurrence of the “gap” as it is at the very beginning of cosmogenesis. Here the order is reversed. How is the “gap” or “rift” in the fabric defined? The gap is a hole, an empty space in the wholeness of the fabric, framed by matter — the cloth fabric — on all its edges. That is, the gap itself is twofold: it is the fabric that frames the hole from all sides, and it is what the hole manifests itself in (instantly) as an empty space different from the fabric. The gap is a yawning void, which can only be expressed through the framing of its emptiness by something, the canvas of be-ing. And our ordinary consciousness is always fixed on this framing existence, on the fabric around the gap. Then we say “the cloth is torn,” “there is a hole.” We regret that the fabric is damaged, that it is no longer whole but already something defective that must be patched. But we do not see the emptiness of the gap, yawning and showing itself-in-concealment.

If we take a small cloth with a hole and look through this hole at a faraway forest, we will see in this hole the outlines of trees, perhaps one or two trees from the entire forest and a piece of the sky. If we remove the torn cloth from our eyes and look again, we will see more forest and more sky. But we do not notice the gap itself, the emptiness open in the fabric, through whose emptiness we can contemplate something. We see the gap and the emptiness only if it is limited by something, and this limitation gives us a hint of the emptiness. Without limitation, the everyday view does not perceive the emptiness. But even if the limitation is present, in the everyday life of everyday thinking, the eye is still focused on the frames surrounding the emptiness and not on the emptiness itself.

In the case of the *gap* in the cosmogony of the German-Scandinavian tradition, we also see the perception of the rift as already having certain frames, otherwise it would be impossible to speak about the presence of a “gap” as such: the emptiness is undiscernible without the canvas of be-ing framing it. If there was no such frame through which the eye and Mind can discern what is visible through the “gap,” then Nothingness would be impossible to formulate as a concept and a word in the Mind. However, it is possible to formulate the concept of the “gap” as “the empty space between the edges of a certain canvas [of be-ing],” which points to the rift as the original emptiness. Cosmogonically, this emptiness is prior to the fabric that in everyday reality first exists and then is instantly torn by emptiness. In cosmogenesis, the original Void (Gap) precedes everything, it *is-not* and is unformulated in a word, but is gradually covered by the canvas of be-ing from its edges and becomes possible to be limited by the concept and word: the Abyss needs boundaries (lat. *terminus*)³.

In the structure of the Edda’s verse, the mention of “*gap var gin-nunga*” is also limited to the above and below verses (2nd and 4th), which already speak of the presence of a certain be-ing, particularly Titanic. Thus, Völva’s story of the appearance of all things does not start with “in the beginning, the abyss was gaping,” but repeats the same framing of the void as a violation of logical sequence of manifestation of being and the creatures from the Abyss. First, the Völva says that she remembers the giants, the nine worlds and Yggdrasil, then she refers to the time that preceded it — she mentions the Abyss, and then returns to the description of the creation of the earth, the sun and so on. In short: two verses, the 2nd and the 4th, frame the third verse that speaks of the “gap” as the very edges of this break; and this is in accordance with the rules of the ancient versification, which allowed the rearrangement of parts of the sentences and phrases in

3 This reasoning is fully applicable to Greek χάος. We find a similar example of the usage of *gap* as a kind of emptiness in the name of Odin *Gapþrosnir* — “the one in gaping frenzy”; in the God’s name, *gap* points to the unconcealment.

favour of the rhythm. The fabric of be-ing stretches over the gap of the Abyss, taking it away from the attention of the Tradition and Mind. What we encounter as the hints to the Abyss is already formulated into terms; it is the indication of Emptiness and not the Emptiness itself. In the Tradition, after the Abyss there appear two edges, two extreme and primary poles — the world of ice Niflheim and the world of fire Muspelheim. Their expansion and movement towards each other leads to a collision, which becomes the primary conflict, generating a chain of other primeval beings. Niflheim and Muspelheim are the traditional *names* of the boundaries of the gap of the Abyss that *cover, drape and enclothe it*; it is the manifestation of φύσις and πόλεμος in the German tradition and the oblivion of the Gap — the Emptiness and Nothingness.

What does the predicate “[gap var] ginnunga” tell us? The word *ginnunga* is derived from the Icelandic verb *ginna*, or *ginnungar* in the ancient Norse form. This verb and its derivatives mean “to bewitch,” “to deceive,” “to fool” (according to Jan de Vries). *Gap var ginnunga* — the Abyss was bewitched/deceived or enchanted/enchanting. The Abyss did not just come into being through *var*, but its very coming into being is an enchantment and bewitchment of its truth. In the Russian language, a more poetic and stylistically natural translation of the verb “to enchant” (очаровывать, *ocharovyyvat*, from the word чары, *chary* — “charms,” “spells”) carries the connotations inherent in this word in the culture: *enchantment* is perceived as a state of entrancement and admired fascination (the admiration of a person captured by a phenomenon). According to this translation, the attention to the Abyss fascinates, grasps and stops the Mind contemplating it.

We have already discovered that the word “gap,” as well as the names of the Gods, indicates that we are dealing with a limited named aspect. But the Völva once again emphasizes that the manifestation of the Abyss at the beginning of cosmogony is a twofold bewitching by the word: the Abyss is not just *is* as a limiting word, but this word is a manifestation; the *placing-here* of the Abyss through the word once

again bewitches and deceives, including the one who uses this word. The Abyss appears in language and poetry as something concealed from the beginning. Its appearance is its concealment; it is concealed in its unconcealment, as all the attention of the Tradition is focused on the Cosmos, forgetting the Chaos.

The Abyss is the unconcealment-in-concealment by the bewitching word: *Ginnungagap*. All that the Tradition, through its language, tells us about the Abyss, is its presence unconcealed in the *word*, whose presence is bewitched and concealed by the repeated definition of it being “concealed.” This bewitches and diverts our attention from the subtle perception of the rift in the fabric of being and the Nothingness that is concealedly revealed in it. In fact, the Tradition does not tell us anything about the pre-existent Abyss because it cannot say anything about it at all. Any story of the Abyss is deception and enchantment. About the Abyss, nothing can be said at all, and bringing-forth of any words for “abyss” in poetry is a deception that imbues with existence only some single aspect, which only hints at its essence. And these hints are a double indication of deception in itself, but still they tell us: the Abyss was yawning open [and the verse’s message about this openness is already a concealment of the openness of the Abyss].

The speech of the Völva is expressed in a poem. Versification, or the practice of poesis, is the bringing-here, bringing-forth [producing] of words for the being of the existence. At that, poesis belongs to the realm of Dionysus, and thus poetry in its essence reveals-and-conceals. A special feature of German poetry is the ecstatic alliteration, which in our work points to the need for wonder, the going out of the Mind for “grasping” what is beyond the word. In Völva’s verse, alliteration is not strictly observed, but it is clearly present in two lines:

3.

Ár var alda
þar er Ýmir bygðí,
vara sandr né sær

né svalar unnir,
 jörð fannsk æva
 né upphiminn,
 gap var ginnunga,
 en gras hvergi.

We are facing the third layer of concealment and the fooling of the listener and reader when it comes to where the Völva is trying to say something about the Abyss. The concealment is expressed not only in the direct use of the word “to bewitch” and in the fixation of the Abyss in the word as something that *was* in a state of unconcealment, but also in the poetic alliterated form of expression of its primacy and a hidden indication of the ecstatic nature of its understanding.

If we cut off everything excessive, there will remain only two lines containing the quintessence of what was said about the Abyss in the speech of the Völva:

Ár var alda
 gap var ginnunga.

The structure of the alliteration is built around the verb “to be” in the past tense, *var*. A brief recording of the repeating phonemes would be a-v-a / g-v-g.

According to Henry Adams Bellows, whose translation of the Poetic Edda (1936) is quoted here, this fragment can be translated as “Of old was the age [when...] [... Earth had not been,] But a yawning gap.” This again repeats what we already know: at the very beginning of cosmogenesis there was an Abyss, and it was exactly like an unconcealment and an enchanting word. Again, its primacy is emphasized with respect to absolutely everything. The word *Ár* means “early,” “at the beginning” and “long ago.” Thus, the first version is: *Ár var* — “at first there was” or “long ago there was.” Was what? The word *alda* in Icelandic can be traced back to several original words: I) the word *elda* meaning “old age” or “getting old,” from which “the Elder Edda” comes; II) to the word *aldur*, meaning “age,” close in meaning

to *elda*. Based on the semantic meaning of the verse, we can say that in this translation “the age was at the beginning,” that is, the age was beginning itself, it was at the beginning of its growth, and time was beginning its course. The translation “in the beginning there was aging” forms the basis of a traditionalist hermeneutics, telling us that the universe began to decline from its very appearance, heading for aging and death — the regression and involution of centuries, according to Hesiod.

The Tradition says: something inexpressible had not just “been there” before the world began to manifest itself and to settle down, at the moment when time began to begin. The Tradition says that “something” had *not* “been there,” and even had “not-been” as “something,” but appeared in being as its concealment. Before the universe, there had been nothing that could be expressed in the word, in being. What the Tradition is trying to tell us about the Abyss is truly fascinating by the very impossibility of expressing and talking about it. We have only concealing, opaque hints — which are, however, very simple language constructs.

Engaging Semiotics

Semiotics is one of the structuralist sciences and a precursor of post-modernism. Engaging semiotics for making interpretations within the traditionalist framework is uncommon, especially in the context of the approach and encirclement of such an obscure and enigmatic entity as the Abyss. We pay great attention to the language, the etymology of Icelandic roots and the words found in the Eddas. Language is a semiotic system, so we will resort to its methods — in particular, to the structure of the semantic triangle of the German logician Friedrich Ludwig Gottlob Frege and the process of semiosis.

The corners of the triangle can be defined as follows:

I — the thing; the object of the objective or imaginary world (fairy tale, myth); the referent or the denotatum; designatum; the denoted; the name.

II — the phonetic or written word or sign (including the event, which also can be a sign); the symbol; the denoting; the signifier or reference.

III — the notion or concept; the meaning that links the denoted to the denoting; the significatum.

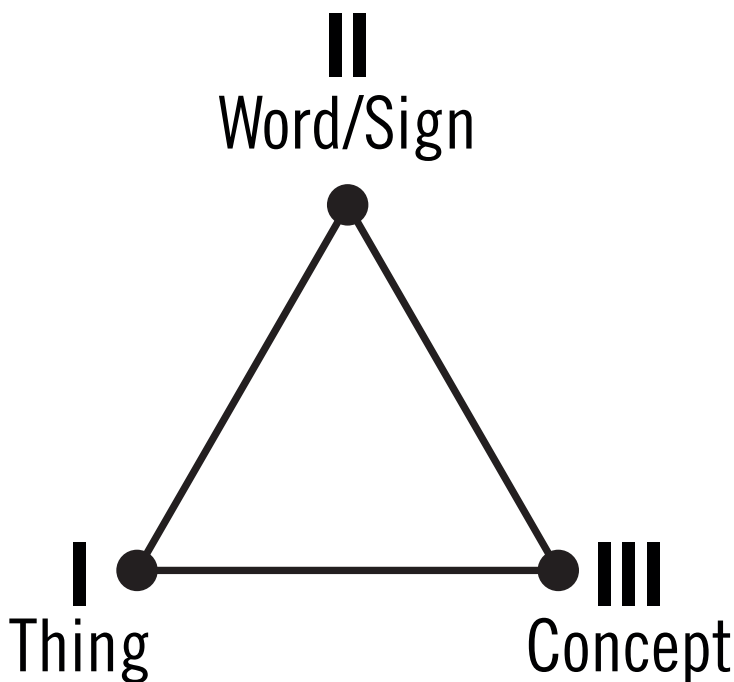


Figure 3.

The word or the sign, together with the notion or the meaning, constitute the sign in the broader sense of the word — that is, the sum of the expression and its content which comprise communication. Human thinking involves operations not with objective things and objects themselves but with the concepts of objects. The real thing is reflected

in the mind, forming a concept fixed in communication by a sign. The relations in the Frege triangle are as follows: the sign denotes the thing (II→I); the sign expresses the concept (II→III); the concept indicates the thing, an object of the real world (III→I). The semantic triangle is based on the principle of reference—the correlation of a sign or concept with a real thing or a sign with a concept. In the semiotic and linguistic reality, a thing can be denoted not by one but several signs or references; in other words, each object can be described through different concepts and their symbolic, textual or phonetic sign expressions, which forms the associative fields of the sign. The correlation of the sign and the real object is a reference. The act of reference is carried out by a person within the semiosis. In his consciousness, man establishes relations between concepts, signs and things, facts and objects of the objective or textual reality.

Frege's semiotic triangle works perfectly in the positivist paradigm of materialism, empiricism, and physicalism. And especially in the philosophy of the early Ludwig Wittgenstein (*The Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*): the "atomic fact," a strict correspondence of one exhaustive name to one thing or fact. We find some similarities to this even in ancient cynics with their immanent Universe and the denial of the Sacred harmony and order, who can be considered successors of the ancient materialism of Epicurus, Democritus (this chain of names can be also added with Occam and his "razor") and the heralds of the strict scientific method and the worldview of the early modern period.

Consider a simple example in order to outline the limits of applicability of the semiotic method.

For example, we have a real tree, an ash tree (I)—it is an object. In the human mind, a conceptual reflection of the ash is formed—it is the process of semiosis; (III)—here is a set of its characteristics: the colour of the wood, average height, type of crown, leaf shape and so on. The content of the concept is combined with the expression of the concept in the oral or written word "ash" (II), which in the act of reference corresponds to the real tree growing here.

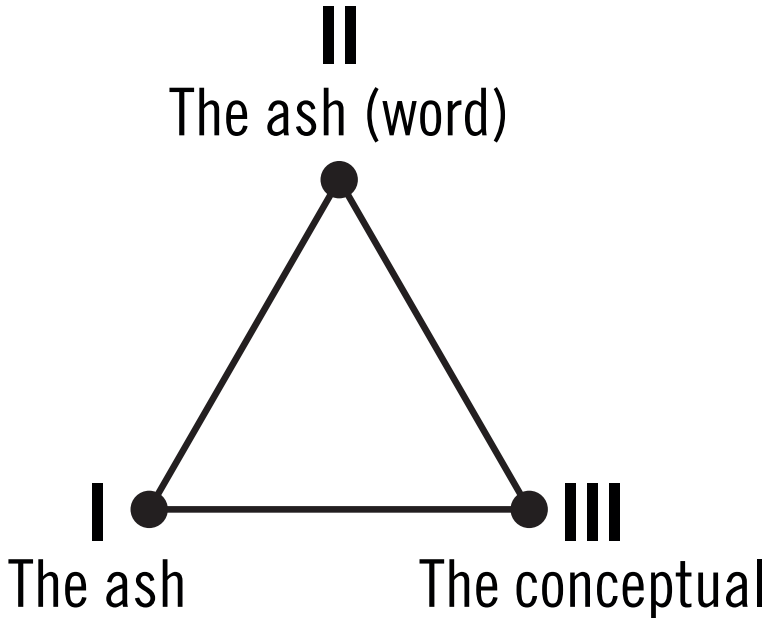


Figure 4.

The operation of relating a sign and a concept to the subsequent reference to a real tree or another thing is accomplished without difficulty when we are in the paradigm of Modernity and strict materialism. That is, when the referent in the real and objective world is a tangible thing or some observed social facts, events and processes (e. g. a meeting, a funeral, sunrise or sunset). The very concept of “real” as the “objective, material and present according to the natural laws of physical nature,” opposed to everything “non-real” as “fantastic, super-natural, mystical and irrational,” is a direct derivative of Modernity and its thinking.

Let us take some mythical thing as the signified (I), for example, a dragon. Words such as “dragon,” “serpent” or “lizard” will be the reference (II), and the “flying fire-breathing serpent” will be the concept (III). Here the interpretation of the Frege triangle can go in several ways.

The first way: in the objective reality, there is no such creature as a dragon. Zoology and paleontology do not know this kind of animal and no one has ever found its remains; according to the evolutionary theory, the possibility of the existence of such an animal (a combination of the ability to fly and breathe fire, serpentine nature and three heads) is arguable. Even assuming the theoretical existence of such an organism, its combination with such traditional characteristics of dragons as the ability to think, to speak, to do magic, to experience emotions, to be reborn and to behave subjectively in general, is impossible and unreal within the paradigm of Modernity. In the triangle of Frege, there is a signifier and a meaning, but the signified falls out. It does not exist in the objective reality. In this case, claiming the presence of a mythical dragon or any other mythical character or thing within the paradigm of Modernism becomes a sign of mental illness, “seeing what is not,” a hallucination to be treated by psychiatrists. The triangle is reduced to the word–concept axis, losing the thing. The word–concept is a hallucination, delirium, or a disease of the mind. The triangle becomes a rigid system of reference of the sign to reality.

In the Tradition it can also work, for it includes dragons and talking magical artifacts, Dwarves and living mountains, Gods, voices of the spirits and so on. In the world of Tradition, every miracle is referential and “real.” The very division into “real/not-real” is inappropriate in the Tradition; it is absent due to the sacred metamorphosis and the miraculous nature of the universe: everything is so real that there is no the purpose to the division into “real” and “unreal.”

The second way: objectively, a live dragon is impossible, so the place of the thing is shifted from the sphere of the real objective world, where the dragon cannot be, into the reality of the text. That is, the place of a live dragon is taken by the “dragon” of the text. The objective reality is replaced by the textual reality, and the place of the subject referent as an empirical thing is taken by a text referent, an image from the plot of a myth or fairy tale expressed in the text. Remember the poem of Stefan George, “The Word,” where the Norn

gives being to a thing, getting the word for it from the stream. Even if the thing is fantastic and unreal, it becomes present through the word: “Where no word is, can be no thing.”

But in this case, there appears some kind of substitution in bringing the thing into being. The reality boils down to a text or narrative. The dragon is as if “there,” but it is there in the text and its reflection in the reader’s mind, so the referent will be not a dragon-as-a-thing, but a dragon-as-a-text or a particular word, a sign and its conceptual content. In this case, there is no acute conflict between “the real” and “the non-real,” but an additional definition is introduced, which means that we are talking about working with the images of the text and linguistic research. Here again there is a repression of Tradition, but in a soft form. To a certain extent, magical things are given the right to being, but as text, not reality. Then there is the postmodernist that says “Yes, here is the dragon, here is a talking magic sword, there are the lightnings of the Gods, and the spirits,” but they are pixel models in the virtual reality of a flat screen. They are neither text nor things; they are a simulacrum, a self-referencing set of characters hiding nothing behind their recirculation — nothing as the lack of meaning and anything at all.

The third example of substitution of the real material thing as the referent is the Platonic idea — the ideal image, which is always distorted when embodied in material things. The idea is self-identical, and we cannot imagine the idea of a tree in its absolute complete autonomy, but in our mind’s eye we will always see a kind of generalised but still image-bearing tree. The idea is intelligible, that is, knowable by the intellect, concentrated thinking or intelligent feeling. At the same time, while the material embodiment of an integral idea of a certain thing is accomplished through the burdening and distortion of the idea itself by matter, substantiated in a variety of objects, methods and forms — from natural to man-made ones — then the concept, the content of the idea (for example, the idea of “tree-likeness”) also

distorts the idea, but to a much lesser degree. This is the difference between the being of ideas and the formation of things.

The mind sums up all the known material objects with their general ideal properties and draws a generalizing concept: as in the case of the idea of a tree, the mind presents us with a picture of a generalized average (stereotypical) tree, but this visualization is not the idea itself but its reflection in the mind in the form of an image that the mind is able to contain. Nevertheless, we can make references (and do it all the time) not only to real objects, but also to ideal images, ideas: the ideas of God, good, order, and so on. The world of ideas is essentially different from the world of things and objects, but still ideas *are* in some special way, they are a special *be-ing* that in its pure form is not material existence but is present in it as sense and form. Making a reference from a word and concept to a real thing, we can turn our attention to the real object, feel and touch it. Referring to the ideal sphere, we can address an idea intelligibly, in thinking. Then the real world becomes separated from us by a transparent canvas of concepts of things and objects, and the essence of things is replaced by concepts of things.

According to Socrates, ideas are expressed in speech, particularly in words. Thus, the word “good” covers all kinds of the existing good that may be quite diverse; the word “human” generalizes all people, although they are different. Such embodiment of ideas in speech and word (both words express λογός) was used by the sophists who turned philosophical aporia (which were similar to zen koans) into demagogic techniques and meaningless sophistry. Based on this, we can conclude that a God as an idea contains all the names-manifestations of the Gods. Although here, in order not to generalize all the Gods known to human history in a single word “God,” let us limit our scope with the God Odin and his word-idea in the name Alföðr — Allfather.

Let us apply the Frege triangle to the interpretation of the Divine and fill it with content, starting from the names of Odin. Knowing the “conditionality” of the thing by the word in the question of being, we

will begin the construction of the triangle not with relying on the material reality but with the word (not forgetting about the vicissitudes of its manifestation and connection with the thing). The name “Odin” will be taken as the word (II), the meaning (III) will be “the one in the state of frenzy and inspiration.” In the reality of the Tradition, the referent will be the God in his manifestation, the theophany of the ecstatic deity of shamanism and war in specific situations of Seidrr or battle (a warrior’s frenzy). Another name of Odin — the Hanged One — gives us the meaning of “the one hanging on a tree,” referring to the manifestation of Odin as hanging on Yggdrasil in the ritual of the God’s self-sacrifice.

In classical semiotics, it is known that one thing, the denotatum, can be described and expressed by many different words and definitions (meanings). In the poetic tradition of the Germans, it is mostly embodied in kennings and heiti. This phenomenon is known as the fluidity of the signifier and the meanings, which generates synonymy, connotations and associations. One real object, a thing, can be described by different meanings and definitions, and expressed through different names/words/signs; the reference content I is invariable, while content II and III is variable. But in the paradigm of Modernity, the construction of the Frege triangle is based on the real object, its reflection in the mind as a concept and expression in the word/sign. In our case, the construction begins with the word — without word there is no thing, and the meaning that correlates the word/sign with the thing/denotatum becomes even more obscure. Besides, the Tradition is not text-centered but oral, and the Eddas and sagas are written down as late as the Middle Ages; therefore, talking about the word/sign, we are talking about the phonetic word, about the oral tradition (transfer) and prosody, the poesis of the skalds. In our case, the building of the triangle is based on the word that describes, approaches and encircles a certain “something,” and through this encirclement, things-referents and meanings are born. We are now talking about the God Odin. His many names are his many demonstrations that

hide something nameless — which means, non-being. In this case, the phonetic verbal expression of the Divine gives rise to a phenomenal reality manifested-in-concealment. Together with its word, the referent conceals not “something” that it describes (that is exactly what it unconceals), but nothingness (the Void), which it indicates via expression-in-word.

Let us consider the Frege triangle in the light of the above with regard to the Abyss.

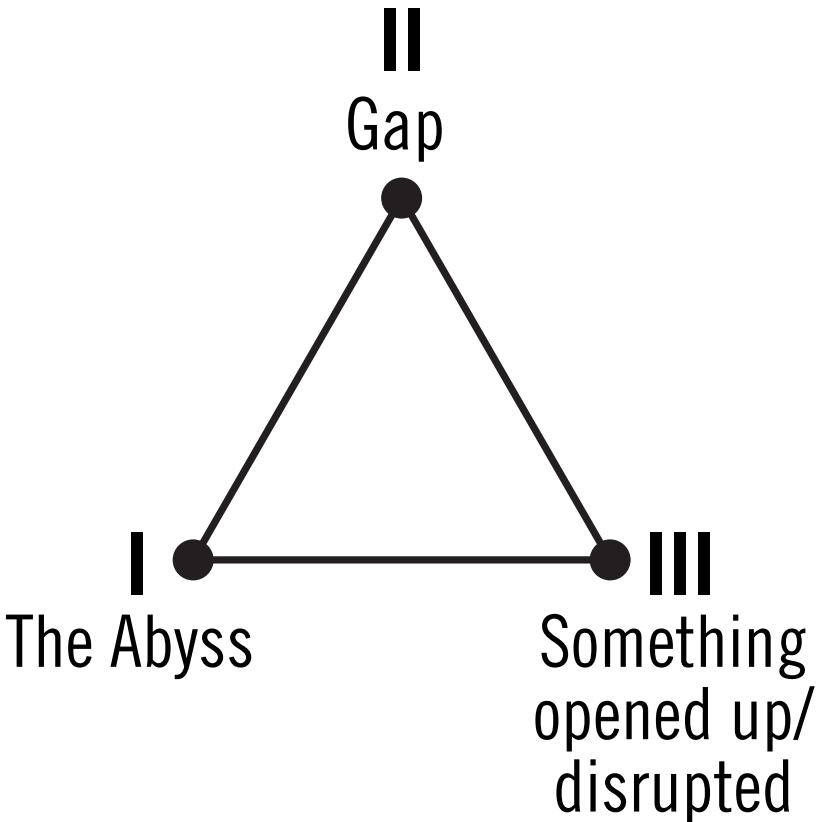


Figure 5.

The peculiarity of the Abyss in the German-Scandinavian tradition is that there is only one word that corresponds to it — expresses it — and

only one meaning: *gap* [*var ginnunga*]. We have already clarified the etymology of the words *gap* and *ginnunga*. Based on the explanation of what this disruption is, the ripped-open as a present Nothingness framed by be-ing that conceals it, we come to that applied to the Abyss, the Frege triangle can be built I) either on the word as a manifestation/fixation of the Abyss in the disclosure-in-concealment, II) or on the Abyss itself as a referent in the form of Nothingness framed by be-ing, which is available for being denoted and reflected in consciousness in the form of meaning and sign. Point I (denotatum) in this case contains the opening of be-ing in the direction of non-being, as a torn cloth fabric contains a gap as a hole in the matter.

Considering Odin (as a name) and the Abyss through the Frege triangle, we find common ground at point II (the phonetic sign/word) as the description or the encirclement of the inexpressible and the “conditioning” of the Nothingness by a word; placing-it-here into being as a manifestation of a deity, or theophany; but in the case of the Abyss, the word and reality are essentially identical. This is evidenced by the cosmogonic myth and the etymology of the word *gap*: the concealment of the Abyss; manifestation-in-concealment and unconcealedly-concealed indication (*gap*) to Nothingness, Emptiness.

Resume: analyzing the structure of the sign on the Frege triangle, we conclude that it is most relevant in the paradigm of Modernity in the case of reference to real things or the reality of the text, touching upon postmodern hypertext and the recycling self-reference of the simulacra. In “Heraclitus,” Martin Heidegger emphasizes that “everyday thinking, and especially our modern thinking, is an object thinking, for which the sign of the verity of the thought (*das Gedachte*) is the possibility of its objectification.” That is, denotatum is placed at the top corner of the triangle, and the construction of the picture of the world reflected in the mind starts from this corner; and this is all about pure positivist materialism.

We followed this path to illustrate the limitations of this structure, and within its framework we have outlined a way beyond it, starting

the construction from the angle of the “word,” whether it is the real “reality” or the text “reality” (the etymology of *gap*). In the same clarification of Heidegger lies an indication of the problem of the true vision of the gap in the fabric: ordinary thinking is focused on the canvas, on *something* (something [torn] *is here*⁴), losing sight of Nothingness. From this position, the everyday consciousness criticizes philosophical theosis and reasoning about those things that one cannot see, touch or imagine in everyday thinking: “You philosophers are busy with pointless chatter about the insignificant.” While it is precisely the non-being — Nothingness — that is the truth of *Seyn-beyng*, and most essentially important for man as such in his humanity and the authenticity of his *Dasein*.

Placing the names of the Gods in the triangle, along with the knowledge of the praxis of poesis and the role of the word for the being of a thing as it is, introduces the presence of the possibility to exit from the descriptive-referential reality to the indescribable and non-expressible, unapparent in the classical model: the nature of words-names of the Gods. We see the same in the description of the Abyss, with the clarification that in the German-Scandinavian tradition just one word and concept corresponds to it. In these cases, the very “reality” of Modernity is destroyed, as it reveals the insufficiency and limitation (repressiveness) of the structure of the semiotic triangle. It shows us a small and enclosed section in the hierarchy of *beyng*. The range of meanings and the levels of existence in the sign is not as wide as in the symbol; existentially, the sign is weaker than the symbol, but its weakness is presented as the strength of the logical and mathematical strictness to things. Considering the analysis of the sacred, we come into conflict with the “real” of Modernity on the level

4 The presence of a framing being can be interpreted as the redundancy of information in the transmission of a message, which is the subject of classical semiotics of communication: the torn tissue appears as something that transmits the message about the emptiness of the gap. But the coding of everyday thinking fails, primarily perceiving in the message what is available to the object-oriented perception (the fabric), and omits the unimportant (the lacuna).

of statements and references; sometimes even the reference to the textual reality still indicates the lack of “reality” as such. There appears a desire towards the non-real and the exit to the other, more complete and unreal — Tradition in full.

However, in this case we are still far from the Abyss itself, although we have approached it at some distance and identified the insufficiency of Modernity and the significance of Tradition (the German-Scandinavian tradition in our case), covering a larger spectrum of life, which is not enclosed, open upwards and downwards. But in the Tradition itself, the Abyss acts as “non-real” in relation to the “real” of Modernity at the previous stage. We encounter the homology of the “otherwise” at different levels of immersion.

Engaging Representation

A sign (a written or phonetic word) is related to a thing through meaning — the concept of a thing reflected in a person’s mind. Human thinking does not operate real objects but works with their representations, definitions and images, which correspond to signs and are referenced to the reality when necessary.

When communicating or reading a text, a person perceives words, names and symbols that create images in their mind. We read the word “mountain,” and the mind paints a picture: the snow-covered peak of a certain or quite specific mountain (Matterhorn) with a grey basis against the blue sky. Or some other picture, different in shade: a grey snowless hill, a cloudy sky and so on, but anyway, the word “mountain” draws a certain “mountain” picture in our mind; we *imagine* a mountain when we hear or read about a mountain. The same thing happens in the representation of a lake, forest and other really existing things, and the degree of credibility is quite high, as we can confirm or correct the emerging concept or representation through a reference to a real mountain or lake; we can go on a trip and see the mountains and forests with our own eyes.

A more complex situation arises when it comes to something mythical, non-real (super-natural). We cannot see a dragon in reality, but we imagine it well. We draw a fairly lifelike picture in our mind, relying on the writer's (or skaldic) talent of the narrator: here is a dragon, it flies, breathes fire, it is covered with scales, it sits down and talks to us about the nature of the dragons and the evil of the cursed gold. Everything is absolutely real in our representation, but impossible in the conditions of Modernity and its desacralized thinking.

Let us turn to the representation of the Abyss in our mind. We will find very quickly that we cannot imagine Nothing, the void of the Abyss by thinking. In our mind, one way or another, there appear certain images and concepts reducible to words and allegories. Polysemy arises in the description of what is impossible to express the way it is, impossible to grasp and hold, to reflect the void in its empty *suchness*. The mind chooses different descriptions and concepts for the indescribable. All of them are just indications and allegories of different degrees of approximation and "complexity" for understanding that *it is not about what they say, it is about what they do not say but what they generally indicate*. The Latin word *definitio*, with the root *finis* — "end" — means "to bring to the end," "to finish" and "to limit," akin to the word *terminus* — "term" or "border." To give a definition means to reveal the essence, to give a definition or concept of a thing. As for the Abyss, we cannot give it a strict definition, we can only bring metaphors and comparisons, because in fact the Abyss is the boundless, the indefinable and the unimaginable — the *infinitio* of definitions.

How does our mind attempt to imagine the Abyss; which images, concepts and signs does it create? These images, concepts and signs may either have no referent in reality at all, or their referent is not *something* (a thing, subject or word in the text) but *Nothing*. When we imagine a "mountain," the mind offers us an image of a mountain; it may vary in detail, but in general the "mountain" is obvious to us. It is the same with a tree: we can imagine an oak, ash, pine, fir or birch — a

variety of trees, but in all of them we see their essence; we perceive their “tree-ness” as well as the “mountain-ness” of mountains, the “animality” of animals, etc. But in the case of the Abyss, the mind offers us several different images, the connection between which is not as superficial and obvious as in the case of imagining trees or mountains that are different in appearance but essentially the same. The semantic circle of terms and concepts that describe the Abyss includes such as “night,” “darkness” and “ocean.” In Tradition, the eternal Chaos is described as the Night of the World, the Darkness from which manifests the Light that brings order, the Divine Wyrð of the law. In Greek cosmogony, one of the first to appear are Erebus (Ερεβος, Darkness) and Nykta (Νυκτός, Night). These words can be considered, together with the word “gap,” as capturing the Abyss — or in this case, the Darkness in the aspect of disclosure-in-concealment.

The idea of Chaos as an Ocean can be found in the Sumerian tradition in the figure of Tiamat; also the ancient cosmologist Pherecydes called Ὠκεανός a primary entity. Though remote from the German Logos, this image can be brought for clarity; it is akin to the Darkness and the Night: they are essentially similar in the dark and homogeneous density of their depths, opacity and unclear things in the dark (the dark night, the dark ocean depths).

The most commonly used term is “Abyss,” which is well-established in the Russian translation, semantically referring to a “rupture” and means “a certain space without depth and without a lower limit,” “bottomlessness” and “infinity,” while being usually represented by the mind as a black empty bottomlessness. In this bottomlessness, the Abyss is connected with the image of the ocean, water, “bottomless [eternal] waters.” “Bottomlessness” is a synonym of the word “limitlessness” — that is, being unlimited by a term, concept or word, which at first glance is not so obvious, for “the abyss” is a word and concept referring to the inexpressible. Here the contradiction between the etymology of the Icelandic word “*gap*” and the Russian word “abyss” is revealed, since *gap* in itself, as in the word denoting a rift, fixes the

boundaries within which Nothingness is *defined*, and “abyss,” on the contrary, points to infinity. Although they essentially point in the same direction, accents already tell us different things. The Icelandic word translated as “abyss,” or *abyss* in English, is the genderless word *hylldýpi* that goes back to the verb *dýpa* — “to become deep,” and the adjective *djupur* — “deep,” “hidden.” *Hylldýpi* is the deep, bottomless and concealed.

In German, the concept of the Abyss is expressed as *der Abgrund* or *der Ungrund*. Both words consist of the noun *Grund*, which means “ground,” “base,” “foundation,” and the negative prefix *ab-* or *un-*; so the Abyss is the “ground-lessness,” “base-lessness,” “bottom-lessness.” In the German language and thinking, *Abgrund* is also a steep, vertical precipice, a breakage of the base. Not a gradient transition of a mountain into a valley, but an instant, sharp fall from the *Grund* to *Abgrund*. The concept of darkness, the night and the ocean have a gradient (graduality) of transition: the darkening, nightfall and immersion into water, so different from the German abruptness. Here we stand on solid ground [of our mind and the referential reality] and — in an instant! — we plummet into the bottomless undefinable Nothingness.

In the German edition of the Poetic Edda, the phrase “*gap var ginnunga*” is translated as “*den Schlund der Urleere gab es*,” where the Icelandic name *Ginnungagap* corresponds to the German *Urleere*⁵. The word consists of the prefix *Ur-* meaning “initial,” “primary,” as in the word *Uranfang* — “Primal”; and the word *Leere*, which means “emptiness” as an empty boundless space, “*der leere Raum*” similar to the Greek *ἄπειρον* of Anaximander, but understood in the non-materialistic tradition of interpretation. The use of the prefix *Ur-* is also found in the word *Urgrund*, meaning “the root cause” and “the first principle” in Meister Eckhart’s apophatic mysticism of the Divine (*Gottheit*). According to Herman Wirth and runic semantics, *Ur* is

5 See “Der Götterlieder der Älteren Edda.”

Uruz, the rune of the \mathbb{U} phoneme whose meaning includes “descent,” which is the last one in the phonetic pentad of the main pre-Indo-European vowel sounds and therefore referring to the point of Yule, the Winter Solstice, the Night of the Year and the space of dying and transition. Another version is that it is the Yr rune \mathbb{Y} — the rune “of the tree roots,” or death. Thus, the semantics of *Urleere* is connected with the original dark depth of the boundless empty space at the beginning of the Cosmogony.

All these concepts of the Abyss formed in our mind are linked to each other, composing a single semantic series: concealment, darkness, enigmatism, depth, disrapture, opposition to light, emptiness. The thinking tries to grasp what it is unable to contain within itself. The features of the known, containable and reflectable are transferred to the inexpressible that cannot be reflected in the mind. The mind wraps the void into the cloth of metaphors (μετα-φορά) and allegories, making it present through indirect indications and concealing-unconcealing images: the gap in the cloth covering the Abyss.

The strategy of thinking is to reflect everything in itself, creating representations (concepts, meanings), and correlating them to signs (words, names, symbols). This is how the reality is captured in the mind. Again, let us turn to the image of the cloth with a hole, which points to something and nothing, but the everyday mind is focused on the cloth, on what is seen through the open rift — it is focused on the referent being, on the objective. The fact that Nothingness manifests itself in this rift, the gaping Emptiness that can be manifested through the imposition of borders for its accentuation, eludes the everyday mind. The cloth fabric is the *bordering* of nothing — that is, a direct indication of Nothing, which should be understood as simply as possible and without unnecessary superstructures; the gap is the abyss of emptiness in the fabric of be-ing. But in thinking and in language, in oral or textual transmission by means of different images and examples, it is the practice of limitation and setting boundaries, from the Latin *terminus*: approaching, encirclement, de-finition,

de-termination — all this is the praxis of bringing Nothingness to a certain word, definition and concept that will point to it in the mind. This praxis — the praxis of poesis — is a human praxis different from the natural φύσις, the sprouting of being. And speaking of the Abyss, we are back to the original primal words which contain all of the above in a concise form: *Gap var ginnunga*.

Resume

Implementing our strategy of approaching and encircling the Nothingness in the German Logos, we discover that it is not a voluntarist choice of how to approach Nothingness: this way or that way. But it essentially conforms to the linguistic rules of the expression of the Abyss: I) de-finition as encirclement by sign and meaning; II) the disclosure-in-concealment.

Wandering in hermeneutic circles, we come to Nothingness by different paths; we pass nearly tangential to the Void and once again fall into a new circle of interpretations, ideas and concepts, retreating and re-approaching to the desired primal inexpressible. We are always at risk of moving too far away from the original thinking and concentration on the inexpressible, embogged in heaps of words, having lost sight of the gap and focused on the referent noun — the objective reality of things; there is always a risk to make this wandering [in thinking] endless and pointless, not bringing us close to Nothingness.

Heidegger defines encirclement as an essential method of philosophizing:

So here we go round in circles. But this is a sign that we are moving in the sphere of philosophy. *Whirling* everywhere. This circular self-movement of philosophy is again something that is contrary to common sense. It wants to come straight to the goal, as if to grab it as some thing. Walking in circles takes us nowhere. And besides, it makes one immediately dizzy, which is unpleasant. It is like hanging between nothing and nothing. Therefore, no circular motion and, therefore, no circles! This is evidenced at least by the rule of general logic. Therefore, scientific philosophy ambitiously aims to

avoid circular movement. But if you have never felt dizzy considering some philosophical question, then you have never truly philosophized or truly raised a question — that is, never walked in circles. During such a circular motion, what is decisive is not what can be seen only by the everyday mind — not running on the periphery and returning to the old place on it: the decisive here is the contemplation of the *centre*, which is possible only when moving in a circle. The centre itself is only revealed when circling around it. Therefore, all attempts to clear philosophy from the circular movement by various argumentation lead away from philosophy, and all objections based on the fact that consideration goes in circles show that they are not philosophical objections at all and, therefore, cannot say anything to philosophy. However, not every circular reasoning is a sign of a philosophizing thinking (circle and circulation).⁶

The art of war, using the tactics of encirclement and manoeuvre, still always comes down to the typical situation of confrontation and direct combat against the other⁷. In going in circles, in wandering, we find another essential feature of the non-warrior thinking in the hidden part of the German Logos. There is a difference between the principle of “proving,” going from argument to argument, and the principle of “showing,” which does not ground and does not prove, but reveals its way and invites you to follow it yourself. But encircled armies can get lost and go the wrong way. A person in his thinking can get from a circle into a cycle, fall into an empty aimless wandering. How is wandering in circles related to speech, saying and being lost in saying that is not tangential to Nothing?

According to one of the main versions, the Latin word *allucinare* goes back to the Greek word ἀλώω, which means “to wander,” “to stray,” and consequently means “to err,” “to stray,” “to wander in mind.” This word is known to us in its derivative “to hallucinate,” with

6 See M. Heidegger, “Introduction to Metaphysics.”

7 Plotinus argues that direct contemplation is a sensuous contemplation: “Indeed, one can contemplate or perceive something other by either perception or mind. Sensual contemplation can be compared to a line, and intellectual — to a circle [...]”

a meaning established in all languages as “to wander in the mind,” “to be delirious,” and “to see or hear what is not there in the real world.” With regard to what we said earlier about the boundaries of “real” and “non-real,” and to the interpretation of the mythical reality through the Frege triangle, we can see that from the point of view of the Modernity paradigm, a traditionalist heathen hallucinates about what he claims to be real. But we do not share this paradigm and do not recognise its primacy and repressive psychiatric apparatus, so we are not interested in the common understanding of hallucination as “a vision of what is not, in the state of mental illness or under the influence of psychoactive substances.” To clarify the nature and the place of *allucinare*, we have to go another way.

By reasoning, we can move logically from point A to point B, unfolding the thought step by step, thesis by thesis; following a different strategy, we can encircle what we are interested in thinking as a certain centre holding our attention in this circling, as put by Martin Heidegger. We can approach tangentially, in circles, or walk a militant straight path towards what is meant to be thought. *Allucinare* does not take us anywhere and does not focus the wandering on a certain centre or an achievable point: it is an aimless roaming in any direction without a waymark and, finally, delusion. Slipping off the orbit or encirclement and approaching into delusion ultimately leads nowhere, because this wandering loses its purpose; even passing next to the desired remains unnoticed due to the immersion in the meaninglessness of wandering. This “nowhere” to which delusion leads is a dead end of reasoning. However, it is not because the thought runs into some wall impenetrable to its logic or illogicality, but due to the fact that delusion itself begins with a dead end, a dead-locked wandering as coming-to-nothing (hallucinating).

Circling and surrounding with a concentrated gaze the centre of being as Nothingness that Heidegger called “ought-to-be-thought,” we are in the process of witnessing its truth. But deviating from this movement, we err, starting to move away from being and to plunge

into the abyss of things, substance and objectivity. In his delusion, man moves away from the truth of beyng further and deeper into the abyss of things. The emphasis shifts towards be-ing, the material reality and τέχνη. In the semantic triangle of Frege this corresponds to the building of a structure based on the acute need for the reference to real things or the reduction of all unreal to the textual reality of the narrative.

We started with the fact that in Modernity hallucinating and hallucination are something unreal, illusory, delusional: something that is not really present in being, but is present in the vision of a sick person. But now we see that, in fact, *allucinare*, or wandering and delusion, is moving away from the witnessing of the truth of Seyn in the direction of immersion into the materiality and objectiveness of the world and the need for reviewing all representations of the mind against real objects⁸. Hallucination actually is the material world of Modernity.

* * *

I) The German-Scandinavian tradition is dominated by a pronounced patriarchal and masculine principle; the militant nature is its obverse — the side turned outwards into the world and the strategy of the being of the Germans and their militant gloomy Gods. This is What Is Due of the German tradition, its eschatological Wyrd and Ærlög.

The warrior ethos does not allow deviations from the sacred vertical hierarchy of the Gods, spirits and people, and its reflection in society. The dark side of the German Logos is included in the warrior

8 This is not the case with Plato's ideas and idealism in general, since the absence of a referent in the sphere of real objects is similar to an indication of something else in the act of reference when considering the names of the Gods or the word "gap." The idea embodied in matter is its distortion, and this reminds us of the etymology and essence of the expression of the Abyss as an unconcealment-in-concealment. But there is a fundamental difference, that ideas are a special be-ing intelligible and knowable through more subtle (less distorting than matter) ideas and images in the mind. While *Gap* is always pointedly *is-not*, i.e. Nothingness.

ethos as the battle frenzy and self-sacrifice to Odin or as special practices of ecstatic magic inherent to women. However, even in Freya, a master of Seidr, this side is a dark reverse to her warlike manifestations as the matriarch of the Valkyries, a light solar obverse. Magic, ecstasy and transgression are brought to the periphery of society, which is pulled down from top to bottom by the manifestation of the warlike nature. The paradigmatic figure of Odin carries the dark shamanic principle as the inner side of the German Logos, on its border turned to the apophatic — nameless-as-boundless — instance of Nothingness, or *Gap*. The deviation from the patriarchal Wyrð takes place in gloom and shadows, hiding from the day's eye, but nonetheless, this retreat is somehow inherent to all Aesir, withperhaps the only exception being the strictly solar warlike figure of Thor. It is pictured in more detail in the *Lokasenna*, one of the most controversial songs in the Scandinavian tradition. And historically, there are no decisive interpretations and doctrines of the Left Hand Path in the German-Scandinavian "orthodoxy." The only exception might be the cult of Odin, but he has the syzygic nature of a warrior-shaman.

The inner part of the tradition and the German Logos is different from the warlike manifestation in the world and dominant strategies; it is of a twilight nature and interprets the nature of war, play, frenzy, the question of being, poetry and things in its own way. Here the level is always shifted from the militant vertical, but shifted in which direction? If the shift was directed downward, we would be in the zone of the Titanic and its interpretations: fair war and open battle would be replaced by vile and unmotivated (hysterical, capricious, treacherous) murder; the heroic manifestation of will would be replaced by the devouring and concealing poverty of the Jötunns; in the end, we would find ourselves in the underground zone of dishonorable and ignominious death, posthumous despondency and long-lasting day-to-dayness not saturated with any events — in the world of Helheim, the only one of the Nine Worlds ruled by a Titaness, Hel.

A sure sign of shifting the focus down to the chthonic region is the rejection of the warrior worldview and being-in-the-war. However, turning to the inner dimension of the German Logos, we see that it is also not alien to war and in its special vision considers it as a game, *Spiel*, a certain reflection of Eros (Freyr as Yngvi and Freya as Valkyrie) and polemics (the speeches of Vaftrudnir and Alvíss). The ecstatic frenzy (oðr) turns from the battle that is *being* to the word and poetry (*orð og oðrerir*) with its alliterative shamanic swaying rhythm: to the praxis of poetry and bringing things to being through the word.

We perceive this shift not as a way down, but as a path inside and as to the underside (reverse)—to the deep apophatic *Urleere selbst*. Within the framework of the German-Scandinavian tradition, this movement is only outlined by the most general and subtle strokes; it is, in fact, scattered all around it as hints and indications of the possibility of such an interpretation of the tradition and Odin's cult, in view of the historical dominance of military ethos. In the time and space of the German Logos, the attempts to read the tradition in this direction, including the philosophical tradition of thinking in which the religion of the Germans is one of the fundamental archetypal pillars, are being made in the modern period of the XX–XXI centuries.

II) It is impossible to turn attention to the Abyss within the strict military ethos of the second caste (G. Dumézil), as it focused on the death in battle, eternal glory as a form of immortality and the continuation of war in the afterlife of Valhalla. Despite their openness to death, warriors leap over the very point of here-death, creating the line of “battle—heroic feat praised by the skalds—glory (immortality)”; that is, the question of death is euphemised.

The way to the Abyss is the way inside, to the reverse of the German Logos or to the inner dimension of Tradition. It is the dark path of ecstatic-transgressive shamanism and alliterative poetry, the path of the Swaying and Dying God—Odin the Frenzied. When viewed through this lens, death is not followed by the posthumous glory of deeds or rich palaces of the Aesir. War here turns into a game,

and death into a “here and now” dance focused on it. The understanding of death as initiation and change of status can also be interpreted as euphemisation and framing of death by the boundaries of “before” and “after”; initiation notes the transitions and growth within society in the light of its attention. The inner work of the poet, priest or thinker himself remains inner and, in fact, always present: initiation is a process of a “dying-initiation-rebirth” structure, while the transgressive dance appeals to the deep Self (*Selbst*) — the *Sein-zum-Tode* existential of *Da-Sein* — and the structure of the German Logos found on all levels:

- The question of beyng and existence: Nothingness as the truth of beyng and the diversity of existence as the material, metaphysical-theological and ideal referential realities.
- The oblivion of the Primary Nothingness in the name and description of “*gap var ginnunga*,” while the gap was covering in the process of manifestation (cosmogensis) in the form of the nine worlds of Yggdrasil as the primordial physis and polemos of the German-Scandinavian tradition.
- The dual structure of the Gods: the name as manifestation and limitation, definition through description and embodiment in the word (S. George); the nameless apophatic reverse of the Divine beyond names.
- The warlike manifestation and structure of Germanic tribes and societies are externally manifested (*In-der-Welt-Sein*) and historically embodied in the complete domination of the German Royal dynasties in Europe and in Russia (Rurikovich and Romanov dynasties). On the other hand, there is the ecstatic, shamanic and magical inner dimension of German society: the dual cult of Odin and the rhythmic alliteration in poetry.
- The position of a special breed of people — poets and philosophers — on the borderline between beyng and being, carrying

out the praxis of endowing things with being through words in poetry and contemplation of Nothingness as the truth of Seyn in theosis and poesis.

- Finally, the special language situation in the expression of the names of the Gods and, most significantly, the manifestation-in-concealment of the Abyss in the word *gap* (the same concerns the Greek word χάος): the gap as a manifestation of be-ing framing the “hole” of Nothingness in it.

Note the special relationship of the Gods and man — despite the confrontation, they have a problematic and questioning attitude to being and truth: for the Gods, being is the hearth for a Thing, and man is a witness of the truth of being. This means that man as a poet and philosopher, in his delicate and subtle [noetic, intellectual] presence, witnesses the Thing of the Gods and their being in the light of the truth of Seyn as Nothingness. Man expresses this testimony in language, because language actually *is* man, it possesses him and tells its tale through man. Being a witness is also the contemplation of death and the ecstatic dance of a shaman on the border between being and being, between Nothing and something. In this wonder, poet and philosopher are able to embrace the duality of the German Logos on all its levels *as their own poles and manifestations in the authentic Dasein existence, centered on Sein/Seyn in the foundation of das Geviert*.

III) A guess follows from the above that the possible identity of the instances of the primordial Abyss (as the Void preceding the rupture and enabling being *to be* as being through *physis* and *polemos*) and Seyn as the primordial center of the German Logos expressed by *das Geviert* structure.

This guess is evidenced by the problematisation of the oblivion of this instance in the German-Scandinavian tradition and in philosophy in general, in its First Principle in Antiquity, as shown by Martin Heidegger. As well as the problematisation of the language expression

of the Abyss as the term “*gap var ginnunga*” in poetry and the essence of the manifestation-in-concealment of being in human language.

The message of the history of being — *Seynsgeschichtliche* in Heidegger’s terminology — is the concealment of Seyn, the loss of attention to being. It is the philosophical language and understanding of the “first principle,” which at the level of the German myth is parallel to the message of the oblivion of *Urleere*, or *Ginnungagap*.

IV) The ecstatic transgressive way to the unconcealment of the deep *Selbst* in the sphere of thinking runs through surprise, more accurately interpreted as going-out-of-mind, which is closer to the original meaning of the word ἔκ-στασις, ecstasis, also translated as “frenzy” (stepping out of oneself), which is equal to the meaning of the name of Oðinn.

The way opposite to wonder is the turning from the ecstatic proximity to Seyn — human being-as-the-border — to the introspective dimension, turning away from Chaos to the order of Cosmos (the existential of being-in-the-world), or, continuing the series of terms related to the mind, it is the way of entering-the-mind. Entering-the-mind is the cosmogony in the realm of mind and thinking: a reflection of the world in the “definition + word” semantic structure and the reference to the denotatum (thing, text, idea: being). The cosmogony is actualised verbally, and at its extremity it comes to the everyday thinking of “the last people,” chatter as hallucinatory delusion; the world as a delusion in the rigid referential (to things) and self-referential (in simulacra) structure of Frege.

The mind itself is not negative, and “entering-the-mind” is a natural and non-negative process, which always demonically leads us away from being to the immersion into existence and its technical multiplication. The mind only distributes its attention from being-on-the-border between the being easily accessible to the perception in different metaphysical gradations, and the inexpressible and irreplaceable Nothingness.

The mind is what Plato thought to be common among the Gods, to whom it is inherent in nature, and a small number of special people — sages and philosophers. In the dialogue *Phaedrus*, Socrates builds a hierarchy of nobility that places poets closer to the bottom of the list, with which we cannot agree; we place them among people particularly close to the Gods.

The mind is a specific “organ” that makes man Divine. In fact, for a wise person the definition of “man” is unacceptable. Man is someone who only has an opinion (*doxa*⁹) about something, but not the Mind. Among people, one who has the Mind only seems to be man. The characteristic feature of the Mind is the focus placed on things, life and the world. But by making an existential effort, by making a decision in favour of the authenticity of being-here, man turns his Mind to the contemplation of the amazing and unbearable Nothing. In other words, in the properties of the Mind there are both the ability to interpret and comprehend [entering-the-mind as a way in the world], and the ability to be amazed. Moreover, entering-the-mind is possible only when there is the Nothing from which this entry is made and towards which then *wonder* [stepping-out-of-mind] is directed. Let us remember the metaphor of the rupture in the fabric and transfer it to the Abyss that precedes the very “fabric” of existence, which starts framing and covering it, and thereby to actualize it in our perception through the implicit revealed-in-concealment indication. The Mind has a similar nature; it is equally open and turned to the *abyss of the things* of this world and to the *abyss of the Nothingness of being*.

Cosmos ordered by the Gods is separated from the surrounding Chaos, perceiving it [looking from the inside out] as the disarranged, disorderly and chaotic in the ordinary sense. In Platonism, the lower limit of Cosmos as an ordered Universe is the boundless space understood as the Foster Nurse or Matter, because it gives things the presence of being as the existence. This boundless and apophatic

9 From the Greek word *δοξα* (*doxa*) — “semblance,” “appearance,” from which the words “dogma,” “para-dox,” and “ortho-doxy” are derived.

space, the lower level of Cosmos, is called “the choir,” $\chi\omega\rho\alpha$, and the root of this word is related to $\chi\alpha\omicron\varsigma$ —“to open asunder,” “to be open.” But in Platonism with its cult of the Mind (*nous*, $\text{Nov}\varsigma$), the lower limit of the world begins to be demonised and perceived as “matter,” foreshadowing the later crudely materialistic understanding. Any thought of $\chi\omega\rho\alpha$, which is an infinitely dense apophatic abyss of matter and poverty, becomes unacceptable because it is unthinkable. The mind, whose essence is in performing operations of distinction and limitation, denies this instance as ontologically inconsistent. The lower border is seen only as what nurtures and allows everything that emanates from the Mind to be present. This is a strictly intra-cosmic and exclusive understanding of the Chaos, or the Abyss.

The turning of the Mind to the Abyss is death, because the Nothingness of the Abyss *nullifies* words, ideas and concepts that fill and move the Mind itself as insufficient and irrelevant definitions of Nothingness. The nature of the Mind is to think, but it is impossible to think the *unthinkable*, and the departure from thinking is dying. Cosmos is the embodiment of the divine Self and its essence is *separating* from Chaos, but at the same time *inheriting* it as its own deep dimension; and man inherits the spark of the Divine and its borderline nature. The true Self is being in an ecstatic dance on the edge between two abysses: Nothingness and be-ing. For the everyday thinking and *das Man* this is madness, but for the true Tradition it is *sacred madness*.

VII

Αλήθεια

IN ONE OF HIS SMALL WORKS, Heidegger explains one of the key concepts of his philosophy through the image of a forest clearing or opening, *Lichtung*.¹ Heidegger resorts to his frequent and meaningful image of the forest — a dense, thick forest, *Dickung*, from the verb *dicken* — to thicken. In the process of walking through the dense forest, a person can come out to a clearing, *Lichtung*. But Heidegger suggests imagining the clearing not as a place where the radiance of sunlight prevails, as a lighter and clearer place in the depths of the Black Forest; he turns away from the connection of the *Lichtung* with the adjective *licht* (light) and the noun *Licht* (light). A clearing is a free space in the thick of the forest — not a clear opening, but a gap in the forest. And only when there is an empty space of the *Lichtung* — only then the light (*Licht*) of the sun pours into it, making it a light place. So, it is a place where light flows in and makes it a *Lichtung*. But this illumination is preceded by the emptiness of the rarefied forest, the vastness — “the clearing is open to all that is present and absent.”² And later in the same place: “the ray of light does not create the clearing, or the openness — it only penetrates it.” Heidegger points out that

1 See Martin Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking.”

2 Ibid.

speculative thinking is always focused on what is available for direct contemplation: the forest, the clearing and the rays of sunlight pouring on it. An important thing (*Sache*) eludes observation: the clearing itself as a phenomenon of emptiness freely open to everything.

The clearing itself is invisible, but everything else is visible in and through it. Heidegger points to the etymology of the Greek word *ιδέα* — “visibility”³; the idea is what is visible and open to observation. Visibility already means presence. Heidegger calls this clearing the “clearing of being” and points out that it was conceived at the beginning of philosophy through a specific word used by Parmenides in one of the surviving verses: *αλήθεια*, *aletheia*. This word is usually translated as “truth,” but Heidegger points to its original etymological meaning. *Λήθη* — *Lethe* — was the name of one of the five rivers, along with Acheron, Styx, Fleheton and Cocytus, that flowed in Hades — the underworld. And it was the river of Forgetfulness, which is the direct translation of the word *λήθη*. The negative particle in the word *α-λήθεια* shows us its original meaning as non-concealment, unhiddenness. *Αλήθεια ist Lichtung*: unconcealment is about the clearing that enables things to be present in being. In unconcealment, there opens a way to thinking, which, however, is focused on appearances, the ideas of Plato and their material embodiments. At the same time, the non-concealment causes itself as such: that is, unconcealment allows itself to be as it is, and at the same time to be found in thinking.

We are speaking of the truth of being, but can we speak of the truth of being as *αλήθεια*? Heidegger says that we cannot:

Insofar as truth is understood in the traditional “natural” sense as the correspondence of knowledge with being demonstrated in being, but also insofar as truth is interpreted as the certainty of the knowledge of Being, *aletheia*, unconcealment in the sense of the opening may not be equated with truth. Rather, *aletheia*, unconcealment thought as opening, first

3 Here we can remember the name of the Greek God of the underworld, *Αΐδης*, which means “invisible,” or concealed below the ground as inaccessible to sight: *Αΐδης*. Often portrayed with a turned back (hidden) face.

grants the possibility of truth. For truth itself, just as Being and thinking, can only be what it is in the element of the opening. Evidence, certainty in every degree, every kind of verification of *veritas* already move with that *veritas* in the realm of the prevalent opening.

Unconcealment allows truth to enter into it, like a person walking through a dense forest, goes out to a clearing and stands in the rays of light that illuminate his presence. *Alethea* opens such a possibility for truth — to be. But, as in the case of the clearing in the forest, attention is immediately fixed on the rays of light that permeate the void [which only gives them the opportunity to be as permeating it]: and *alethea* is understood as the correctness, the truthfulness of judgment and anything else since Antiquity. The circle (or triangle) of the referential truth is closed again. Unconcealment gives truth the possibility to manifest, to enter into it as into a clearing and become visible: therefore, as soon as truth enters unconcealment, the very ἀλήθεια gets concealed (concealment as *Verborgenheit*) and generally exists as unconcealed-in-concealment. This concealment is already present in the word ἀ-λήθεια itself. The true as the unconcealed the hidden always carries the concealment of its truth. This description is very close to what we said about the etymology of the word gap and the nature of the gap in the tissue. The clearing of the uncovered is filled with the light of the truth and be-ing entering into uncovered, just as the gap (gap) is covered by the be-ing from its edges, as χάος or the Abyss is forgotten, disappears from the attention of the German-Scandinavian tradition in the very beginning of cosmogony.

Through *Lichtung*, the concept of ἀλήθεια converges with the Icelandic term *gap*, traditional but not previously conceptualized philosophically. This again shows the axis of the Hellenic–Germanic and the homology between the truth of *Seyn* and *Ginnungagap*.

In the field of philosophy and thinking, the unconcealment is concealed by metaphysics: the myth, the Gods, the ideas of Plato and the boundary of possible comprehension by the Mind, energy, shape and entelecheia of Aristotle, and referents in the form of material objects

and phenomena in the positivism of Modernity; in Postmodernity it is concealed by a self-referencing (making a hyperlink to itself, like a Möbius strip) senseless simulacrum, instead of Frege's triangle or symbol in Tradition. According to Martin Heidegger, the comprehension of any *ιδέα* must follow the comprehension of the unconcealed, since it is *αλήθεια* that allows truth to be revealed as truth. Alternatively stated, truth is true as it is only in the light of unconcealment. In other words: truth is true when it is based (*Grund*) on the emptiness of the clearing of being (*Seyn als Abgrund*). In Frege's triangle, truth is always referential, it needs a denotatum — the basis. The non-referential truth is "based" on emptiness, on Nothingness, and it makes Nothingness the best and most durable support for truth and its unconcealment in the light.

According to M. Heidegger:

In the bright night of the terrifying Nothingness, for the first time there occurs a simple unconcealment of being as such: it is revealed that it is being, and not Nothingness... Nothingness is the condition of the possibility of the unconcealment of being as such for human existence... in the Nothingness of human presence, existence as a whole for the first time comes to itself according to its own possibility — that is, in the final way.⁴

In this interpretation, we see the basis of the truth of the dual structure that permeates the entire German Logos from cosmogony to language, throughout the world, the Gods, society and, most importantly, man.

4 See Martin Heidegger, "What Is Metaphysics?"

VIII

Nothingness

HIGH ATTENTION AND SUBTLETY to the terms used requires concentration and trustful consideration of both the words themselves and the concepts expressed. We speak of Emptiness and Nothingness as words that point to something that they are not, or that they are as some limited reflections, metaphors and allegories. In the paradigm of Modernity, we could refer to the conventionality of terms and denote what we seek and use it in the text as some conditional mathematical constant with a corresponding sign — for example, as X , the unknown. This partly corresponds to the structure of the sign proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure, but we believe that it is way too relativistic and non-relevant to the philomythic approach. Listening to a myth and to its narrative, we meet the *originally said* words — the references to the Abyss that were given a name.

We have already mentioned the words used in the world of Tradition in which the ancients tried to reflect the inexpressible concept of the Abyss in the Mind: Night, Darkness, Ocean, Abyss, Gap, Chaos, Emptiness. The term and the concept of Nothingness stands apart here. Let us encircle the issue of Nothingness in our consideration.

The Metaphysical Problem of Nihil

The problem of Nihil is traditionally associated with the invasion of the non-Indo-European Semitic religion of Christianity, which originates from Judaism and, more broadly, belongs to the three creationist religions (Abrahamic religions): Judaism, Christianity and Islam¹. The core idea of creationism is the principle of creation and the *creaturehood* of the world — that is, τέχνη by the will of God the Creator, the demiurge of Plato or Gnostics. The principle of creaturehood — *creatio ex Nihilo* — is based on the fact that the absolutely self-sufficient and the truly being (that is, having the fullness of being) God creates the world from absolute Nothing, Nihil. The world, therefore, is a handcraft creation, which is often compared to ceramic crafts. The world and people in it are by nature radically different from the personal figure of God (Yahweh, Elohim or Allah), they are rather insignificant in the sense that they are created from nothing and their existence is due to the plan of God and the soul that entered their bodies. The world without God in such metaphysics is a self-enclosed immanent space of materiality which is referential to things — that is, the world of Modernity and Enlightenment. Creationism represented by Judeo-Christianity is a direct source of Modernism in Europe and Western philosophy. In the creationist world without God, all high teleology is lost — the meaning of existence and life, self-knowledge and the origin of the world: the accidentality of the Big Bang, the accidental genesis of life, the aimless evolution of species and human societies, etc., describing the mythology of Modernity.

In Judaism and Christianity as its heir, the understanding of Nothingness as *Nihil* goes back to the Book of Genesis (Greek Γένεσις, Latin *Genesis*, meaning “the Origins”), verses 1 and 2:

1 A detailed examination of the differences and relations between creationism and manifestationism and Modernity taking its origin in Christianity can be found in two volumes of “Polemos” by Askr Svarte; here we will limit ourselves to brief remarks.

1. Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεός τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν.
 2. Ἡ δὲ γῆ ἦτο ἀμορφὸς καὶ ἔρημος· καὶ σκότος ἐπὶ τοῦ προσώπου τῆς ἀβύσσου. Καὶ πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἐφέρετο ἐπὶ τῆς ἐπιφανείας τῶν υδάτων.
- 1:1 In principio creavit Deus caelum et terram.
- 1:2 Terra autem erat inanis et vacua et tenebrae super faciem abyssi et spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas.
1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
 - 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.²

The Book of Genesis says that first God creates (*creavit*) the earth, which means he creates matter from nothing *a priori* (“nothing” in the sense that this creation was not preceded by anything, it was not based on anything, and it has not been made of anything as of some substance; it was precisely a creation, not *physis* or manifestation), and this created earth is further endowed with the quality of depth and bottomlessness of its earthly materiality in the words ἀβύσσου/*abyssi*—that is, we are talking not about the Abyss as a word pointing to Nothingness but about the chthonic abyss of matter akin to Jotnar’s bowels and their poverty. The original Greek word α-βύσσου, which passes into Latin, French and modern English (abyss), contains the negative prefix of α -, that is, a closer translation would be the word *bottom-less*, but now the semantic level is shifted radically down and we are talking about a completely different understanding of the abyss—now it is the abyss of matter and negation. Hence the original Titanic nature of all creationism as such, whole and complete, ΑΩ. Everything that God creates bears the mark of poverty, and with the death of God, this poverty finds its emancipating liberation in nihilism; in the first acts of cosmogony, God creates ontological poverty, compressed like a spring. Later, in Western theology, this principle will be fixed in the formulation “ex Nihilo”; in Eastern theology, a greater emphasis is placed on the Neoplatonic interpretation of creation as a good emanation and the goodness of creation. But the practice of

2 Greek original text, Latin Vulgate version and English King James Bible.

Neoplatonic interpretation in the body of Christian theology as such causes justified criticism and, in general, is inappropriate.³

A radical, positive opposite of *creatio ex Nihil* is the pagan doctrine of manifestationism (from Latin *manifestare* — “to manifest,” “to bring out”) also known as *creatio ex Deo* — the creation from God [by God himself from himself]. World and man belong to the Divine on different levels as emanations; the similarity between the Gods, Cosmos, society and man exists on all levels, which is clearly formulated and described by Plato and his followers-Neoplatonists (Plotinus, Proclus and Damascus). The manifestation of Cosmos is a manifestation of the Divine from itself outwards, while the manifestation itself remains essentially Divine — which, however, can be concealed from man in the manifested world. Put differently, there may be no Cosmos at all but God exists. Yet, since God is overflowing with abundance and exuberance, the world is manifested.⁴

The difference of the doctrines of manifestationism and creationism is one of the most difficult problems of traditionalism as a philosophy and method. Most often it is solved by turning to one of the Abrahamic or Pagan traditions. In traditionalism itself, manifestationism prevails alongside with the interest in those aspects of the Abrahamic traditions that are on the verge of orthodoxy and express a distinctive Pagan influence. We call this “theological” or “philosophical duality,” or dual faith in the Abrahamic traditions. Among traditionalist masters, the attitude to Christianity and its role in Europe was, in general, rather cool. Martin Heidegger was also inclined to a negative assessment of the influence of Christianity. Julius Evola pointed out that Christianity “belongs to the third caste” in Dumezil’s

3 On the attitude of the early Church to Hellenic wisdom and the essence of theological dual faith (the penetration of pagan philosophy into theology), see the second volume of “Polemos” by Askr Svarte. In Christianity in general and in Orthodoxy in particular, Platonism, though being repeatedly anathematised, is fragmentarily assimilated and incorporated into Christianity as a pagan basis.

4 Here we are already dealing with Sein-being and *physis*.

system, or to the level of craftsmen and farmers, those to whom the higher initiations and mysteries are inaccessible. In another of our works, relying on the opinion of the Baron, we clarified that in the context of the Indo-European structure, Judeo-Christianity and creationism are generally an under-caste phenomenon, or are localized among the so-called fourth caste: slaves, servants of the nobility, merchants, townspeople, beggars and outcasts—people devoid of mystical dimensions. But we mainly consider the ontological vision of the second and first castes—soldiers, priests, poets and philosophers. In the hierarchy of society and levels of existence, these classes, especially the first, are situated closer to the Gods, they embody their ethos and coexist with them in their subtle presence at the fire of the *Thing*. Manifestationism embodied in the philosophy of Heathen traditionalism is organic and complementary to the upper castes and to our perspective; in fact, that is where we started when we declared the proper understanding of Paganism and our method.

What is the specificity of creationism (τέχνη) and nihilism, which it contains as its negative nullifying nucleus? Mircea Eliade notes an important nuance: that the truth of Judaism could be formed and generally exist as such only in the desert of Western Asia.⁵ The poverty of the deserts that have shaped the Jewish nation, had an impact on their perception of the world and led to the fact that they were the first among the rest of the Semites who have consistently expressed the ideas of creationism and the contractual relationship between people and God (the Old and New Testaments). There is a hypothesis that in ancient times the space of Asian deserts was rich in vegetation and life, but then it was quickly desertified. It is difficult to determine with certainty whether the growth of the desert is a consequence of an insight of one of the Semitic tribes about the creationist ontology and metaphysics of Jahvism, or the desertification of the surrounding lands indicated to them this direction of thinking; it will be reasonable

5 See “The History of Faith and Religious Ideas” by Mircea Eliade.

to keep this non-random coincidence of dying nature and the formation of the nihilistic metaphysics in mind.

Historically, the Jews lived surrounded by other tribes that retained polytheism, which, coupled with constant military confrontations, formed the idea of being chosen by God and having an exclusive status in creationism (and Judaism in particular), which is fully inherited by all Abrahamic religions. The norm of relations between “us” and “them” becomes a privative war and the principle “we are all, they are nothing [if they refuse to accept the true faith]” reflected in religious dogmatism and intolerance. At the level of metaphysics, the genesis of Jewish identity and religion corresponds to the original *Nihil*, from which the demiurge God creates a world and man marked by poverty, with whom he later concludes a treaty. In radical versions of Abrahamism (in some schools of Islam and in Gnosticism), the very fact of the creation of the world is recognized as a negative accident, a mistake, and it is believed that it would be better if it did not exist at all. This radically distinguishes creationism from manifestationism, which at its extreme is expressed in the Divine monism explicitly developed in Advaita Darsana in India. The paradigm of all non-Indo-European creationist thinking is the desert, the poverty of which is resolved only through the invasion of God, full of excessive existence and good, and his creations, miracles and acts. Without God, the desert is deprivation, negation, disintegration (drying up) and nullification. This is extremely close to the Titanic poverty of Indo-European traditions, including the German-Scandinavian.

In the history of Heathenry as a paradigm, the emergence of creationism is a bright and uniquely Titanic moment of the rebellion against the fullness of the sacred and the usurpation of the entire vertical context by a single God, who bears the distinct features of a Titan. This perfectly fits into the logic of the sacred involution — the regression of the universal cycles as described by Hesiod or as they are set out in the most famous form in the Vedanta. History is a fall and destruction, including the destruction of the traditional metaphysics.

It is significant that creationism does not appear from scratch in the Jewish tribes; it is preceded by a more ancient and forgotten Heathen tradition, which has been preserved longer in other Semitic tribes and peoples. Researchers speak of the gradual emergence of creationism, which has absorbed and reinterpreted all the previous Pagan heritage: it is expressed in the usurpation of the entire pantheon of the Jews (and later of other peoples) by the figure of Elohim (the plural of God — “Gods”), and the usurpation of the pantheon of the Arabs by one of the Gods (Allah) several centuries later. In each case, the myth begins to take shape following the patterns of creationism, in order to emphasize that there was no Titanic usurpation of the pantheon. There were no other Gods, no tradition, no time — nothing; in the beginning there was only *Nihil*, the absolute lifeless desert of the Middle East — the shifting sandy abyss of matter.

The paradigm of Pagan European, and especially German, thinking is the forest (German *Wald*), forest trails (even seeming ones), thaw holes, clearings, and overall the “woodiness of the wood,” *Dickung*. The forest acts as a paradigm of thinking, as a set of archetypes, ways, concepts and words reflected in myths and included in the language of philosophy. One of the brightest philosophical praisers of the forest who explicitly made the forest a synonym of thinking in the German Logos was Martin Heidegger.

But, as we know, in Tradition — in Heathenism and manifestationism — there is no void as such, and no Nothingness. The whole Cosmos, all the nine worlds of Yggdrasil are permeated with Divine emanations and order — in some places less, in some places more. The Deity itself, according to Platonists and Neoplatonists, can diminish, hide from the world, leaving it as if alone. This is reflected in Proclus’ doctrine of the emanations of the One: coming-outside-of-itself (πρόοδος) and coming-back-to-itself (επιστροφή). Neoplatonists also use the image of the Sun, which is always One (ἓν) and motionless, and the rays that it emits. This is the *breath* of the Divine Cosmos, its pulsation and saturation with theophanies and epiphanies.

All attention is focused on Space and its hierohistory, myths, heroes, etc. As we see, the oblivion of the Abyss takes place in the primal beginning of cosmogony and is expressed in the word already as the revealed-in-concealment, in the image of the rupture in the fabric of be-ing with full focus on the growth of being. The emptiness of the Abyss in the German tradition is mentioned as an indication, but is not emphasized at all, being entirely excluded from the attention, until this instance becomes actualised in the philosophy of late Modernity in the German Logos of the XX century.⁶

* * *

But what is “Nothing” as a word, what can it tell us, how can it be understood? You can think of “nothing” linguistically as a negative pronoun for denoting objects, similar to the pronoun “no one.” In this case, nothing means the absence of something (someone), the essential emptiness: “we saw nothing.”

The concept of “nothing” as a process gives us a nullification akin to the concept of entropy, nihilism or the growth of chaos and disorder in the world, events, society and culture, which means we are dealing with a deviation from order, law and harmony. This is an exclusively Cosmic and Harmonic view: in this light, nothingness is the property and act of the Titanic. And nothingness becomes a pure negation of being and existence in a negative light — i.e., at its utmost, nothingness leads to non-being. In logic, the concept of “something,” which can be taken as a pronoun for the entire Cosmos and its content (A), will be opposed to non-A — “nothing” as the expression of “nothing of something [of being and existence]”; in this case, we are dealing with the element of pure logical negation.

But otherwise, this “nothing of [something]” can appear as a border and a kind of veil. Here is a sentence: “nothing of the myth is real (exists) in Modern times.” What does the word “nothing” say

6 It is important that Martin Heidegger did not recognise the creationist principle and was extremely critical of Christianity.

here? It acts as a pronoun of everything that is considered to be non-real, super-natural (fairy-tale) in the modern scientific picture of the world. How exactly is “nothing” pronounced regarding its being in Modernity? “Nothing [...] exists.” That is, there is nothing fabulous and wonderful in Modernity — the referent is nothing — it is not present, the expression is senseless: “there is no dragon in reality.” And at the same time we know (if you prefer, we know empirically and literally) that in the world of Tradition there are Gods, spirits, Daimons, Alves, dwarfs, Jötunns, metamorphoses and miracles. In the world of Tradition there is everything. But in the Modern world there is nothing of this “everything.” The word “everything” is as much a pronoun for everything mythical as “nothing.” It turns out that all that comprises the content of the word “everything” and the word “nothing” simultaneously is-there and is-not-there, exists and does not exist. But we should avoid sophistry. Everything mythical is in Tradition, but there it is not reflected as something different from the natural, as something super-natural; such a division occurs in Modernity, and already here “everything mythical” is-not: nothing of the myth exists.⁷

The statement “nothing exists” is a veil between two realities in which thinking is structured differently, and from the point of view of Heathen traditionalism, the latter thinking is less good as it is castrated. Thinking about the non-existent nothing as the content of the German-Scandinavian tradition within Modernity calls for an active imagination. But it is important to understand imagination not as some idle postmodern *allucinare*, delusion and fantasy in the spirit of fantasy literature that leads to the construction of the New Age simulacra. Imagination is a special quality of the Mind to make the non-real become real without putting it into material form, and moreover, to extract images not from reality, and such that have never

7 In fact, this very reasoning and consideration of this example is possible for the only reason that we are already not in Tradition and can allow ourselves to use the terms such as “Tradition,” “Myth,” “Modernity,” etc. But at this distance we also gain the possibility *to look into the clearing*.

existed before, the images that were-not, taking them from Nothing. At that, the word “imagination” contains the root “image” — the image in its emergence and formation.⁸ The word “imagination” means becoming-in-the-image, entering-in-the-image. It is similar to placing-here and bringing-out or producing, which are the praxis of poetry. Imagination and poetry are one and the same. Imagination is the Dionysian mode (structure) of the Mind, always present and essentially belonging to priests, poets and philosophers. It is ecstatic — stimulating imagination; it is transgressive — drawing from the beyond; dancing on the border.

In modern Russian, the pronoun “nothing,” which is negation, is expressed as a double negation through the use of the particle “not” in the sentence, for example: *ничего не было* — literally “nothing was not” (which means “there was nothing”); *ничто не существует* — literally “nothing does not exist” (which means “nothing exists”); *никто не пришел* — literally “no one has not come” (which means “no one has come”); *ничего не произошло* — literally “nothing did not happen” (which means “nothing happened”), and so on. The double negation in the Russian language emphasizes the non-beingness of Nothing, or more precisely, of that for what it serves as an umbrella pronoun. At the same time, it emphasizes the non-beingness of Nothing as a category of reality: nothing *is not*, and expressions such as “nothing is” or “there happened nothing,” “there came nothing” look awkward in Russian and require bringing to linguistic harmony (“nothing happened”). The Beingness of Nothingness is absurd; it is ruled by the maxim of Parmenides: “being is, but nothing is not.” In Germanic languages, the situation is somewhat different; in English the construction “It was Nothing” requires only one negation; in Icelandic we find the verb “to be” in the past tense when describing the Abyss (*gap var...*); in German, “nothing” is expressed by the negation *Nichts*. For a Russian-speaking perception, such constructions

8 Similarly, the Latin *imago* is inherited in other European languages as an image, an idea or an icon (gr. εἰκών).

look rigid and archaic, as they really retain the older structure of the common use of derivatives from the verb “to be,” in contrast to the Russian language that has lost this practice.

Thus, we see that “nothing” somehow *exists* in the language, it is held in the language and only in it, because in reality there is no emptiness, it has no referent. But the word “nothingness,” “nothing” or “no-thing” itself contains something (“thing” in the word “no-thing”) — a *thing* that it denies, thereby creating an indication of the absence of something (everything). Again, the pure element of Nothing is elusive and inexpressible; to denote it, a certain *being* is used, put in the language through denial as in the examples with a rupture in the fabric; only in the word the root “thing” is the framing canvas, and the *no-* negation is the indication of the gap where Nothing reveals itself. Stricter is the German word *Nichts* as a pure negation, it is generally impossible to correctly convey it using the prefix “no -”; an approximation will be “no-ness” as nothing of anything (anything at all).

The key here is the *ability* or the *skill* of seeing in the concealing word “Nothing” the very *thing* and its negation as an indication of [Nothing]⁹. We may understand this “*skill*” as something similar to the craft ability to do something with one’s hands. But, for instance, the Slavic word *uměti is connected with the word “mind” and is closer in meaning to the verb “to know,” and in Greek it is connected with εἰδέναι, meaning “to see” (“idea” points to something visible, “Hades” to something invisible). To be able and to have the skill is *to see*. But to see what? To see Nothing that is again revealed-in-concealment, and therefore we need see the unconcealed within the concealed, that is, to *know* how to distinguish between ἀλήθεια and the λογός that it contains, which becomes visible (ιδέα).

9 Here, *at the end* of this particular phrase, we have come to the full exhaustion of language, we have come to the very edge, where even the word “Nothing” does not express what it indicates. Here comes a sharp and radical breakdown, Ab-grund, a-mazement.

Nihilism

The problem of nihilism in Modern times is closely connected to the shift of the level (a subtle substitution of the eternal Pagan abyss for Nihil) during the formation of Judeo-Christianity and Christian Europe on its basis. Modernity is based on the denial of Tradition in its Christian form, even in the rather liberal Protestantism. The subject of nihilism is the subject of so many profound and comprehensive works and studies that even a brief consideration of them goes beyond our abilities, and we can only outline a number of essential provisions on nihilism. In *Polemos*, we have clearly and comprehensively shown that Modernism is a direct consequence, a child of Christianity and Judaism, and hence of all creationism. Nihilism is the embodiment of Nihil in a world where “God has died,” according to Nietzsche. Nihilism is the nullity (bringing to nothingness and nonentity) of everything and everywhere, of all sacred structures and narratives (Mythos and Logos-as-speech). We are talking about the desertification of human beings and the world (*die Welt*); where the groves of the Academy, of Teutoburg and Schwarzwald once were, now lies the constantly multiplying and lifeless metaphysical wasteland.

In Tradition, the Norse one in particular, it is possible to find something similar to nihilism in Titanism and the metahistorical war of the Titans (Jotnar) with the Gods (the Aesir and the Vanir). In this case, the Jotnar are the actors of nihilism, they are those who nullify and devalue the sacred and the wisdom (the murder of Kvasir and the passive keeping of his Odroerir wisdom in their poverty). Titans are those who bring the world to the anti-divine disenchantment and strict material (or virtual) identities (the poverty of interpretations, rigid [auto]reference; Jean Baudrillard’s simulacra). The abolition of the Divine dimension — of the noetic (Νοῦς) saturation of Cosmos — leads to the ossification of the world, to the cooling of the clay creation, to the flattening of meanings, the replacement of the Divine abundance pouring into all the worlds of the Mind for

Titanic poverty that absorbs the last glimpses of rays-meanings in its subterranean bowels. In them, like in the sandy abyss of God-forsaken creationism, there is no “passing-out” for the light of [Mind], because there is nowhere-from, and there is no “coming back” because there is nowhere to return: everything is totally immanent, causal, material, not-of-the-Mind — it is dull, banal and vulgar.

But the way to Nothingness as to the reverse of the military dimension of the German Logos means a violation of the warrior ethos and order and a specific abolition of the Mind in the form of frenzy or sacred madness. In this aspect, the path to non-order, other order, is very similar to the nihilistic abolition of the Mind. Hence comes the convergence of the Left-Hand Path as a nonconformist transgression with the Titanic dimensions. But essentially the situation appears as a balancing [dance] on the border, like the passage of Odysseus’s ship between Scylla and Charybdis. In other words, the path of wonder leading to the Abyss is not identical and even directly opposite (the victory over the Titans by cunning, not by force) to the Titanic strategies of impoverishment, materialisation and virtualisation of being and existence. However, from the point of view of the strict solarity and militancy of the Mind, this path can approach Titanic nihilism to the point of non-distinction.

In philosophy, according to M. Heidegger, we can find that nihilism is the fate of the West and Western thinking. The whole history of the Western Logos is the history of the oblivion of beyng, from the pre-Socratics, who were the first to question beyng, to Plato and Aristotle, who secured the oblivion of beyng and marked the End of the First Beginning of philosophy, the whole history of Western thought up to Nietzsche is the history of not the end but of the finishing to the End, up to the full stop at the end of the sentence; “here is the end.” The oblivion of beyng is the oblivion of the truth, of the unconcealedness of that clearing in which the essence and meaning of existence are revealed. Therefore, the regression of Western thinking and falling into τέχνη and nihilism have been predetermined since

antiquity, and with the advent of Christianity (creationism) they received a qualitative boost in speed.¹⁰

In the German language, as we have already pointed out, *Nothing* corresponds to the stricter word *Nichts*; from which stems the word “to nullify” or “to nothing” — *nichten*. Heidegger uses *nichten* in relation to existence when talking about the oblivion of being, while Nihilism is denoted by the borrowing of *Nihilismus*, emphasizing that we are talking about Nihil and derivatives. Here, Friedrich Nietzsche becomes the herald of European Nihilism. One of the central ideas of his philosophy is the opposition between the eternal Rome and the eternal Judea,¹¹ which is congenial to us. In Nietzsche, Rome acts as a paradigm and affirmation of the active principle of life, the eternal “yes” to life, while Judea (Judeo-Christianity and its morality) — as a suffocating “no,” which eventually overcomes the stagnating historic Rome. The criticism of Christianity is one of the components of Nietzsche’s criticism of modernity and the genealogy of Nihilism, along with the pessimism of decadence, mechanicism and positivism¹². The philosopher suggests starting from this all in his reassessment of values. The epochal exclamation, “God is dead!” is intended to summarize that the era of Tradition is gone completely. We killed it; that

10 From the point of view of Pagan traditionalism, at this point there happens a structural substitution in the European Logos: authentic manifestationism is replaced by the foreign non-Indo-European creationism. But Heidegger sees the history of Europe and thinking as a holistic narrative. In many ways, the question of the relationship between the authentic and the foreign lies in the comparison of Plato and Aristotle with creationism in its Christian form, where [neo]Platonism largely compensates for the negativity of Judeo-Christianity, especially in the field of Christian mysticism. For more information on the pagan view and the separation of the authentic and the alien, see *Polemos* by Askur Svarte, vol. II; you can find an opposite example of the appropriation of Platonism by Christianity in “Metaphysics Of The Good Tidings” and “In Search Of The Dark Logos” by Alexander Dugin.

11 See, for example, O. Y. Tsendrovsky, “Rome Against Judea: Nietzsche’s Interpretation Of The History and Genealogy Of Christianity.”

12 See *The Will To Power* by Nietzsche.

is, “we” as a person of Modernity, as a child of creationism. The death of God concerns Christianity as the only dominant (in Protestant and Catholic versions) tradition in Europe, but in fact this sentence is imposed not on Christ/Jehovah but Tradition as a whole. Despite the fact that Nietzsche opposes the nihilism (the negative spirit of suffocation) of Judea to the vital Rome, his attitude to Antiquity and to Platonism in particular is controversial and critical.

Another indication and metaphysical insight about nihilism can be found in Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*: “The deserts grow: woe him who does them hide!” The desert of nihilism is a metaphysical reflection of the Jewish desert (M. Eliade) inherited by all Abrahamic religions and freely expanding after the death of God (Gods). Heidegger interpreted Nietzsche as the ultimate end of European metaphysics and philosophy: it is all over, the ending is finished, no “but” and no “if” — only a big final full stop, and nothing more. Nonetheless, Nietzsche himself could not overcome metaphysics and break into Another Beginning of philosophy, which he predicted as Dionysian.

The same critical attitude to Nietzsche’s optimism and to his overcoming of nihilism, is postulated by Ernst Jünger in his work “Across The Line.” After the Second World War, he argues that the optimistic view of nihilism as a “wound that can heal” stays unconfirmed for more than half a century of history after the publication of *The Will to Power*. Ernst Jünger attempts to give nihilism the correct definition and to determine its relation to pessimism, disease, evil and the interpretation as a “stage in the process of development.” Being a veteran of two world wars, Ernst Jünger finds a rather precise term for nihilism in the military vocabulary — “defeatism,” which he compares with a virus that is rapidly spreading and leading to fear, pessimism and invariable defeat. Very briefly, Ernst Jünger touches upon the Titanic aspect of nihilism as a manifestation of eternal becoming, which, however, never reaches its goal, because it is not capable of it in principle. It is more accurately expressed by his brother Friedrich Georg Jünger in *The Greek Myths*, describing Sisyphus rolling a rock

up the hill, which constantly rushes down at the peak — an archetypal example of infinite becoming never reaching the target. Ernst Jünger writes:

The difficulty in defining nihilism is that the spirit has no idea of *nothing*. It approaches a territory where both contemplation and cognition disappear: two great tools without which the spirit cannot do. It is impossible to create either an image or idea of nothing.

Therefore, nihilism only shares borders with the area that precedes nothingness, and will never come in contact with its main power. To be precise, one can also have the experience of dying but not death.

Jünger's remark is fully consistent with the nature of the Titanic as the eternal and doomed to failure, the incompleteness (poverty) of becoming. This is the fundamental difference between the path to Nothingness and nullification (Nihilism, *Nihilismus*): the latter is a Sisyphean impossibility, a bad infinity, in contrast to the ecstatic instantaneous breakthrough. Here again appears the connection with creationism, since the infinity of nihilism, doomed to eternal failure and incompleteness (the inability to move from nullification to Nothingness, from dying to Death), is due to the ontological break with the sacred (God/Gods). A world without God is a world of imperfection: "where there are no Gods, there are always Titans," writes Friedrich Georg Jünger. Yet in Heathen manifestationism, transgressive ecstatic contemplation of the One or of the Abyss is available to priests, poets and philosophers.

A world without God is a strictly material world where matter is not sacralized, left to itself and its poverty. The apotheosis of materialism is the Modern Period with its causal determinism and technologization, increasing ordering and the mechanizing alienation of man from his essence, including in the sphere of society and the State, presented as "freedom from." In *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche asks, "you are free from, but what are you free for?" Jünger explains that nihilism is not as much anarchism and chaos as something contrary — establishment of

order, system and the mechanistic logic of the Worker. This is similar to Martin Heidegger's *τεχνη* and its final incarnation in machines as the crown and fate of the oblivion of *beyng*, also resonating with the simulation of the demiurgy of God at the craftsman level of "human, all too human," later even more aggravated in the process of pure and endlessly virtual semiurgy of signs and simulacra. *In the ontology of creationism, the world is a creation, and its fate is an endless and unsuccessful imitation.*

Nevertheless, Ernst Jünger postulates optimism about the fate of Europe in the element of nihilism. He says that the "head" has already crossed the fatal line, but under it, in the element of nihilism, there still remains a body, and especially its lower part is still fraught with the potential for explosion. But the "head" has already been released, and humanity has the opportunity to rise. In this he echoes the well-known optimism of Julius Evola, who similarly reasoned that if Europe in its fate first enters into decline and nihilism — and involves the whole world in accordance with the thesis implicitly shared by Evola that "the fate of Europe is the fate of the world" — then it is destined to be the first to come out of the era of darkness and show the way to everyone else.

Five years later, Jünger's work "Across The Line" is answered by Martin Heidegger in his work "Concerning The Line." Unlike the optimistic Ernst Jünger, Heidegger is interested in the "line" of nihilism itself, introduced by Jünger as a metaphor. Heidegger again raises the question of nihilism as the fate of Europe and the need for turning to *beyng*. The way out of the trap of nihilism is the new language of *beyng*, which will open the way to it. Alain de Benoist briefly formulates the essence of the friendly polemics of M. Heidegger and E. Jünger:

What conclusions can be drawn? I was talking about a "dialogue" about nihilism between Jünger and Heidegger, but the term does not fit at all. Heidegger and Jünger often share similar assumptions, but often come to opposite conclusions. They both agree that nihilism finds its most solid

support in modern technology, but they have different concepts of technology. For Jünger, technology has primarily a “Titanic” nature, while for Heidegger it is metaphysics made flesh. Jünger sees nihilism as something contrary to the values of Western metaphysics and Christianity. Heidegger sees it as the ultimate consequence of these same values. Jünger confines himself to saying that man has already “crossed the line” in his attitude to nihilism. Heidegger also encourages us to wonder what this “crossing” means. In fact, Heidegger relies upon Jünger’s work to go further and deeper to a broader perspective in thinking, in order to prompt thinking to change itself. Jünger offers “rebels” to “retreat into the forest.” Heidegger invites them to step on the forest path that leads to the clearing, to the “clarity” or truth (*aletheia*), non-concealment, to the exit, finally, from oblivion — to go out from this thousand-year concealment that enveloped the history of Europe and whose worldwide domination now makes us think about leaving it.¹³

The oblivion of be-*ing* leaves the existence to fade in solitude, and Heidegger clearly states that Christianity has played an important part (but not decisive in its *Seyngeschichtliche*) in this by introducing the division into *creator* (the one who creates) and *creatum* (what is created), which he himself calls “Christian world-denial”¹⁴. He interprets Nietzsche’s “eternal return” as an essentially Christian message of salvation in the growing nihilism of be-*ing*.

According to Heidegger, the fading of be-*ing* is the destruction of be-*ing*, bringing it to non-be-*ing* (be-*ing* devoid of its essence), which is not equal to Nothing:

Nothingness is higher and deeper than Non-being — it is too great and full of dignity for just anyone, and all of us together, to stand before him like this.

Non-being is less than nothingness, for it is torn out of being, and it *nothings* (*nichtet*) all be-*ing*.

13 See “Jünger, Heidegger and Nihilism” by Alain de Benoist.

14 See “Reflections II–VI (Black Notebooks 1931–1938)” by M. Heidegger.

It is less, for it is not yet decided where it is. Not with *be-ing*, becoming more and more *be-ing*, and not with Nothingness.

No less vague are Heidegger's notes concerning *Nichts* (Nothing) and its decomposition into *Nicht* (No), which is difficult to be decoded into the English language.

The philosophical reaction to nihilism is existentialism, which raises the questions of the comprehension of fear, freedom, alienation of human existence, the negative reaction to the Enlightenment and the Modern Period. In German philosophy, F. Nietzsche can be called a forerunner of existential questioning, and the fathers of existentialism are S. Kierkegaard and the psychologist K. Jaspers. The profession of the latter largely predetermined one of the directions of existentialism, its psychological and therapeutic applications, which significantly differ from the existential intentions of Heidegger. Through Martin Heidegger and his work *Being and Time* existentialism comes to France, where it gains enormous popularity, most closely associated with the figures of Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus. In French literature, we can also highlight Louis-Ferdinand Céline and his book "Journey to the End of the Night," which bares the existential nerve of the era in its purest form, without euphemization and the search for a way out in the spirit of Sartre's *Nausea*.

Heidegger himself had a very negative attitude to the "existential philosophy" of Karl Jaspers and he thought even worse of the French existentialists, who did not understand his message at all and, dismembering his thought, created something completely alien to the existential situation of *Dasein*. When *Dasein* decides (*Ereignis*) on authentic (*eigene*) existence—it turns to death and authentic *beyng*. Prior to this Event-decision, it exists in a non-authentic way—in other words, falsely, in the pursuit of *beyng*, unsure of its possible decision on authenticity. The authenticity of *Dasein* is eventive, not permanent, it is a task. Turning to the image of the German warrior, we can say that his moment of authentic being-here is the moment

of battle. The pause of peace between world wars and battles is an alienation towards non-authenticity; at this time, the German *is* not in *Dasein* but *exists* in its direction, in its anticipation. But the increasing alienation from *Dasein* in general immerses one in a situation of being forsaken by *being* (*Seinverlassenheit*). *Dasein* itself is immersed in *Seinverlassenheit*, and this estrangement from being is the starting point of existential philosophy, which seeks to justify this alienation (the abandonment by being) as a completely normal state of human freedom. In other words, there is no necessity to get involved in any battle, to meet face to face with death and to turn to the authentic mode of being in *Dasein*; it is enough to find a point of comfort in a peaceful life and enjoy it and its freedom.

Since “God is dead” in Europe, man is left facing the abyss of Nothingness — the meaninglessness of the world and existence. The decadence of nihilism has brought man to a de-idealized world of his complete freedom. Existentialists tried to comprehend this situation and give an answer and a plan how to bear his newfound freedom and cope with the horror that it reveals. The atheistic direction of the leftist Sartre and Camus have not given any intelligible answers to this question; in *Nausea*, Sartre reduced the whole decision to the strategy of sublimation of Sigmund Freud in the final scene of the novel. If God is no longer, then we should live with a creative goal-setting and in line with Marxism and socialism, as suggested by Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. Later, Sartre tried to narrow existentialism down to a new version of humanism and banalization of the horror of human freedom in society, including freedom from society, against which Heidegger himself wrote the accusatory “Letter on Humanism.”

In the context of wrong understanding and the resounding glory of existentialism, Julius Evola came forward with criticism of Heidegger as an existentialist and outlined the limitations of this approach. In doing so, Evola has not looked into Heidegger’s fundamental ontology;

he has not noticed the proximity of its main statements to traditionalism and a much more thorough criticism of Modernity¹⁵.

The attempts of existentialism to find an answer and to outline a strategy for solving the problem of human existence in a world without God and without the Divine (or authentic being-here) were not successful. But existentialism gave shape to a number of essential questions and statements regarding the crucial role of borderline situations in human life: the collision with death; the finiteness of life; the horror and detachment (alienation) of being from the element of life; the discovery of nihilism (the negative nothingness) in the world and the negative disposition of the universe (the infinitely bored mood of *Dasein* and the existential of *Sein-zum-Tode* in Heidegger).

The title of Louis-Ferdinand Céline's novel *Journey to the End of the Night* can be considered as a maxim of existentialism. Existentialism is an essentially authentic reaction to Nietzsche's peak of nihilism and World War II. In its search for ways and answers, it only outlined important questions, offering no real solution; while Céline's hero was characterized by a hopeless downfall as a journey to the edge of the night, existentialism became aware of this edge and gave it a name, but it has not found what to do and where to go further. At midnight, the darkness of the night is so black that one forgets that there was once light.

Looking back, we can say that E. Jünger's optimism was excessive, and today we cannot talk about any crossing of the Line of nihilism. We are still here, and we need to focus on the Line itself and the language which can give birth to the true answer to this question, as Martin Heidegger wrote.

At the same time, we notice the obvious Christian Protestant foundation of existentialism: the Death of God (the loss of the sacred in the de-idealization of the Church, considered in Rudolf Bultmann's works on structure and kerygma) opens *Nihilismus*, abandoning man

15 See *Ride the Tiger* by J. Evola and "Heidegger Reader of Evola" by J. Cessa.

as a creation in the abyss of matter, left to himself and his godless freedom. We cannot find a similar *nothinging* emptiness in Heathen manifestationism. The gods may be “resting” (*Deus otiosus*), fleeing or hiding from the world before their triumphant return (*theophany* and *epiphany*), to give momentum to the Wheel of the Year, to renew Nature, and so on. Death also does not place man in front of the abyss of horror, as the afterlife is not non-being but other-being, transition, transformation, rebirth and initiation.

Titans and their privative, impoverished being are as close to the nihilism of creationism as possible. We can (and will not be the first and only) recognize the figures of the Titans who have usurped Olympus/Yggdrasil in Yahweh, Jehovah, or Allah; the Gods have left and not returned (from captivity?), man began to exist inauthentically and turned into the “mass” of *das Man*. For Tradition, this situation is both pathological and eschatological. We are dealing with the Christian and, in every sense, post-Christian discourse. The true Tradition lies under the metaphysical rubble of decaying creationism, the structures of Modernity and the simulacra of Postmodernity.

To get fully immersed in Tradition is not only impossible but also would be an existentially meaningless search for painkillers. In the German-Scandinavian tradition, as well as in any other, nihilism and Nothingness are not posed as a problem and not digested in full; they are merely denoted by the figures of Titans and monsters or named in the first acts of cosmogony. Heathen traditionalism has a much greater potential as a philosophy and position in relation to Modernity. There is no place and no call for retreating back into the past, this call being understood in different degrees of literalism, but there is a possibility of understanding and passing over the edge of the night without being identified with nihilism and its Titanic creationist discourse.

At Ragnarök, the Wolf devours the Sun, and the Titan Surtr cuts Yggdrasil down, and the whole universe, burning to ashes, plunges into darkness, waiting for the return of the Gods. Do we now live like people who took refuge in the darkness of the forest and are

experiencing this moment of destruction? After all, the destruction of the world is not a literal collapse, devastation, the onset of literal darkness as the absence of physical light. Killing the Gods, the Titans remain and rule (according to F. G. Jünger). Their world is available to us directly, we live in it. The fallen Tree is the abolished vertical hierarchy of the sacred, instead of which there reigns the blind night of chthonic poverty (with the great contribution of the coming of Christianity). But those who woke up in the night—should we be deceived by the glare of the screens of gadgets pretending to be the light of the Sun, which we do not know? Or to infinitely wait for a new sunrise? Which will turn out to be a huge plasma screen as wide as the horizon of the available vision or a virtual reality cable from the Wachowski trilogy?

Should we not, in the Night of the World, stop our anguished floundering and find silence and our foothold in the Void of Nothingness, which is always available to us in essence, and from this silence sharing borders with Nothingness, to silence-out the new Word of God?

I X

Götter und Gottheit

IN THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE, the word “Бог” (*Boh*) is commonly used to refer to sacred celestial figures. It goes back to the the proto-Slavic *bog and, according to M. Vasmer, to the proto-Indo-European root *bhag (Sanskrit *bhága* — “master”), which means “to bestow,” “to give” and “to share.” Etymologically, “Boh” is “the Giver” and “Bestower.”

In the Germanic languages, the word *Gott* became common; *God* in English, *Goð/Guð* in Old Norse. Originally this word was neuter, faceless and impersonal language through the floor. But with the advent of Christianity, the word became masculine and reflected the predominant Christian worship of the one God, more personified.¹ Thus, the language reflects the reduction of the horizon of the Divine and its reduction to one figure. It was the word *Gott/God* that was adopted by Christianity in the Germanic languages to refer to the concept of “God,” unlike many other synonyms.

The word itself dates back to the Teutonic *guda(n) (God), proto-Indo-European root *ǵhuto derived from *ǵhew meaning “to overflow” or from *ǵhaw meaning “to summon” (to invoke). Etymologically, *Gott* has the following possible meanings: “[one who

1 The modern feminine is *Göttin*, plural *Götter*.

was] summoned” (invoked by the priest) or “one who has Overflowed [in their Welfare, and created the world; *to flow like to bestow with gifts*].” With the advent of Christianity, these etymological lines interlock on the Semitic-only God.

The German-Scandinavian tradition uses several different words to refer to the concept of “God.” One of the most regular roots at the end of the compound names of Odin is the root **tyr*. We meet him in the independent name of the As Thur, the original God of War and Judgment, and the corresponding Tiwaz rune ↑. The Scandinavian form of the word, *Tyr*, dates back to the proto-German **tiwaz*, which in turn is the German version of the proto-Indo-European **deywós* (God), whence the Greek Ζεύς (Zeus), Dievas of the Baltic Peoples, the religious term Dyeus Pater (God the Father), the Latin Deo/Deus and the English Theo (like in “theology”). *Deywós* means “heaven,” “day” and “sky” in general as God-Sky. The root of *tyr* is found in such names of Odin as *Fimbultyr* (the Great God), *Geirtyr* (the God of the Spear), *Hangatyr* (the Hanged God / God of the Hanged), *Hertyr* (God of Armies), *Runatyr* (God of Runes), *Sigtyr* (God of Victory), *Valtyr* (the Fallen God) and *Veratyr* (God of People). As you can see, most of them are related to the semantics of war; besides, the ending *-tyr* adorns each name of God and its meaning with the semantics of war, judgment and justice, the supreme Deity and its heavenly solar power of the victor.

Three names attract special attention. The God of Runes, *Runatyr*, stands out from the general military semantics, as the use of magic in battle and for protective purposes comes from the use of spells and dark magical aspects in war. Moreover, the acquisition of runes is related to the myth paradigmatic of the shamanic transgressive aspect of tradition — the myth of Odin’s self-sacrifice on the tree of *Hangtyr*; the latter is one of the names of Odin, to whom human sacrifices were brought by hanging, as, for example, it happened with the Legion of Quinctilius Varus in the Teutoburg Forest. Also the name of *Valtyr*, the Fallen God, may refer us to the myth of sacrifice as well, but the

use of the root **val*, which is strongly associated with the meaning “to fall on the battlefield,” tells us of the eschatological semantic circle where this manifestation of Odin takes place. Based on the roots, the name can be interpreted like this: Fallen Sky / Fallen Heaven, which resonates with the finale of Ragnarök where Surt cuts Yggdrasil down. In the general semantic contour of the root *tyr*, these two names are more shifted towards the depths of the inner dimension of the German Logos than others.

The dominant race among the Gods and all beings are the Aesir, including Freya Vanadis, who as a Van was accepted into their family. The word *As*², plural *Æsir*, dates back to the proto-Germanic **ansuz* (“God” and the rune 𐌺). According to one version, this root goes back to the pre-Indo-European **h₂énsus*, meaning “to generate.” G. Köbler points to the proto-Indo-European root **ās* with the meaning “to shine,” “to burn,” which corresponds to the semantics of the supreme solar Deities and the flame of the fire of the Aesir’s *Thing*. Since the Aesir are supreme beings, then we are talking about cosmology and the generation of order: they are the Aesir (Gods) because they give rise to [the Divine] order in the Cosmos, reflected in different names and titles such as *tyr* and *ragna* (corresponding to the meanings of Lord and Lady) and in the war as a fatherly Uranian element of the Germans, as the *Völva* tells us about “the Aesir at the Thing.”

From the specific proper names of the Aesir, especially Odin, which reflect certain manifestations-theophanies and functions of the Gods in the world, we ascended to the very “generic” words denoting “gods” as concepts and distinguishing them from other figures. We see that all the pre-Indo-European and already (proto-)Germanic words that took the lexical meaning of “God” in their roots, etymologically trace back to heaven, abundance, overflowing-out-of-itself and giving, and are also associated with war and celestial solar power. None of them has the semantics of privation, deprivation or poverty. By

2 In Old Norse, the form “*æsir*” is expressed as *qss* with the root **os*, which is found in a number of names in Scandinavian languages.

definition, Gods are those who carry the Sky, Light, War and Wealth, and lavish them generously. Returning to the axis of Gods-Men in *das Geviert* and remembering that the Gods win playfully, we will see that the awakening of the *Daimon* in man (deification), which we have defined as the victory of the Gods, is the revelation of the heavenly, warlike and abundant dimension by man and the deliverance from any material chthonic and existential poverty and oppression.

* * *

However, when we apply words such as *God*, *Gott*, *Gođ*, *Tyr*, *Æsir* and so on, we still remain in the same space of the word-as-limitation, but this time on a higher level (or a linguistically deeper one). The personal names of the *Æsir* express various aspects of the unspeakable Deity, and different variations of the lexeme “God” also point to the more fundamental, Heaven-rooted aspects of the Gods: various specific names of the *Æsir*, for the only reason that they are *Æsir*, express the heavenly divine nature of what they embody in the world.

Gott is already as something *benamed* and *summoned*, but is not the inexpressible Nothingness like the apophatic *Selbst* and the reverse side of our Logos.

Meister Eckhart: The Breakthrough to Gottheit

With the establishment of the Christian discourse in Europe, the fate of Pagan traditions (Heathenism in general) was divided and went in two directions. One of them is the preservation of customs, rituals, beliefs and interpretations of Christianity and its saints in the Pagan context in the body of the people and its folklore, which preserved many details. Many things are preserved among the folk, only outwardly clothed in the language of the new religion, but this “many” does not contain philosophical meta-reflections; this is the ontic level of Tradition. Another way is the incorporation, underground or open inclusion and assimilation of *fragments* of Pagan “Hellenic” wisdom as part of theology, ritual and esoteric mysticism, for example

Hesychasm. It is all called “Christianity before Christ” in Christian exegesis and the “glimpses of truth” in the teachings of the erring heathens. At that, Pagan philosophy, for such it was at that time (in particular, Platonism, Aristotelism and Neoplatonism), are explicitly anathematized, being subsequently either avoided or ignored by theologians. We have described this situation as a “philosophical” or “theological” duality — a dual faith where the formal language of Christian Orthodoxy is followed by non-creationist structures of thought and non-creationist metaphysics. Of course, such an underground pagan trend in theology does not turn all creationism into paganism expressed in different words, and theologians themselves do not consciously determine their pagan identity. But within the boundaries of the language and the paradigm of creationism, thorough work is done to overcome the ontological gap between God and the world — between God and man. With the help of this philosophy, Christian monks, ascetics, mystics and theologians overcome Christianity itself in essence, remaining in its body (of course, not always) in form and language.

In the German space, the most famous representatives of this practice are the “Rhineland mystics” — a galaxy of theologians and mystics who founded a theology, German in language and spirit (they wrote and preached in German), along with a mystical reading of Christianity different from the doctrine of the See of Rome. The founder of the Rhineland mysticism is considered to be Meister Eckhart, a member of a noble family and a monk of the Dominican order.

The core of Eckhart’s mysticism is the doctrine of detachment.³ He opens the introduction with the following words:

I have read many writings of pagan masters, and of the prophets, and of the Old and New Testaments, and have sought earnestly and with all diligence to discover which is the best and highest virtue whereby a man may chiefly

3 See “On Detachment” by Meister Eckhart.

and most firmly join himself to God, and whereby a man may become by grace what God is by nature, and whereby a man may come closest to his image when he was in God, wherein there was no difference between him and God, before God made creatures.⁴

Eckhart's detachment is a form of spiritual ascetic practice and a method of apophatic theology and anthropology. God is absolutely self-sufficient, and he does not need, according to Eckhart, any qualities and properties. The path to the comprehension of God runs through detachment from all his properties and qualities. For man, detachment is the practice of full concentration of consciousness on the apophatic principle of God and the diminution of the Self, as well as the highest virtue that Eckhart places above love or compassion — the traditional exoteric Christian virtues. In diminishing and detaching, the believer comprehends the divine spark in his soul and approaches the identity of God; detachment is “the spirit that remains motionless in all circumstances.” To describe the state of detachment, Meister Eckhart resorts to a metaphor:

And so, if the heart is to be ready to receive the highest, it must rest on absolutely nothing, and in that lies the greatest potentiality which can exist. For when the detached heart rests on the highest, that can only be on nothing, since that has the greatest receptivity. Let us take an example from nature: if I want to write on a wax tablet, then anything written on that tablet already, however wonderful it may be, will prevent me from writing there; and if I want to write I must erase or destroy whatever is on the tablet, and the tablet is never so suitable for me to write on as when there is nothing on it. Similarly, if God is to write the highest on my heart, then everything called “this and that” must be expunged from my heart, and then my heart stands in detachment. Then God can work the highest according to His supreme will. Therefore the object of a detached heart is neither this nor that.⁵

4 Translated by Maurice O’C. Walshe.

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Fully embodying this practice, the believer reaches unity with God in his condition “before creation.” At the level of the apophatic depth of the soul, there is no difference between man and God but there is Unity; at the level of the cataphatic — that is, the manifested phenomenal world — God and man are different. In the ethos of detachment, the Neoplatonic teaching of the One and the unity with it is explicitly manifested, expressed in the language of Christian theology. The apophatic nature of God is duplicated by the apophatic Godly principle in man himself. None of the worldly virtues is the highest and genuine, except for detachment. None of the qualities assigned to God are truly inherent in him. This brings Eckhart to the fact that God is Nothingness, and the detached heart also settles in [the same Divine] Nothingness.

Eckhart’s apophatic theology contradicted the cataphatic theology of Catholicism, which prompted the great mystic to come to the idea of *the distinction between God (Gott) and his Godhead (Gottheit)*. God as *Gott* is the cataphatic Trinity to which prayers and worship of Church are addressed; it is the existing God who has qualities. But at the basis (*Grund*) of God as be-ing there lies — or more precisely, arises from this basis — God-as-*Gott*; in other words, the basis is the apophatic Godhead — *Gottheit* — as the essence of be-ing, its nature. It is impossible to offer prayers to the Godly or to ascribe to it qualities and movement; the Godly is dark, self-sufficient, unmoved and not existing as be-ing; the Godly is the depth, *Urgrund*, the deep foundation of God or, in our context, the Gods and their manifestations and names.

God (the Gods) as Gott(er) already belongs to *be-ing* through its qualities: the Trinity, faces, names, images or, for example, the bestowing (and limitation) of the previously faceless *Gott* with a definition of sex with the advent of Christianity; it classifies him as being on the level of Sein-being. Meister Eckhart emphasizes that the true God as *Gottheit* is above all being, considering the opinions of previous

theologians on the relationship of God and being as the identity of “*God is being*”:

Foolish teachers say that God is pure being; He is so much higher than being as the supreme Angel is higher than the mosquito.

And elsewhere Eckhart says: “*God is God in His essence.*” The essence of God is the Divine, and in the Divine God is as He is. *Gottheit* is apophatic, it is Nothingness in which Gott is based (*Grundung*); the essence of God (Gods) is Nothingness.

And further:

He who has God thus essentially, takes Him divinely, and for him God shines forth in all things, for all things taste divinely to him, and God’s image appears to him from out of all things. God flashes forth in him always, in him there is detachment and turning away, and he bears the imprint of his beloved, present God.

Based on Neoplatonism (Plotinus), Meister Eckhart, within the Catholic German theology and in the language of Christianity, overcomes the ontological gap between the nature of God and the nature of man, and he does so strictly in the German spirit, once again revealing the apophatic principle in God and in man.

A natural result of this insight — a breakthrough into the structure of the German Logos and the subordination of the Christian language to its truth — was the Inquisition trial of M. Eckhart. He himself did not live to see the end of the trial (1327 ♪), which ended with the bull of Pope John XXII, in which he called Eckhart’s teachings heretical.

His views were advocated by his successor, also a Rhineland mystic, a Dominican of a knightly family Henry Suso, in his apologetic work, “*Little Book of Truth*”; he also developed the concept of the foundation or ground (*Grund*) that we have already employed. Suso calls the state of detachment of M. Eckhart “abandonment” — *Gelassenheit* — and develops the apophatic teaching of his mentor in more detail in the

format of the questions of a young man and the answers he receives from the Truth or from the Word (Logos):

The disciple began again to question: How far does a detached person's ability to understand reach?

Answer: Here on earth a man can reach the point that he sees himself as one in that which is the nothing of all the things that one can conceive or put into words. This Nothing is called by common agreement "God," and is in itself a something existing to an incomparable degree. Here a person sees himself as one with this nothing, and this nothing knows itself without the activity of knowing. But this is mysteriously hidden further within.

Question: Does some writing mention anything about that which you have called the "Nothing," not because of its non-being but rather because of its unsurpassed incomprehensibility?

Answer: Dionysius writes of One who is nameless and that can be the Nothing that I have in mind, for whoever calls him Godhead or being — or whatever names one gives him — they are not appropriate to him in the way names are formed in a creature.

Question: But what is it that is hidden further within this aforementioned Nothing, which according to you excludes in its meaning everything that has come into existence? It is after all pure simplicity. How can that which is utterly simple have a "further within" or a "further without"?

Answer: As long as a person understands oneness or something like it as something that can be presented in words, he still has to go "further within." The Nothing cannot go further within itself; it is rather a question of our understanding; that is, we must understand it apart from any illuminating form or image because no understanding based on forms or images can grasp it. And one cannot talk about it in the sense that one talks about a thing that can be clarified with words. Whatever one says about it describes not the least little bit what it is, no matter how many theologians and books there might be. To say that this Nothing is intellect or being or fulfilment is certainly true, according to what anyone can tell us about it. However, in true point of fact, it is as far from these things than if one were to call a fine pearl a chopping block.

In the Orthodox branch of Christianity, the teachings of Meister Eckhart and Henry Suso are close to the teachings of Hesychasm of Gregory Palamas, who is often directly compared to Meister Eckhart. In Islam, this direction is closest to the Sufi doctrine of the extinction of the Self and the approach to Allah to the point of permeability (identity), *Fanaa*. The roots of *Fanaa* teachings also go back to Platonism, as in the case of Hesychasm, but there is also a version about the influence of Indian (Buddhist) practices of *japa* (mantra meditation with beads) and meditation, because structurally they are very close.

The breakthrough to the structures of manifestationism, expressed in the language of mysticism and being in balance with orthodoxy, gave rise to a more careful and intimate relationship between man and God, man and the sacred. In its explicit versions, Nicholas of Cusa even proposed to declare religious peace and partly to rehabilitate paganism.

Projecting the teachings of Eckhart and Suso on the German-Scandinavian tradition, which is possible up to a certain point and at the level of philosophical interpretation, we can return to the question of Collin Cleary: to which God did Odin sacrifice himself on Yggdrasil? Cleary himself refers to Rudra/Shiva and the hermetic tradition in Julius Evola's representation, stating that the figure of Odin is ambivalent as Odin-who-sacrifices and Odin-who-is-sacrificed-to. But their dualism is removed in the One that is the inner aspect of Odin (the one "who-is-sacrificed-to"). The external aspect of Odin, clothed in the name, is the world of duality or the world of phenomena, of the multitude, and its internal and concealed dimension is the apophatic One of the Neoplatonists.

In Eckhart's language, we can express it in the following way. Odin as the name and figure of the myth of self-sacrifice is *Gott*, while the one to Whom he sacrifices himself is *Gottheit*—the deep ground (*Grund*) of the apophatic Divine or Nothing. Further, the act of self-sacrifice itself fully corresponds to detachment or abandonment

(*Gelassenheit*). Odin belittles himself, that is, “extinguishes” his theophany, which literally consists of the words θεός—“God” and φαίνω—“to come clear,” “to shine” like the image and the name, in favour of the nameless and inexpressible Ground. As a result, he discovers a “secret” or “mystery”—such is the meaning of the word “rune.” Runes are also a magical system that fully blooms, like a flower sprouted from a seed, when inseparably connected with language and poetics. Odin reveals the divine mystery of the magical [poetic] language as [home] beyn̄g; of that which brings things into presence as be-ing in the clearing of Nothingness.

Such a comparison of the German-Scandinavian myth of Odin and the teachings of Meister Eckhart and Heinrich Suso is risky, but perhaps because of the non-random homology between the myth and the doctrine: they are both manifestations of the structures of the German Logos in different languages and in different historic periods.

Finally, it should be said that the Divine primal source itself is described by the Rhineland mystics in a rather dark, truly Teutonic gloomy terminology. Thus, Meister Eckhart’s disciple Johannes Tauler taught that the purified spirit is immersed in divine Darkness and Silence. Darkness, as we have already said, is one of the permanent mystical apophatic terms-indications of the Abyss.

The mystic Jakob Böhme shifted the terms in his teaching and spoke of the Abyss as Nothingness that he called Groundless—*Ungrund*, where *un* is the prefix of negation. The Groundless Nothingness of Böhme is radically superapophatic, it is not related to anything at all and opposed cataphaticism forms, which are the Ground (*Grund*). The God of Böhme does not need any ground at all, he rests on Nothing and is extremely apophatic and self-sufficient. That is, *Grund* in the understanding of Meister Eckhart and in the understanding of Jakob Böhme express different concepts. Böhme’s *Undgrund* can be correspondent to the words *Urleere* or *Abgrund*—*Abyss* and *Over-Void*, respectively.

“Ēv and Monism in the German Tradition

Meister Eckhart’s distinction of *Gott* (*Götter*) and *Gottheit* as the apophatic basis (*Grund*) of the cataphatic Gods indicates the prospects of Genesis in the German Logos and monism in the German tradition. To what extent is this true, especially in the German-Scandinavian myth?

The apophaticism of One Divinity in M. Eckhart goes back to the language of Plotinus, which was assimilated by Christianity in spite of the anathemas. The structures and the philosophy of Neoplatonists are the basis of almost all Christian mysticism that overcomes the ontological gap of creationism. The Neoplatonism of Plotinus is based on an interpretation of Plato’s dialogue *Parmenides*, which lays the foundations of the doctrine of *One*, ἓν, and its relation to *many*, πολλα. The essence of the dialogue, on the basis of which all further rethinking of Plato’s heritage takes place, is reduced to the first five hypotheses of the relations of *One* and *many* that make up the ontological hierarchy of the levels of being:⁶

- 1) ἓν;
- 2) ἓν πολλα;
- 3) ἓν και πολλα;
- 4) πολλα και ἓν;
- 5) πολλα;

The first hypothesis speaks of One that is above being (the super-being One) and is strictly apophatic — to the extent that the word “is” is not applicable to it as the verb that makes it exist. The opposite is also true: the expression “One is” means that we are already dealing with or talking about not that Supreme One but some other mode of One;

6 See “A Commentary on Damascus and the Tradition of Neoplatonic Exegesis” by L. Y. Lukomsky.

One *is-not*, but if One *is*, then it is no longer [the super-being] One: not Nothing but something.

The supreme source—concealed in the supreme [apophatic] darkness of One—does not exist for the view from this Cosmos or from the Mind at all, it is not available for the present perception and experience. One *is not* but it “is” in some other way, accessible by a different strategy and path, permeating the *many*, the whole Cosmos. Thus, the dualism of the Gods and Titans, Aesir and Jötunns, as well as the range of relations between them—from brutal war to play and metamorphosis—is concluded and positively resolved in the supreme One. One embraces and unites what is expressed as duality and multiplicity in other hypotheses.

The second hypothesis is ἕν πολλα, “One Many,” pointedly without any connective unions, which would establish hierarchy and relations between the two parts like in the third and fourth hypotheses. The level of πν πολλα is the manifestation of One of the first hypothesis (which is Nothingness in its pure form) in cataphatic aspects as *many* or as true being—for example, in the expression “God is being” and so on. ἕν πολλα is a game, the dynamics of *One many* flowing into each other. If you try to make it static and fixed, either *many* will fall off and only the ἕν of the first hypothesis will remain (which is just not present in *many*), or only the bare πολλα of poverty-ridden matter will remain (nihilism).

At this level, there is a distinction between Gottheit and Götter; or rather, only at this level *Götter* are conceived as based in *Gottheit* but different from it, having the qualities and functions in the world. We have talked about this particularly when examining the words-names of the Gods and their inexpressible (unlimited by the *terminus*) nature beyond words and names.

The distinction between *Gottheit* and *Götter/Gott* as ἕν [and] πολλα reveals two non-opposing instances that are both *grounds* to each other in the terms of equipolency. Friedrich Schelling, an heir of the philosophical tradition of the Rhineland mystics, writes:

In the circle out of which everything becomes, it is no contradiction that that through which the One is generated may itself be in turn begotten by it. Here there is no first and last because all things mutually presuppose each other, no thing is another thing and yet no thing is not without another thing. God has in himself an inner ground of his existence that in this respect precedes him in existence; but, precisely in this way, God is again the *prius* [what is before] of the ground in so far as the ground, even as such, could not exist if God did not exist *actu*.

...

But the process of their becoming cannot be in God, viewed absolutely, since they are distinct from him *toto genere* or — more accurately — in eternity. To be separate from God, they would have to carry on this becoming on a basis different from him. But since there can be nothing outside God, this contradiction can only be solved by things having their basis in that within God which is not God himself, i.e. in that which is the basis of his existence.⁷

The last phrase of Schelling here asserts *ĕv* as a single source of everything different, which is also the vessel of everything we talked about above. There is a subtle distinction between the *being* of things, whether they be God, Gods or things of the material world, and *beyng*-Nothing, to which their presence points, simultaneously covering this *beyng*.

At the linguistic level, we can compare it to our analysis of the meanings of the words *gap* and “nothingness,” one side of which can be *being* (qualitative and cataphatic), but in the semantic dimension pointing to *non-being* (without qualities and apophatic), as in the examples with the rupture or the two-component structure of the word *no-thing*.

Also here opens the horizon of the cataphatic monism in Tradition where all Gods as faces and manifestations, including genealogical ones, are merged in the figure of one supreme Deity with qualities.

7 See “Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom” by F. W. J. Schelling.

This includes the formula “The Supreme One God is being,” because in his manifestations and faces he is expressed as Cosmos and its Gods. In more detail, this metaphysics is developed in the darshana of Advaita Vedanta and Advaita Tantrism of India.

Neoplatonists came out to the horizon of this cataphatic theological monism, or *henosis* (bringing to One), interpreting the name of the Supreme God of the Sun Apollo in the Hellenic tradition. They divided the name Ἀπολλων into the negative prefix α and the root πολλων, which meant “many”; therefore, Apollo is α-πολλων, the Non-plural, which means *One* (ἐν πολλα, or Eckhart’s *Gott* but the supreme one). Another name of Apollo is Phoebus, Φοῖβος, which means “radiant” in Greek.⁸ The sun and its rays are a metaphor for One and its manifestations and theophanies in the world. The shining Sun is One manifesting itself, appearing in its radiance, reigning in the sky and among the Gods — Apollo, who permeates with his light (makes one) all the levels of Cosmos and rules in it. While ἐν of the first hypothesis is described in terms of apophatic darkness and abyss.

The third and fourth hypotheses carry the most important nuance — the και conjunction (“and”): One *and* many; many *and* One. Here we already find I) the emergence of the ontological gap between One and many, which are different in essence; II) a hierarchy of relationships: the dominance of One above many in the third hypothesis and vice versa — the composition of One from many in the fourth.

The level of ἐν και πολλα fully corresponds to the creationist metaphysics of One as the Only One, distanced from the world through the ontological gap of the natures of God (Jehovah, Yahweh and Allah). This closed topic finds its maximum expression in Gnosticism where the Demiurge is the embodiment of cosmic evil, and his twisted creation a prison of souls.

The antithesis of this is the hypothesis of πολλα και ἐν, which corresponds to the epistemology and ontology of Modernity: the

8 And also Ἥλιος of Emperor Julian the Faithful, see “Emperor Julian. A Complete Collection of Works.”

superiority of the material *many* (matter, substance, atoms, the sub-atomic level, and so on), positivism, conventionality and atomic civil society. *One*, on the other hand, presumes the following: society as a sum of individuals, conventional truth, and the taxonomy of genera and species as generalizing ascending categories; the construction of *One* as the sum of *many* from below. In another work and in different terms, we have described the relationship of creationism and Modernity as the relationship of father and son, the source and the river flowing out of it. In this light, the transformation of ἓν και πολλα into πολλα και ἓν is natural; it reflects Nietzsche's statement "God is Dead" and the peak of nihilism.

Despite the identical spelling, in the third and fourth hypotheses, ἓν is neither the super-existential One of the first hypothesis, nor the One-Being of the second hypothesis; it is an entirely different, ontologically contrasting One: the Creator of monotheism, or the conventional unifying One in the scientific picture of the world. It is similar with πολλα, which is not identical to the dynamically playing ἓν πολλα of the second hypothesis, in which there is no gap and no και ("and"), the conjunction expressing some relation. *Many* of the third hypothesis is the world created *ex Nihilo*, and *many* of the fourth hypothesis is material nihilism placed above One — matter, its dialectics and development.

The last, fifth hypothesis speaks of the lowest ontological horizon of existence — πολλα. There is only *many*, no *One* of any hypothesis exists at all: nor super-being, nor the Gods, nor conventional generalizations; only mere fragmentation, blending and mixing, deprived of the light of Apollo, and thus of order, Mind and Logos.

Friedrich Georg Jünger gave the truth of πολλα a precise definition in the maxim "The world in which the Titans rule is a world without the Gods." The πολλα level is a chthonic space of pure Titanism, the worlds of the Jötunnns and their poverty. The night is so deep that man and his *Dasein* do not remember and do not know about the

light, the Sun, and the possibilities of their own (*Selbst*) authenticity of being.

In essence, these five hypotheses of Parmenides include all possible variations of metaphysics: pagan, mythological, creationist metaphysics, scientific metaphysics of the Modern Period and the rhizome of Postmodernism, as well as all their personal versions, inner patterns, branchings and derivatives. The hypothesis of *πολλα* tells us about a different abyss (starting with a lower-case letter) — this is the abyss of matter, an infinite immersion in *many* that has no order and no end. The Abyss of super-being above is duplicated by the abyss of non-being from below.

Once again we meet with what connects all levels and runs through two abysses — the *λογός*. But this Greek word has a number of meanings more ancient than the meanings of the words “word,” “statement” or “teaching” common in philosophy. Heidegger pays special attention to the interpretation of the Logos in its etymological meaning — as the “locating,” “gathering” or “placing” (“a concentratedgathering”), ascending to the etymological meaning of “harvesting” — cutting and gathering of ears and herbs and making them “one.” In this case, the Logos acts as something that allows man to turn in the direction of the knowledge of the Abyss of the Super-Being of One from above or from the chthonic abyss of the non-being of matter from below. Heidegger emphasizes that the Logos is *man’s relation to be-ing*.⁹ Here he follows Aristotle in his definition of man as ζῷον λόγον ἔχον, “an animal possessing the logos [speech].” The Logos is also the thinking translated into Latin as *ratio*, and also the statement, the speech, the gathering-concentration as the relation to be-ing, and the openness of man *as a special be-ing* to this relation to being in its *being-here*.

Concerning the Logos as statement and speech, Heidegger says that both apophatic and cataphatic statements in their basis and essence are reduced to two basic operations or interpretations, which

9 See *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* by Martin Heidegger.

are always contained in one another in explicit or non-explicit forms; they are σύνθεσις (synthesis) and διαίρεσις (diagnosis), unification and distinction. These basic operations constitute the structure of thinking, νοεῖν, and of the Mind in general, νοῦς. Further, Heidegger notes that the reduction of the entire Logos to any operation of this pair (only synthesis or only diagnosis), or to the inevitability of the “either-or,” is incorrect. The Logos as the relation of man to being, which man possesses himself as a special being, Heidegger interprets as *something that is an open possibility for the “either-or” choice structure*. In other words, the Logos is not a dual structure of thought and “either-or” Mind, but an open possibility to perform these operations. But this primordial essence of the Logos is not always revealed for perception. The majority operate “everyday thinking,” so they are already immersed in the “closed” duality. The fixation of thought within the framework of the dual “either-or” structure corresponds to the ontological levels of ἓν και πολλά and πολλά και ἓν.

Continuing this line and taking the assumption that this construction is perfect, we can conclude that the hypothesis of ἓν και πολλά corresponds to the mental operation of σύνθεσις, or synthesis; that is, the gathering and the bringing of *many* to the generalized *One*, and the hypothesis of πολλά και ἓν — to the operation of διαίρεσις — division, fragmentation and multiplication of things. But thinking is these two operations, which are constantly co-present in a different proportion and manner. In the fourth hypothesis of “many and one,” the synthesis is still present but as a conventional taxonomy of genera and species of material existence, animals, society and so on. While in the third hypothesis of “one and many,” through rare acts of miracle [inherent to creationism and its miracle-deprived world], *many* is freed from multiplicity, accepting the granted moment of eternity and Oneness.

The Logos as an open possibility to “either-or,” and as the antecedent truth open (αληθεύειν) to thinking, is the irrational and non-dual Mind, ἓν πολλά without the “and” connective — the free and dynamic game of the *One many*, which are not restricting each other. As we

have already mentioned, the attempts to focus on *One* or on *many* lead to stasis and immerse us into the estrangement of the lower-level hypotheses, which are the dominant standard of Western European and German thinking, starting from the Christianization to the High Modernity and the development of physical and mathematical sciences. But the ascent means that the Mind enters into intoxication, ecstasy [ex-stasis, non-static], the peak of which is the Epiphany of man as an animal possessing the Logos that he, as the Logos himself, comes from the pure apophatic darkness of the super-being One.¹⁰

The classic metaphor for the description of the Logos is *lightning* that strikes in the night and its light instantly illuminates-and-captures everything in its presence in this night. Now, speaking about ecstasy, the flash of the Logos shows not only being but also, being unconcealed-in-concealment, indicates that the logos-as-lightning strikes not just from the Sky, but from the Higher Abyss of the Darkness of One.

The ancient Germans worshipped the Sky as the Father, the God Tiwaz (Tyr); thus, to focus one's attention on the Sky from which the Logos-lightning strikes is to concentrate on the cataphatic *Götter*, bringing the metaphor to the level of the theology of myth, and the epiphany to the Higher Abyss, breaking through from *Götter* to *Gottheit*.

Accordingly, the Earth that is struck by lightning was revered as Mother Jörð (Erda, Earth). In the German Logos, we are facing the homology of the structures of thinking, myth, metaphysics and theology based on the Hellenic-Germanic axis. In fact, this is the German Logos itself—the German Word, the German *Thing*, *Res Germanica*. The capturing of the Sky-lightning-Earth as framed by One is a revelation of the Abyss, the Clearing (*Lichtung*, ἀλήθεια, unconcealment), which silently opens and enables *be-ing* to be as be-ing on different ontological levels.

10 ἔν πολλὰ as the Dionysian intoxication of the Mind or the poetic shamanic ecstasy of Odin.

In fragment 60 Heraclitus says:

ὁδὸς ἄνω καὶ κάτω γεροlymatos ὡυτή.

The road up and the road down is one and the same.

The hypotheses of *Parmenides* in the interpretation of Neoplatonists outline the horizons of the Upper Abyss (ἔν) and the lower abyss (πολλα). In the Traditionalist view, we have long been in a state of gradual destruction and oblivion of all the upper mythical, metaphysical and ontological levels of the first hypotheses; man concentrates on *many*, getting more and more immersed in *many as a process*, which is described by the postmodernists of the French school (Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, Michel Foucault, Jean Baudrillard, etc.). The Abyss of One is no longer (and for a long time) available to us from the above, but we know about it and advocate it against the lower abyss; this is the position of the traditionalist Julius Evola, who acknowledged that the Tradition is lost and the last days of Kali Yuga (the Iron age, Ragnarök) opens larger and riskier opportunities to traditionalists. We are talking about the immersion into πολλα in order to break through the abyss from below, and through the abyss of chthonic poverty to break through to ἔν. This is the nonconformist and transgressive position of the Left-Hand Path eschatological traditionalism in accordance with the maxim of Heraclitus.

Having approached our destination from the other side and having followed completely another way, we came closer to the already known difference of the German Logos from the Hellenic one, with a heavy and gloomy emphasis on the End, Ragnarök, eschatology, and the oblivion of beyng (Heidegger) or *Endkampf*. The strategy of breaking through the lower abyss and sinking into darkness, the descent into the Night of the World is close in spirit and, in a way, understandable and attractive to the Germans, their warlike and open-to-death *Dasein*. There is no way back to restoration, to another turn of time or putting the moment off: ahead is the most significant

and important — the End — Death. They are also the possibility of Another Beginning.

* * *

In the first approximation, popular thinking always defines paganism as “polytheism”; the presence of a couple, tens or hundreds of Gods is its obvious feature that distinguishes it from creationism. Sophisticated metaphysical constructions of the Neoplatonists or, for example, the thinkers of the Indian schools of Shaiva-Shaktism, Kashmir Shaivism and Tantrism (or generally, the space of the Advaita Darshan) reveal complex and often paradoxical dialectics of the correlation of *One* Supreme God and *many* other Gods and of the universe (as *many*). One of the special features of Hindu traditions is the deification of all possible phenomena of the universe, society and man: specific Gods are responsible for every event, phenomenon, path (Dharma) or even thing, and the generalized pantheon includes many hundreds of these Gods. In non-dual teachings, all the Gods are manifestations of the Supreme God, though being independent; most often, the manifestations of Shiva and his spouse Shakti, the dynamic energy that creates the phenomenal and the material world. Shakti herself is understood as a fundamental manifestation of the same Shiva. In this way, Divine monism is achieved in Hinduism: there are different Gods responsible for different phenomena, and these Gods are the manifestations (faces) of the One God, who in his cataphatic aspect is the source of all being and things. But this level of metaphysics is reached by some exceptional schools and persons, both in India and in Greece (such as Neoplatonists and their insight into the interpretation of the name of Apollo). Other schools in these traditions, as well as many other traditions of other Indo-European peoples, do not turn their gaze towards this horizon.¹¹

11 Which does not tell us anything at all about the level of their “development,” but shows us the pluralism of types of thinking and/or the limitations of our own

What is the horizon of monism in the German Logos and in its mythology? Is it possible to derive the whole variety of Gods from the figure of one Supreme God, to raise the ontological question of the relationship of One and many and to solve it through theocentric mythology and metaphysics?

In the archaic beliefs of continental Germans, it is possible to distinguish the supreme warrior God, Tíw (Tiwaz), who represented the fatherly principle of the Sky and the maternal Deity Jörð (Erda, or Nerthus in Tacitus). As Father and Mother, Husband and Wife, the Sky–Earth divine couple is a classic archaic structure of the Divine description of the world. We will find this same structure in many Indo-European peoples, and it is clearly expressed in the shamanic cults that have survived to this day. According to Tacitus, the Germans revered the God Tuisto, their sacred ancestor, who is either the son of Jörð or, through the connection of the name with the root *tiw, the son of Tíw.

In their old ballads (which amongst them are the only sort of registers and history) they celebrate Tuisto, a God sprung from the earth, and Mannus his son, as the fathers and founders of the nation. To Mannus they assign three sons, after whose names so many people are called; the Ingaevones, dwelling next to the ocean; the Herminones, in the middle country; and all the rest, Instaevoles. Some, borrowing a warrant from the darkness of antiquity, maintain that the God had more sons, that thence came more denominations of people, the Marsians, Gambrians, Suevians, and Vandalians, and that these are the names truly genuine and original.¹²

Thus, in the German αρχη we see the fundamental pair Sky–Earth, which in some sense exhausts, fully embodies and embraces the ancient German view of the Divine principles of the world. Man-Sky-Warrior-Tíw and Woman-Earth-Mother-Jörð. The manifestations

thinking and its language, unable to see and recognize the horizons of monism in traditions “exotic” to us.

12 See *Germania* by Publius Cornelius Tacitus.

of this pair define and structure their society, the relations between men and women, the tradition, the relations between Germans and other tribes and peoples; in fact, it is the early mythological Indo-European structure of existence embodied in the German Logos. We see here the Divine duality of male and female, but it is not expressed anywhere that Jörð is a manifestation of Tíw. Yes, Tíw as the husband takes Jörð for his wife, but this relationship does not reduce the female to being a manifestation of the male. Tíw acts as a strict Patriarchal solar (Apollonian) principle.

Later, already in the Scandinavian Eddic period, the figure of Jörð is interpreted as Titanic, and from the image of Mother Earth she moves to the status of one of Odin's lovers. The Jötunnness Jörð becomes a competitor of the other Asynja wives of Odin and the mother of Thor.

Fundamental to the German-Scandinavian tradition is the change of the supreme father God. In place of the strictly Apollonian warlike Father Sky, Tíw (Tyr), there comes the twilight, many-faced shaman Odin (the figure of the Dionysian circle of the Gods). The structure of the German Logos and the myth remains patriarchal and warlike, but is complemented by the interior dark reverse of ecstasies, transgression, and poetics. The figure of Tíw/Tyr moves into the category of secondary figures of the Aesir family. The change of roles is reflected in the myth of the taming of the wolf Fenrir, where for the sake of delaying an eschatological event — and yet strictly in line with fate — Tyr deceives the wolf and loses his hand and his function of the God of justice, truth and war.

On the other hand, the complication of the myth is understood as its "development": from the pairs of Father-Mother and Sky-Earth, like a flower growing from a seed, mythology opens into the complex genealogy of the Aesir and the Vanir families. The Divine Sky is populated by the Aesir and the Vanir, divided into halls for warriors, men and women; the world is ruled and guarded by its Gods (Odin, Thor, Tyr, Heimdall) with the already celestial Goddesses (Frigg, Freyja,

Nanna), who are responsible for different aspects of marriage, love, sexuality, and the afterlife reward for lovers. The lower horizon is impoverished to the Titanic state of deprivation, cold and chthonic privation. The son of the God Odin and Jötunnness Jörð — Thor the defender — is one of the Aesir close to all social classes; the amulets with Mjólnir were worn by both men and women. The same “development” correlates with the metaphysical involution of Cosmos, the movement of the universe towards the End. The full divine pair Sky-Earth is divided into the sacred Sky and Titanic matter.

In “Gylfaginning” of Snorri’s Edda, Odin is called Allfather, “Sá heitir Alföðr”:

Then asked Gangleri: “Where is this god, or what power hath he, or what hath he wrought that is a glorious deed?”

Hárr made answer: “He lives throughout all ages and governs all his realm, and directs all things, great and small.”

Then said Jafnhárr: “He fashioned heaven and earth and air, and all things which are in them.”

...

Then said Gangleri: “What did he before heaven and earth were made?”

And Hárr answered: “He was then with the Rime-Giants.”

Þá spyr Gangleri: «Hvar er sá guð, eða hvat má hann, eða hvat hefir hann unnit framaverka?»

Hárr segir: «Lifir hann of allrar aldir ok stjornar öllu ríki sínu ok ræðr öllum hlutum, stórum ok smám».

Þá mælir Jafnhárr: «Hann smíðaði himin ok jörð ok loftin ok alla eign þeira».

...

Þá mælti Gangleri: «Hvat hafðist hann áðr at en himinn ok jörð væri ger?»

Þá svarar Hárr: «Þá var hann með hrímþursum».

Odin as the All-God is called the creator of Heaven and Earth, but Snorri does not say that Odin is the father of Tíw and Jörð; it is about

“Sky and Earth” as the Cosmos in its entirety. Gangleri asked about the early deeds of Odin. Answering this question, the triad of the High, Just-As-High, and Third recounts the genealogy of the All-Father that begins long before his birth — with the beginning of the cosmogony. The birth of Odin and his brothers (the triad Odin-Vili-Ve) from Borr is the genealogical culmination of all cosmogenesis in general; Cosmos began to manifest in its illogical,¹³ sometimes monstrous genealogy of the first creatures for the sake of the appearance of the All-Father incarnated as the triad that would establish order in all the worlds, will *create* them, set their borders and the universal law of Wyrð (“The Prophecy of the Völva”). The words “Þá var hann með hrímþursum” refer to this period — he was among the Thurs, until he killed Mimir in his triadic incarnation and created Cosmos out of his remains.

As a many-faced shaman and traveller between realms, Odin openly wanders in all the worlds, including the lower ones. While the solar Tíw was a static Sky, which is eternally above, Odin is a dynamic supreme God, who sits on his throne in Asgard but can suddenly appear anywhere and in any guise. Odin includes the chthonic (in taboo-breaking and wandering) and the uranic (through military and paternal functions) as his own dimensions, *which are, in essence, constructed by him since the beginning of the world*. The celestial and the solar are because Odin has established the Divine order, but the chthonic also exists because Odin leaves his throne and wanders into the lower worlds of death in search of wisdom and eschatological knowledge. Odin travels in the Sky and Underground *not because they exist, but they exist because Odin travels there, up and down*.

13 The modern everyday mind operates with the concept of linear development. According to this, Odin was born because the world manifested from Chaos and the chain of causes and effects has reached this point. But a different logic tells us that things began to manifest *towards* Odin as the one who will be born and will order it.

Let us consider the actions of king Gylfi, the main character of the Edda of Snorri, the “Gylfaginning” Chapter (“The Beguiling of Gylfi”).

Gylfi is a noble konung and master of sorcery, so he combines the functions and knowledge of the two upper castes by J. Dumézil; he is a king-priest like Odin. In order to explore the nature of divine wisdom, he embarks on a journey in search of Asgard, disguised as an old man. When he reaches Asgard, which the Aesir knew beforehand as it appeared in prophecies, he presents himself under the name of *Gangleri*—the Traveller, from the root “gang,” and this word is one of Odin’s names.¹⁴

So what does Gylfi the konung-priest do? His acts are the practice of *imitatio Dei*. He acquires wisdom the way that Odin himself does: he goes on a journey, wears a different face and a different [Divine] name. Moreover, since he is a konung priest who greatly honors wisdom and seeks it, he himself is, in fact, an archetypal incarnation of Odin in man. Wisdom is revealed to the one who embodies God, who is possessed by God as his *daimon*.

In Asgard, Gylfi-Gangleri appears before the triad of the leaders of this world, who call each other the High (Hárr), the Just-As-High (Jafnhárr) and the Third (Þriði). Gangleri and the triad of High, Just-As-High and the Third compete in answering questions, which is a classic form of intellectual combat (The Lay of Vafþrúðnir, The Lay of Alvíss) and a form of poetic-prose narrative in literature. The first chapters praise Odin as Alföðr and reveal the entire cosmogony, the culmination of which is his coming and reign, and then tell of the legends, deeds and destinies of Gods and men.

The conversation of Odin in the image of the king-priest and under the name of the Traveller with Odin in the triple image of the High, Just-As-High and the Third about the superiority of Odin as the supreme God and Father of All, is an example of monism in the German-Scandinavian tradition, recorded already in the late Eddic

¹⁴ See *The Prose Edda*, “Gylfaginning,” Chapter 20.

period. The names point to the revealed-in-concealment dialogue of Odin in his different incarnations with himself about himself. The historic conditions in the world are deteriorating, and Snorri's style and his misunderstanding of certain pagan contexts is compensated by the tension and reference to the upper theological horizons of the *content* of his Edda.¹⁵

“Gylfaginning” ends with this enthusiasm (in the original meaning of the Greek ενθουσιασμός — the obsession with a Deity) dissipating and he finds himself in an open field. While the Aesir:

...the Æsir sat them down to speak together, and took counsel and recalled all these tales which had been told to him. And they gave these same names that were named before to those men and places that were there, to the end that when long ages should have passed away, men should not doubt thereof, that those Æsir that were but now spoken of, and these to whom the same names were then given, were all one. There Thor was so named, and he is the old Ása-Thor.

En æsir setjast þá á tal ok ráða ráðum sínum ok minnast á þessar frásagnir allar, er honum váru sagðar, ok gefa nöfn þessi in sömu, er áðr váru nefnd, mönnum ok stöðum þeim, er þar váru, til þess, at þá er langar stundir liði, at menn skyldu ekki ifast í, at allir væru einir þeir æsir, er nú var frá sagt, ok þessir, er þá váru þau sömu nöfn gefin. Þar var þá Þórr kallaðr, ok er sá Ása-Þórr inn gamli.

The end of the “Gylfaginning” once again shows us the essential role of the word — poesis, bringing-out and placing-here — in the manifestation of being. All that was said by the Aesir to Gylfi — which

15 The Edda of Snorri thoroughly relies on the Elder Edda and is at the same time a complementary disclosure and a transition from myth and poetry to theology hidden in the semantic gloom, with a considerable tint of euhemerism in the spirit of the time. Here it is necessary to pay close attention to the names and reference the structure to Neoplatonism.

means by Odin himself about himself and the universe — later had to be brought into presence as truth. Let us remember what was said earlier: *Odin travels through the Sky and under the Earth not because they exist, but they exist because Odin travels there, up and down.*

Also, Odin begins the journey to Asgard to the Aesir and their Divine Wisdom not because they already exist as the present, but they appear exactly because Odin as Gangleri: I) travels to Asgard; II) comes there and meets the triad of the Aesir; III) talks to himself about everything; (IV) and everything that was said by the God to himself becomes real and present, for it was *said by a God*.¹⁶

Thus, we reveal the deep structure of “Gylfaginning,” which tells us of the horizon of monism in the myth of the German Logos, which closes in on the shamanic, ecstatic and transgressive figure of Odin the AllFather. All the names of the participants of the dialogue are his manifestations under different names, and all the above gains (*eigene*) presence after this conversation is ended. In fact, consciously or not, Snorri presents a monist and Odin-centric version of cosmogony and mythology, when there is nothing at all until it is expressed entirely by God in a dialogue with himself.

Resume: At the archaic continental stage of the golden age of Tradition, the horizon of monism is confined to the Divine couple of the Father-Sky Tiwaz and of the Mother-Earth Jörð, and their son Tuisto who is the ancestor of the Germans. This dual horizon is solar, and the supreme As Tíw (Tyr) is strictly a warrior and patriarchal God.

Later, at the Scandinavian Eddic stage, when the Tradition appears in its flourishing diversity and is already on the threshold of the transition from myth to theology, in a manner deeply characteristic of German narratives, revealed-in-concealment, there appears a sign of monism through the reduction of all being to the figure of Odin-Alfadr — shaman God, the trickster appearing anywhere and all of a

16 In accordance with the prophetic poem by Stefan George, “The Word!”

sudden, the patron of wisdom and magic, open to death and the deep dimension of Godhead (*Gottheit*) as Nothingness.

At the same time, it cannot be said that in the German myth it is possible, as in Hinduism, to discover or appoint Gods for all things, phenomena, ways of actions and so on. German monism is turned to the Source, it is planned in the highest pre-cosmogonic spheres; it is the monism of the One but not the deification of many through the Gods-for-every-purpose.

But, unlike Advaita Darshanam, this glimpse of monism does not find any further deep and diverse study, as the dominant Christianity negates the pagan intellectual genius.

* * *

Let us look at the fourfold of M. Heidegger, one of the peaks of which is occupied by the Gods or Godhead.

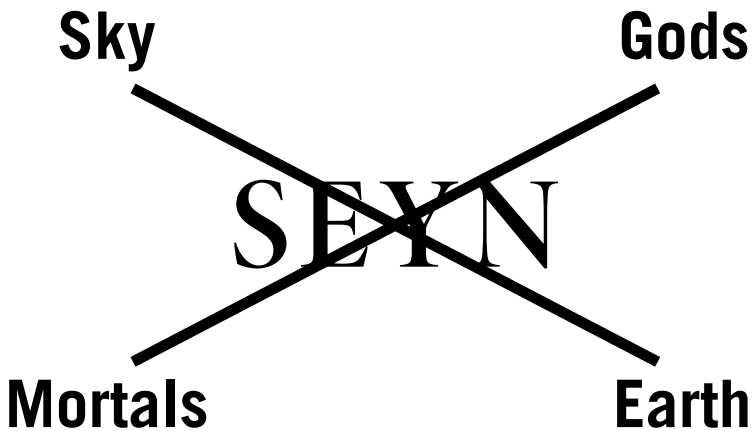


Figure 6.

Taking the pole of Godhead as a starting point and relying on the German-Scandinavian tradition, we can close all the other poles of the fourfold confining them to Gods — that is, to the sacred monism.

The sky is the God Tiu, Father Sky of the Germans. The earth is the goddess Jord, Mother Earth of many peoples. And people are Gods-as-descendants-of-Tuisto; regarding the special cases of priests, poets and philosophers, they are obsessed with *Daimons* and, in fact, are deified in ecstatic experiences during their life. At that, people can be understood as folk, *Volk*. Then, the Germanic peoples living *on* German lands and *under* German skies, are the Godly children of their German Gods.¹⁷ Here we can observe some of Heidegger's intentions often mentioned in the *Black Notebooks* regarding the understanding of the correlation of Dasein of man and Dasein of a people. Or rather, Dasein precedes a people and its single representative alike; the being of the people is spoken and expressed by the voices of only few, while people in their overwhelming majority are far removed from existential issues. And in Heidegger's drafts, the question of people's fate and determination of man in his Dasein is often associated with the *Gods*.¹⁸

But closing all poles of *das Geviert* circumferentially, reading them as Gods or manifestations (accidentia or derivatives) of Godhead, we immediately turn out to be off the fourfold and the fundamental ontology of Martin Heidegger, losing *Seyn* from our context. The discourse immediately changes to something else: traditional metaphysics, myth or theology.¹⁹ This is already the space of the *Götter*, the cataphatic definitions of existence and everything within the manifested Cosmos. The symbol of this space can be the circumpunct or Celtic

17 See also the insightful remark of J. G. Gerder: "Peoples are thoughts of God." Consequently, the Germanic peoples are the thoughts of the Germanic Gods, the bearers of their own Germanic Logos.

18 See, for example, the following words in the *Black Notebooks*: "Will we dare to [call to] the gods once again, and with them — to the truth of the people?" and "After all, Gods only [the gods] of the people: there is no universal God for everyone — that is, for anybody."

19 This idea gives the possibility to interpret the pole of the Sky/World using the Russian context of the term *язычество*.

Cross (Wheel of the Year) — one of the most archaic and comprehensive sacred symbols.

Divine monism a priori implies cosmic harmony of emanations on all levels of manifested existence, along with a certain downward hierarchy. In fact, this is Neoplatonic metaphysics, which we encounter in the majority of Indo-European traditions in one form or another. But Heidegger, following the pre-Socratic Heraclitus, places πόλεμος at the base of the fourfold. There is war between Gods and people, war between Sky and Earth, and the truth of beyng in the centre of the intersection of their axes. In the center of the crossing, which is different and reducible neither to the Wheel of the Year nor to the vertical Neoplatonic hierarchy, there burns the fire of beyng.

Martin Heidegger, despite his frequent references to “the gods” in plural, also calls the upper pole of the Mortals–Gods axis “Godhead” or “God.” Here we can see the special attitude of the philosopher, who grew up in a Catholic family but later denied the positive role of creationism, to the question of monotheism or polytheism.

Heidegger does not give a definite answer to the question “is God one or are there many Gods?” but he also does not dismiss this issue as insignificant — on the contrary, it is extremely important. And Heidegger makes a beautiful and noble philosophical gesture that shows the direction to the truth in this matter: *the Gods themselves, in the light of their Thing fire, must decide whether there are many of them or they are One. Not man defines or assigns the number of the Gods, but the Gods ro á þingi must decide their number.*

The fire of the Thing of the Gods is the truth of beyng, which concerns the Gods and to which they direct their questions, as do the people called to bear witness to its truth. In the questions of the Gods to beyng, their Divinity is decided and established. We can say that the Gods *philosophize* about beyng.

But we live in the era of the escape of the Gods, and it has been so for a very long time; the Gods have left this world, now occupied by the Titanic principle. In the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger writes:

Along with losing the gods, we have lost the world; the world must first be erected in order to create space for the gods in this work; yet such an opening of the world cannot proceed from, or be carried out by, the currently extant humanity—instead, it can be accomplished only if what basically grounds and disposes the opening of the world is itself acquired—for Da-sein and for the restoration of humanity to Da-sein.

The modern man (*das Man*, “the anyone”) is unable to make an “occurrence” [or decision] of the Gods, to whom, according to Heidegger, we “can be friends, and should not be slaves.” But the flight of the Gods, the fall of man (and *Volk*) into *das Man*, the loss of the World (Sky) and the unrestrained rebellion of the chthonic (the former Earth) are the consequence of the disintegration of the fourfold due to the loss of the focus (indetermination) on the un-concealment of the truth of *Seyn-beyng*. Those truly few people, poets and philosophers, *who are able to turn their mind to beyng, do not do it*, they do not witness its truth and thus do not create the friendly silence that invites the Gods to the hearth of the *Thing*. Heidegger observes that “being itself is in need; the need as the absence of homeland and the hearth of the being of being.” *Beyng is in need*, which is signified by its Titanic environment of the decayed [anti-]fourfold. And it needs a homeland: the Sky, under which a few people on Earth will meet in silence with the Gods at the hearth of the *Thing*, which will arise as their coming and the space of the fundamental solution.

The questioning of the ultimate truth is open both to Gods and mortals—the truth [unconcealment] of *beyng* and the underlying essence. This questioning is deeper than the mythical and metaphysical idea of Godly monism and the ritual practice of deification of man like in Advaita Darshana in India. In the German-Scandinavian tradition, the horizon of monism is only outlined in the Eddic era; but the deepest dimension is revealed already in the anti-traditional times of the XX century, at the very end of philosophical history and the deepest oblivion of *beyng*, in the truth of which the authenticity of *being-here* of people and the truth of the Godly among the Gods

is decided. It is described by Martin Heidegger, and his fundamental ontology is very different from Platonism, including Neoplatonism of the Rhineland mystics and the myth of Tradition, but they include a number of homologies and similar intentions.

* * *

Resume: with the involvement of Neoplatonic structures, the German Logos includes several different ways that, at their limits, plunge our attention and Mind (thinking) into Nothingness. The general overview is as follows:

Myth	Neoplatonism	Rhineland mystics	Heidegger
gap	ěv	Gottheit	Seyn

The Eddic mythology gives us a clue, the key to which lies in the etymological hermeneutics of the word “gap.”

The Neoplatonism in the Hellenic–Germanic axis tells us about the super-being apophatic One.

The Rhineland mystics, speaking in a language bordering on orthodoxy, uncovered the deep apophatic ground of God/Gods—the Godhead, or the Divine.

In the philosophy of M. Heidegger, standing apart from the traditional and Neoplatonic views, the apophatic Nothingness lies in the existential basis (Seyn) of all things, unfolded as a fourfold.²⁰

Each of these circumferential paths is in its own way, and sometimes radically, different from another at the level of language and historically separated. But time intervals do not matter here, because all statements essentially indicate and say the same thing. The common thing between them is that the Abyss, the Bottomlessness, the

²⁰ Through the prism of Heidegger’s philosophy, the sacralization of all things through the Godly is not only the oblivion of beyng but is totally unnecessary due to the presence of a deeper perspective of the truth of beyng as Nothingness, which is anxiously questioned by man and the Gods.

One, the apophatic Godhead, the clearing of the unconcealment of the truth of being *are all Nothingness in relation to all being*—*as to materially present objects, so to Gods and ideas*. Even the words we use—the terms of myth, theology and philosophy—are conditional and unavoidable assumptions to indicate Nothingness in the language in which it is unconcealed-in-concealment.

X

The Language of the Year: A-I-U and Silence

IN THE WRITINGS OF the Dutch-German scholar Hermann Wirth, much is undoubtedly highly controversial in terms of Heathen traditionalism and academic science, in the bosom of which and by the methods of which he sought to prove his Hyperborean theory of the origin of mankind, its proto-religion and proto-language.¹ Especially doubtful are Hermann Wirth's views on ancient history and the revision of the origin of the Tradition (proto-religion), as well as the sources of his research, especially the chronicle of Oera Linda: in its case, the issue is the proportion of fragments of the archaic heritage and contemporary insertions. The views of Wirth are close to the universalist traditionalism of René Guénon, added with an interpretation of all particular traditions as a regressive distortion of Nordic Ario-Christianity.

Nevertheless, Julius Evola called Hermann Wirth one of his teachers, and the researcher himself enriched traditionalism with a deep insight into the paradigmatic metaphysical essence of the symbol of

¹ See *The Ura-Linda-Chronicle, Der Ausgang der Menschheit, Die Heilige Urschrift der Menschheit* by H. Wirth and *The Signs of the Great North* by A. Dugin.

the Polar Year, the so-called Celtic Cross and its connection with the basic phonetics of the pre-Indo-European vowels.

The metaphysical hermeneutics of the Celtic Cross-Year, based on the works of Wirth, is based on the symbol, which is an archaic calendar, in the form of a circle divided into four sectors by a cross. The vertical and horizontal lines mark four solar positions in the sky: the Winter and Summer Solstices and the Spring and Autumn Equinoxes.

The Winter Solstice or Yule is the lower point of the vertical line. In Germanic languages, the word *Yule* dates back to the Teutonic root *hweulō, meaning “wheel.”² Also the Supreme As Odin, among his other names, bears the names of Jolfaðr and Jolnir, “the Father of Yule” and “one of Yule” respectively. Yule as a celebration of midwinter reflects the position of the sun on the 20th-22nd of December at its lowest point in the sky; these are the longest and darkest nights, and in tradition they were celebrated as the days of the dying of the old sun and the birth of the new one — the new year. In this case, the Year itself is expressed by the solar symbol of the wheel, which is updated and is born in Yule, the etymology of which also means “wheel.” That is, Yule is the holiday of all holidays, the matrix of all other solar positions of the year, the beginning and the end of everything, directly associated with Odin as its Father through his names.³

From the lower point of winter — the winter of the Year and the metaphysical Winter, the Night of the universe (the Great Winter, the *Fimbulvetr* in the Norse tradition) — the Sun starts growing and ascending in the sky, moving to the first horizontal point of the Spring Equinox, where the length of day and night becomes equal, after which day begins to dominate over night, and light over darkness. This is the time of active formation, maturity, growth, youth, spring and so on. It is followed by the second vertical point — Midsummer, or Summer

2 In Slavic languages, this holiday is called *Kolyada*, from the old Slavic root *kolo — circle, wheel (compare to the Greek word κύκλος, cyclos, Eng. cycle or wheel), ascending to the same proto-Indo-European root as *hweulō.

3 Another hint to Divine monism in the German-Scandinavian tradition.

Solstice. Midsummer is the highest point of the formation and course of the sun in the sky. The right semicircle from Yule to Midsummer reflects the Sun's way of formation and lightening, growth and being at a maximum distance from the point of death-and-birth of the sun and of the Year.

After Midsummer there begins the second, left semicircle—the path of descent, aging, return to the point of Yule and sunset and the metaphysical time of twilight of the Year. This way is marked by the Autumnal Equinox, after which night begins to dominate over day and darkness over light. It is the time of aging and dying that ends with death at the point of Yule. The vertical division of the Wheel of the Year into the semi-circles of growing and aging can be supplemented by a horizontal division into the upper semicircle of dominant daylight and the lower dark semicircle of dominant night and darkness. The widest variety of interconnections and combinations of the semantics of the Wheel of the Year is the key to the hermeneutics of the Cosmic cycle—the metaphysical Year and its Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter as the ages in Hesiod; the literal agricultural cycle of the year and day (dawn, day, sunset, night); the cycle of life from birth through youth, maturity and old age to death; the sacred mapping of space: the light North (*ex Nord Lux*) and the dark South (*Surtr ferr sunnan* in *Völuspa*), the sunrise in the East and the West as the land of sunset; the cycles of life and extinction of Culture (its cooling at the stage of Civilization) in Spengler can also be described through the symbolism of the Wheel of the Year.

In his linguistic studies, Hermann Wirth compared the main pre-Indo-European vowel sounds and the Celtic Cross in accordance with its semantics. The main vowels include five melodically harmonizing sounds *a-e-i-o-u* or the most basic three *a-i-u*.

The *a* sound is the first that follows after birth (Yule). It starts many Indo-European alphabets and is pronounced with the most widely open mouth.

The *i* sound is the highest of the triad, it corresponds to the peak of development and growth; besides, the graphic depiction of the letter *i* coincides with the vertical axis of Yule–Midsummer and bears phallic connotations.

The *u* sound is the lowest and can be pronounced with your mouth closed; it is the sound of fading.

The sounds *e* and *o* are transitive between the pairs of *a*–*i* and *i*–*u*. No sound corresponds to the point of Yule, it is soundlessness.

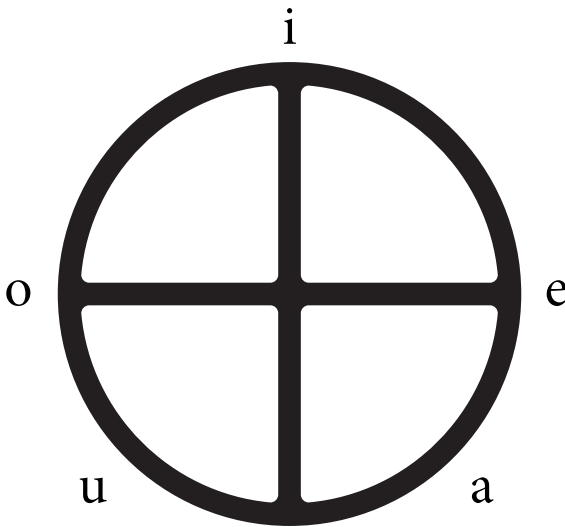


Figure 7.

In his *Radiations* of 1941–1945, Ernst Jünger gives the following interpretation of these sounds, reported to him in a letter by one of the soldiers, which can complement the sound semantics⁴:

‘A’ embodies width and height. The simplest evidence of this is the \wedge sign: two distant points meet at the zenith.

4 The acronym AEIOU is widely known in Germany as the Austrian motto of Friedrich III “Austriae Est Imperare Orbi Universo”—“Austria will rule the world.”

‘E’ is the sound of infinity, abstract thinking, the world of mathematics. This is indicated by the three equal parallel lines of \equiv , connected by a vertical one.

‘I,’ as an erotic sign, as a Lingam, expresses relations associated with blood, love and frenzied passion.

‘O,’ as the sound of light, is the embodiment of the Sun and the eye.

‘U’ or ‘V’ as the ancients wrote it, is the sound of the Earth sinking into the depths. It is also a sign opposite to ‘A’.

In addition to the sacred sounds, Wirth adds the runes of Futhark framing the circumference of the Wheel of the Year. Since Wirth interprets the meanings of the runes in accordance with his theory, with which we cannot fully agree, we will have to take the path of combining runic semantics with phonetics in relation to the hermeneutics of the Celtic Cross, following the direction suggested by Wirth and compensating for his mistakes.

The *a-i-u* sounds in the Elder Futhark correspond to the runes Ansuz \mathfrak{A} , Isa \mathfrak{I} and Uruz \mathfrak{U} . In Old Norse, the \mathfrak{A} rune means *ós*—the Aesir, but later the phonetics of the rune and the word changed from *ó* to *a/æ* and respectively, to *Ás* and *Æsir* (pl). Speaking of the Wheel of the Year and the *a* phoneme, it follows that the birth and the beginning of formation comes from the Gods-Aesir as the source, and under their protection. It is clearly seen in the role of Odin as Father Yule, the whole Year.

The \mathfrak{I} rune denotes ice. Its *i* sound signifies the achievement of a static peak at the highest point, “freezing” as a metaphor and a reference to the subsequent descent to winter.

The \mathfrak{U} rune denotes rain and drizzle in Old Norse, bearing the symbolic meaning of “aurochs”⁵ in the Anglo-Saxon Futhark. The meanings of drizzle and rain fit into the general semantics of aging

5 See Martin Findell, *Runes*, The Trustees of British Museum, 2014. This meaning is also related to the rune’s graphic depiction and its “hump.”

and death as a descent, *Untergang* and sunset. The *u* rune phonetics evolve into the consonant sound *v*, which is reflected in the ancient graphic of the letter V and, for example, in the name of the giant Surtr (Black): *Surtr* — *Svartr*. In Old Norse, there is the root *val* (*valr*, *val-len*) — “fallen” [fallen down; dead] as in “fallen warrior,” which gives rise to Odin’s name *Valföðr* and Freya’s name *Valkyrja*. In modern English, the word *fall* has a similar semantic field of meanings: fallen on the battlefield (German *Todesfall*); *fall* as autumn, *fall* as a descent or a precipice. The transition from | to ∩ and death is *Untergang als Valgang*.

The Celtic Cross marks the four solar points of the Year, but the sounds reflect only the three stages of formation, and even the expanded five sounds do not enter the Joll/Yule area (the *vl phoneme), leaving it vowel-silent and hidden by twilight. Some light can be shed on this area — but in no way illuminate it entirely — by adding two additional runes, 𐌿 and 𐌺, to the general scheme.

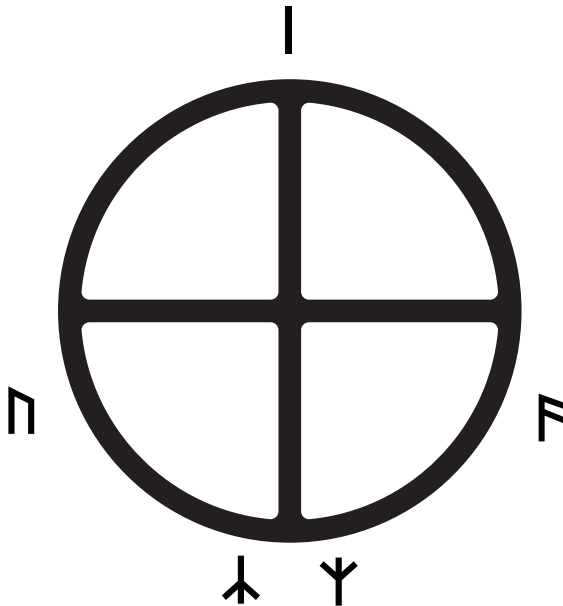


Figure 8.

The first rune in the Anglo-Saxon Futhark corresponds to the sound **k**[c], and in the Younger Futhark, starting from the X century in Denmark, Sweden and Norway, to the sound **r** or **y**, the **Yr** rune. Today it has the meaning of “death,” “downward branch,” “tree roots.”

The second rune is Algiz. In the Older Futhark it expresses the phoneme **z** as the sonorous variation of **s**, or, as **AlgiR**, the **r** phoneme at the end of words. In the Younger Futhark it bears the name of **Maðr** — man [with his hands raised] and expresses the **m** sound, and also denotes the yew-tree, from which bows and arrows were made; the shape of the rune also refers to the tree crown or branch — **Y**. In modern times, it has acquired the additional values of protection and life, forming a binary pair with **l**.

Hermann Wirth uses two symbols, **Y** and **↑** respectively, to express the same ideas of “man raising his hands up” in the right half of the Year and “man lowering his hands down” in the left. The first runic symbol (**K**, according to Wirth) is a graphical variation of the rune **Kano**, **<** or **ʃ**, meaning “wound,” “disease.” These semantics have nothing to do with Wirth’s meaning. There is a similar situation with the **↑** rune — the solar **As Tyr**, the God of war and justice, clearly does not correspond to the semantics of descent, sunset and autumn. The phonetics of these runes, the sounds of **k** and **t**, also do not fit into the semantics and hermeneutics of the Wheel of the Year as Wirth wanted to see it.

The letter **z** is a typical ending of words in the Proto-Germanic language, and **r** in Scandinavia, so the corresponding runes occur at the end of words, and in Latinized alphabets, the runic and phonetic diversity of the semantics of death, sunset, and completion is localized at the end of the rows: *r-s-t-v-x-y-z* in Latin; *r-s-t-u-v-x-y-...* in Icelandic; *r-s-t-u-v-w-x-y-z*⁶ in German and English. At the same time, the **a** sound is in the first place in an overwhelming number

6 It can be seen the following way: *u* is *v* and *w*, *s* is *z*. In the Younger Futhark, the **Yr** rune brings up the rear.

of alphabets, opening the order, which corresponds to its runic and Wheel of the Year semantics: all starts with the Gods, the Aesir.

Originally, the Futhark and runes were used as magic symbols, but later — like an opening flower — they become the writing system. At the end of the Latinized alphabets, we find those groups of sounds that are *not in themselves*, and being recorded by runes, they coincide with their semantics of the end, down-fall, dying. Here the runes are turned from magic to paradigmatic symbolism, describing all stages of formation.

The triad of vowel sounds *a-i-u*, written in runic symbols $\mathfrak{F}-|\mathfrak{N}$, is framed by additional consonant runes reflecting not phonetics but rather semantics, becoming $\mathfrak{Y}-\mathfrak{F}-|\mathfrak{N}-\mathfrak{L}$. The semicircle of birth, going-out and sunrise, *Aufgang*, is $\mathfrak{Y}-\mathfrak{F}-|$; and the semicircle of aging, return and sunset, *Untergang*, is $|\mathfrak{N}-\mathfrak{L}$. Reading the verse of the Icelandic runic poem that refers to the rune Maðr \mathfrak{Y} , we can conclude that the very birth — as the birth and entry into growth, the becoming — is already the first step of going-down, *Untergang*.

Man is delight of man, and
augmentation of the earth, and
adornor of ships.

(Maðr) er manns gaman ok moldar
auki ok skipa skreytir.⁷

The fragment of “ok moldar auki” is also translated as “and an augmentation of the dust,” which even more explicitly says that all that was born (the *being*) is destined to die since its inception. All the vowel runic and phonetic semantics of the Wheel of the Year are reduced to the pair of death–birth; at that, the corresponding runes are not located strictly at the point of Yule but are as close to it on the left (death) and on the right (birth, “an augmentation of the dust”) as possible, and between them remains the space of transition which is *already not of this world but not yet otherworldly*.

⁷ See “The Icelandic Rune Poem.”

Between 𐌿 and ƿ there opens the *clearing* of not just silence as the absence of sound, but silence as speechlessness. Tradition and conventional thinking are focused on rapid transition, jumping from death to a new birth without stopping in the space of the gap between death and life, especially since modern man is unable to properly conceive the space between birth and death as well. From this speechlessness between Yr and Maðr, at the point of Yule, the whole Wheel of the Year with its sacred *a-i-u* sounds is born (ascending — ƿ). The point of the Winter Solstice, extremely saturated with symbolism, covers the space of the gap in the circle of the Year — the Cosmos and its cycles; this is the space of the exit from the metaphysical, mythological *something* to the ineffable *Nothing*, which cannot be expressed by word or sound. This same point is the *clearing* (*Lichtung*), in which (from which) the first sound appears, the primal word that begins the manifestation of Cosmos and of all being. And at this point we meet the God of Yule, the great Shaman Father and the God-Wanderer Odin.

Odin's name *Gangleri* or *Gangradr* — Wanderer — is related by a common root with ascent (*Auf-gang*), descent (*Unter-gang*) and transition (*Über-gang*). As a father, the one who conceives and protects the manifestation of the world and the beginning of the year at the point of Yule, he is known as *Jolfaðr* and *Jolnir*. As a traveller and a wise old sage going to death, openly-turned-to-death, he is known as *Valtyr*, the Fallen God.

In this light, let us again remember the myth of the sacrifice of Odin, as a result of which he discovered the runes.

The *Hávamál* reads:

138.

I ween that I hung
 on the windy tree,
 Hung there for nights full nine;
 With the spear I was wounded,
 and offered I was
 To Othin, myself to myself,
 On the tree that none
 may ever know
 What root beneath it runs.

139.

None made me happy
 with loaf or horn,
 And there below I looked;
 I took up the runes,
 shrieking I took them,
 And forthwith back I fell.

138.

Veit ek, at ek hekk
 vindga meiði á
 nætr allar níu,
 geiri undaðr
 ok gefinn Óðni,
 sjalfr sjalfum mér,
 á þeim meiði,
 er manngi veit
 hvers af rótum renn.

139.

Við hleifi mik sældu
 né við hornigi;
 nýsta ek niðr,
 nam ek upp rúnar,
 æpandi nam,
 fell ek aftr þaðan.

The sacrifice of the king for the sake of well-being in the new year is a well-known archaic motif that reflects more ancient mythological stories about the sacrifice of the primal creature (Ymir, Purusha) and the creation of the world from its flesh. In the myth of Odin, he sacrifices himself to 𐌿, dedicating it to himself—thus he makes a paradigmatic gesture that ensures the manifestation of the world in the new year, starting from its birth ʏ and the finding of its noetic, magical runic mystery *a-i-u*. Kure Henning emphasizes that the acquisition of the runes by Odin is related to the fall (descent) from top to bottom—*fell ek aftr þaðan*—and concludes that the mystery of runes is associated with the lower worlds and death, from where Odin raises them up and brings them to light.⁸

Including Odin's names Jolfaðr, Jolnir, Valtyr, Alföðr and a number of other ones in this interpretation, we can significantly expand

8 See Kure Henning, "Hanging on the world tree" / "Old Norse religion in long-term perspectives. Origins, changes, and interactions, An international conference in Lund."

the horizon of monism in the Norse tradition. The Celtic Cross is the wheel *hweulō revealed as Joll in the language, and at Yule it is born anew, going down for rising; the Year is Yule, and in the Yule days of the Year, the Yule As Jolfaðr manifests as the beginning of the new year. It is the birth of Yule from Yule by the Yule Father; the Sun of the Celtic Cross of the World's Night, light from darkness, sound from silence.

All the crucial moments associated with the manifestation of the universe are connected with the figure of the transgressive, ecstatic God of Death and Poetry, as well as with the space of the metaphysical Winter — the Night of the Year, the space of Death as something around which concentrates the existence of the Germans as warriors and few poets, priests and philosophers. The figure of Odin unites all these archetypes and social functions.

Death is the only thing that provides the authenticity, the genuineness of being and the meaning of the entire history, becoming and life. Life itself begins as the augmentation of dust by those who come into this world; entering into life is entering into dying. Death surrounds and covers the empty space of Nothingness as Speechlessness and the descent to Ginnungagap “in the unknown depths.”

* * *

“Where no word is, can be no thing” — such is the truth of the Norn in the verse of Stefan George. Therefore, the present diversity of not only objects but of all things in general, all existence, tells us of the continuous stream of words: in this way, *many* is multiplied, πολλά. Going back from many to One, it is reasonable to conclude that this ascent implies a gradual reduction of words and at its end reaches the one All-word: the sacred word that does not summarize but contains all the future potential and impossible diversity of being like a seed. In tradition, this secret word is almost always a name of God or a sacred mantra bestowed by a God, which is sometimes another one of his names. The *opening* name of God in the German-Scandinavian

tradition is *Alföðr* or *Jolfaðr*, but these names contain two roots *al* and *jol* + *faðr*; that is, they have two parts, two words, while our primary interest is one proto-word, super-word. Such a name of God may well be *Jol* as such or *Jolnir*, the derived name of *Odin*.

According to E. Thorsson, the German all-word is *runa*—the mystery that *Odin* has learnt as the result of his self-sacrifice. All that is revealed in the world can be explained and reduced to the runic system of the *Futhark*, which, in turn, can be reduced to its name—*runa*. The name of the term (the border) contains the essence of a thing and its pledge of being: the essence of the runes is *runa*, a mystery, something that is hidden. Among runic spells, a mysterious formula is known, and there is still no decisive version regarding the etymology—*ALU*, $\mathfrak{A} \mathfrak{L} \mathfrak{U}$. In one of the versions, the formula is traced back to the Teutonic root **aluh*, meaning “amulet,” as the formula is often found on bracteate pendants. In another version, it goes back to the Teutonic root **aluhþ*—beer, ale—the ritual intoxicating drink of the Germans.

If we replace the consonant sound of the rune \mathfrak{L} for the vowel sound of the rune \mathfrak{I} in the *alu* formula, then we get the already known formula of the Year— $\mathfrak{A} \mathfrak{I} \mathfrak{U}$. The *AIU* triad is the quintessence of the Celtic Cross, the mystery of life, becoming, and death; as the all-word, it may well be the name of the Year God, according to Hermann Wirth.

The phonetics of a-i-u is also found in the *Maha Mantra* of Hinduism *Aum*. According to the doctrine, *Aum* (*Om*) was the first sound of the yet unmanifested in the cataphatic aspect of *Brahma*, and the vibration of this mantra created the world. These sounds mean the triad of creation, maintenance and destruction. In the Greek language, we find this phonetic triad in the word *αἰών*, *aion* or *eon*, meaning the age and life of a person or a generation of people. *Αἰών* is also the name of the Deity of Time. In the Hellenic and Germanic axis, the meanings of *αἰών* and $\mathfrak{A} \mathfrak{I} \mathfrak{U}$ correlate. But in the Neoplatonic context, the most solid candidate for the all-word is the name of the

solar God Apollo: Ἀ-πόλλων, the *not-many*, or, reducing its meaning to a monosyllabic word, just ἔν.

The All-word is the Arche-word, where the Greek ἀρχή means “Supreme”—that is, the principle closest to the Source. And this principle (another meaning of ἀρχή is “to rule”) governs and determines all further disclosure of being as being in general. Heraclitus, the pre-Socratic closest to the Germans, considered the fire as ἀρχή, which is conceptually close to the fire of the Gods’ *Thing*. The primal word is the seed that bears its own essential fruit—the universe with its universal law of order (Wyrð), man and his path (Year, Aeon). This is the power of the arche-word; it is the Logos.

But the Logos as the primal word is born out of the ringing silence of the apophatic Abyss of Nothingness. If in tradition this All-word is a secret that is revealed to the initiated, *the mystery of this All-word itself*, its reverse, is the proximity to the speechlessness from which it is silenced-out.

The Existential of Speech (*Rede*)

For the disclosure of here-being (Da-sein) of man, Martin Heidegger resorts to the analysis of his his existentials, one of which is speech, *Rede*⁹. The Ancient definition of man says that he is ζῷον λόγον ἔχον, “an animal with speech” (another definition and translation of the word λογός), which in Latin translation became *animalis rationalis*—a rational animal. But *ratio* is already not speech; the meaning was radically changed and the values were substituted in translation.

In speech, beyng expresses itself. Scandinavian languages have the word *mál* derived from the Proto-Germanic *maþla and includes the following meanings: I) it is the process of speaking, utterance; II) “speech” as a genre of sacred texts: Hava-mál, Grímnis-mál; III) and also language as the language of a people, the language in which they speak, write and think. The German language also has the word

9 See *Being and Time* by Martin Heidegger.

Sprache, meaning both language and speech, which M. Heidegger uses to express “the saying.”

Friedrich Georg Jünger points out that a person is able to express the language even when deprived of oral speech, i.e. being mute, with the help of sign language, body and signals. Thus, language is undoubtedly the basic property defining man, but not only in the matter of speech. Collin Cleary, adhering to a different position, indicates that the language of gestures and behavior is available to animals as well, and they master it perfectly. In this he follows Heidegger, who defined man as the world-forming being through the possession of the Logos (speech), while animals are worldless (*weltlos*)¹⁰.

According to Heidegger, speech and language are rooted in *beyng*, and in the language, through saying, *beyng* is at home, and here it reveals itself. The *Dasein* of man as a talking animal — *not man himself and his being-here, but the being-here possessing man and speaking through him* — manifests itself in his language. Language possesses man, while man is language and the boundary between the spoken, the said, and silence. Heidegger’s existential of speech included not only the saying itself as the process of speaking, but also two other key elements that are also the essence of speech: listening and silence.

Heidegger refers to the 50th fragment of Heraclitus, which reads:

οὐκ ἔμοῦ, ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου ἀκούσαντας ὁμολογεῖν σοφόν ἐστιν ἐν πάντα εἶναι

Who listens not to me but to the Logos, will say: all is one.¹¹

It is not the ordinary Self that sounds in a philosopher’s speech, but the Logos and *beyng* speak through his words, and it is necessary to hear; it is necessary to listen to it with attention. And not only to speech, but to all things as such. In the forests, fields and sky, being is

¹⁰ See F. G. Jünger, “Language and Thought.” Cleary C. “The Gifts of Odin and His Brothers,” Heidegger M., “Basic Concepts of Metaphysics.”

¹¹ Heidegger examines this fragment in detail in his work “Heraclitus.”

said; and at the same time, if you trustfully listen to the speech of the world, you can find the silence of speechlessness, which is the clearing of ἀλήθεια — truth and non-concealment in which the speech is made. Thus, speech is at the same time something that is said as being, and the very silence that we call speechlessness hidden behind speech. The way to silence lies in listening to the speech and the darkness of silence that lies in it, behind it and before it.

Heidegger writes:

The true is the unsaid, which remains the unsaid only in accordance with the strictly and duly *said*.

To think essentially is to listen to this unsaid while thinking through the said, thus coming to a consonance with what is silent toward us in the unsaid. As long as a person is entrusted with the word as his main asset, he cannot escape from the unsaid.

Further Heidegger writes about the relation of silence to λογός and to the essence of man as the guardian of being:

It [the Logos] is the originally preserving omission (die Verschweigung) and, as such, the pre-word (das Vor-Wort) to every saying of words in a response. The pre-word is the silencing-out of silence (das Erschweigen), which in its being precedes and forestalls the essence of the word—the silence that first must be broken if the word is meant to be. Λογός is not a word. It is more primal than the word, it is the pre-word to every language. Its seeking call to the human being is the silent call of the pre-word, whose being silences-to (zu-schweigt) to man. Only in the inevitable failure to retain the equivalence to this silence and only from the point of view of the status of man as the sayer of speech, we think of this silencing-out as saying in the sense of being addressed to us (Zu-Spruch und An-Spruch). Speaking more clearly, it is necessary to say that Λογός is a realm that silences-itself-to man (sich zu-schweigende), region, that is, the space resting in itself that keeps within all the unconcealing implications and instructions.

Heidegger gives an important indication regarding speech and saying: the truth of beyng is not so much spoken-out as silenced-out and silenced-to. And this source is silenced to [as in connected to, fitted to] man, silencing-out his humanity as the destiny to be a witness and shepherd of the truth of beyng.

The theme of speechlessness and silence in general is extremely important for Martin Heidegger; in his works and drafts, he talks a lot about the need for silencing-out and maintaining a distance from the world through silence, which he brought into practice in the postwar period. He is inspired to this silence by the increasing talks, including the rumours around his work *Being and Time* (1927), which do not understand his message and only multiply misunderstanding and “machinations.” Not every spoken speech carries the saying of beyng, but only in the “strictly and duly said” one can reveal the unsaid — the truth of the silence of the silencing-to beyng.

In his *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger writes:

The truth is never a goal or an “ideal,” but always only a self-concealing principle, a ground-less ground (ab-grundiger Grund).

Turning to the Rhineland mystics, we can suggest an analogy: speech and word are based (*Grundung*) in the silence that is ground-less, *Ungrund als Ab-grund*. The silence of the un-said is the ground (*Grund*) of what is said. In the metaphysics of the Year, this would correspond to the manifestation of the sound of the pre-word from the pre-sound, the point between U and A, the runes Yr and Algir. Then the whole circle of the Year can be applied to the hermeneutics of word and utterance, its *saying*, poesis, amplification and disintegration into meaninglessness.

In the inauthentic mode of Dasein, man falls away from his essential destiny and becomes a faceless grey mass of *das Man*, falling further into alienation and enslavement by technology and forgetting the question of beyng. In such a situation, the existential of speech, *Rede*, turns into its own opposite — chatter, *Gerede*. In German, this

is clearly seen in the pair *Rede* — *Ge-rede*. In Icelandic, the word for “chatter” or “wordiness” is *mælgí*. A similar form of the word *mál* occurs in the Prophecy of the *Völva* — *mællir* — when Odin *speaks* with the skull of Mimir. In the word *mælgí*, in addition to the root, you can hear and isolate the negative suffix *-gi*; so *mál* is speech and *mælgí* is non-speech, anti-speech, something opposite to a meaningful dialogue or statement in which there is meaning. Chatter or wordiness is a degeneration of speech, a senseless noisy or lulling stream of delirium, which can seem very “meaningful,” beautiful and convincing in its non-obvious rambling. Listening to the silence of speech, a person can hear the silence of the unspoken truth of being, and listening to the chatter, a person cannot understand anything at all: what is being said, what is the sense of it, who is talking and so on.

As the endowing of things with being through the word is the essential prerogative of the Gods (the Norns in Stefan George, the Aesir in Snorri’s Edda) and a few people: poets (like Hölderlin) and philosophers, who witness being, the chatter of *das Man* is unsubstantial, empty. All the most important and truest is said and asked only by a few; modern mass wordiness generates meaningless, unnecessary and ugly statements and signs. Here begins the conservative and traditionalist dimension of the above-mentioned Dasein existential. And here we turn to Jean Baudrillard and his concept of a simulacrum — a sign, a statement or an event that, through hyperlinks and self-cycling (the Möbius strip), hides the fact that it expresses nothing and carries no meaning in itself.¹² But the simulacrum convinces all the consumers and participants of the semiurgy and recycling of information of its importance. Wordiness as non-authentic speech is the multiplication of (πολλα) meaningless statements on any topic, including the Tradition, being, the Gods and everything else.

12 See *Simulacra and Simulation* by Jean Baudrillard.

In today's situation, it is necessary (and Heidegger spoke about it as early as in the first half of the XX century) to stop speaking at all and turn to silence and sensitive listening to things.

All of us, initially thinking in the everyday way, actually need to "stop" our mind. Only when this eternally busy, endlessly annoying, with its "logical" and "illogical" but still "normal," mind freezes, perhaps something else will come into play; namely, the deep, essential thinking, and it will come in such a way that the stopped mind will no longer interfere with its hunger for quick victories, vindictive know-it-allness.¹³

13 See "Heraclitus" by Martin Heidegger.

X I

The Language of Scandinavian Dasein

IN SCANDINAVIA — Iceland, Norway, Denmark and Sweden — the philosophy of Martin Heidegger is known, but not so many people are familiar with his works. His *Being and Time* and *What is Metaphysics?* were translated into Danish and Norwegian only once. Only a handful of philosophers work with the German original or English translation and convey the ideas of M. Heidegger in their interpretations. It could be said that the Scandinavian languages are incapable of expressing philosophy, that they are too “primitive” for this, but this would be wrong. At the time, the German language was not considered the language of philosophy, but with the works of Hegel, Schelling, Fichte, Nietzsche and Heidegger, it became the crown of the philosophical language on our continent. Therefore, the question of translating at least the basic vocabulary of Heideggerian thought into Scandinavian languages is a question of daring and the presence of the daring.

We will focus on the already suggested variants of the translation and adaptation of Heidegger’s terms in the Scandinavian languages; their etymological and lexical surroundings and connotations.¹

¹ Based on the master’s thesis of Ragnheiður Eiríksdóttir *Víður-eign Verunnar—fyrirbærafræði Heideggers til bjargar mannkyninu* and the work

Sein and Dasein

The German word *Sein*—Genesis, the Genesis goes back to the Proto-Germanic roots *wesan—to be *beun—to be, to become. The root *wesan is derived from the old Norse verb *vesa*, which later became the Norse form of *vera/væra*, also meaning “to be”: the Icelandic *að vera*, Danish and Norwegian *væren*. In German, the past participle of the verb *sein*—*gewesen*—preserves the connection to the Proto-Germanic root. In Past Simple it is *war* in German and *var* in Icelandic; its Present Simple forms in German and Icelandic are *ist* and *er* respectively.

Að vera is the affirmative “to be,” like the Norwegian or Danish *væren*. The derivatives of these words are used to convey the concepts of being and existence in those places where the Latin version is not preserved in Heidegger’s translations. The *að verða* form means being as a process, the becoming. For example, in the phrase *Innganga að verða*—“to enter into becoming.” Also, this form is used in the future tense in the meaning of “to be,” for example “to promise to be,” “definitely to be in the future.” In tradition, this word is found in the name of one of the Norns—the Goddesses of fate, one of which appears in Stefan George’s poem—*Verðandi*, the Becoming, or the one who favours the becoming and formation.

The opposite of being, existence and presence is non-existence and absence; it is expressed through the negative structure *ekki-vera* (Icelandic) or *ikke-være* (Norwegian); *Ikke-væren* is Non-being. In Old Norse, *ekki* consists of the root *ek*—a derivative from *eitt* (*einn*; one) + the negative suffix *-ki*, the softened form of *-gi*. That is, *ekki* is the absence of *one*, single, but not the establishment of *many*. If there is no *one* (*eitt*)—then there is nothing at all (*ekki*). The term “something” is also derived from *eitt*—*eitthvað*.

of Allan Bernhard Jørgensen *Eksistens, væren og mening. En eksistensfilosofisk læsning af Kierkegaard, Nietzsche og Heidegger* and Thomas Schwarz Wentzer *Introduktion til Heideggers Væren og Tid*.

The negation of *ekki* in the Icelandic language forms the term *Ekkert* — Nothing, similar to the German *Nichts*, also built through negation. But *Ekkert*-Nothing is identical to the concept of Emptiness. To express the idea of emptiness, an unoccupied space akin to a vacuum, in Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish there are derivatives from the root *tom*, the Proto-Germanic **tōmaz*: *tómur*, *tōmhet* and *tom* respectively. It is noteworthy that it is *Tom* that is used to express the Buddhist idea of Emptiness.

The situation becomes more complicated when it is necessary to convey the key Heideggerian term *Dasein*, which in some cases is not translated at all or is always given in brackets. *Da-Sein* means the presence, the existence of man, and at the same time is a complex structure of “being-here” (*da* — “here” and *sein* — “to be”). That is, we are talking about the immediate existence *right here*. But at the same time, *da* is not quite any specific “here,” but here-as-between something and something, between *here* and *there*. Man’s being-here is being-between, but at the same time it is a specific being-here.

The meaning of existence, of being, is also conveyed by simple forms derived from *vera* — *veran/væren*. In Danish, *Dasein* is also translated as the structure of *Tilstedeværen*, consisting of the following parts: *til* — to, *stede* — presence, being in the present tense, and *væren* — being, existence. The result is a more voluminous construction of Being-To-[its]Presence and Being-In-The-Present-Tense as Being-Here-and-Now. But they are devoid of the reference to a place and of the connection with *da* in *Da-sein*. The Icelandic language also has such structures as *Tilvist* and *Til-vera*, starting with the prefix *til-*, meaning direction, the approach *to* something, similar to the preposition “till” (till some moment, till some point). But in *Tilvist*, the focus on *vera*, on being, is lost; the form *Til-vera* is closer in this case, meaning To-Being, Till-Being in the sense of moving in its direction, approaching *to it*. The temporal aspect of this prefix is expressed in the accomplished form of the expression “till this hour.”

Also interesting is the Icelandic version of *Par-vera*, which can be translated as Being-There or Being-Here at the same time. That is, *Par-vera* can play with the colours of the concreteness of being-here and the intermediate not-here-position of *Dasein*. But placing *Par* in language constructs can introduce strict specifics of place like in “here.” For example: *Hver er þar?*—Who [is] here?; *þar af leiðandi* is the adverb “therefore,” where *af leiðandi* can be literally translated as “leading-out,” “taking-out” from here (*þar*). In Norwegian, the derivatives of *þar* are the form *der* and the Norwegian analogue of *Parvera*—*Derværen*. The Icelandic *þar*, Norwegian and Danish *der* and German *da* share a common Proto-Germanic root *þa.

One of the main existentials of *Derværen* is Being-in-the-World. Being-here is always simultaneously present as Being-in-the-World, without precedence and as such: *Da-sein ist In-der-Welt-Sein*. In Danish it is transmitted by the melodious alliterative structure *Í-verden-væren*, similar to the German *In-der-Welt-Sein*. The words *welt* and *verden* go back to the Proto-Germanic *weraldiz, which gives rise to the Old High German *weralt*, Frisian *wrald* and Icelandic *veröld*; in the Poetic Edda it is found in the meaning of “peace” as a synonym of *heim*.

The common basis of the Germanic languages is favourable for translation, which we can see in the the German word *Zeit* (old German *zīt), Icelandic *timi/tið* and Swedish, Danish and Norwegian *tid*, having a common Proto-Germanic root *tīdiz, which has the connotation of split time, interval or period: day, year, moment, or event.

Ereignis — the Event

Another key term in Martin Heidegger’s fundamental ontology is *Ereignis*—the Event. The main root of this word is the German and Scandinavian *eigen* with the following meanings: to own, to appropriate, to have, to possess. The same root is found in the description of the authentic and non-authentic mode of the existence of *Dasein*,

eigene and *uneigene*, which can be roughly translated as “own” and “non-own” modes of existence. The translation, based on the Greek αὐθεντικός refers to the statement of authenticity or non-authenticity of this existence, which is actualized as authenticity as the result of the decision of Sein turning to Da-Sein. Heidegger himself, with his usual emphasis on simplicity hidden behind the semantics of complex philosophical terms, traces the root of *eigen* in *Er-eignis* back to the word *Auge* — eye and *augu* — to see. This is a reference to non-concealment, ἀλήθεια.

The history of Western philosophy and thought in its First Beginning is the process of forgetting the question of beyng (Seyn), reaching the triumph of technology, machinations and nihilism. This is the fall of Dasein into its non-authentic mode of existence. The decision of Dasein about its authenticity, focusing on the Sein in Da-Sein, is the moment of the Event — the assertion of Another Beginning. The moment of *Ereignis* is entirely eschatological and occurs — or rather may or may not occur, since there is no predetermination and everything depends on the decision of man’s Dasein — at the time of the End.

Er-eignis is the possession, the appropriation of Sein in Da-Sein: the experience of beyng in being-here as one’s Self (*Selbst*). In the *Black Notebooks* there is a more original form of usage and translation of Er-eignis — en-owning: “Er-eignen (to concern) means, originally, to distinguish or discern which one’s eyes see, and in seeing calling to oneself, ap-prop-riate.” To distinguish, to learn is to make something one’s own, to appropriate it as one’s own essence. *Er-eignis* is when the *Sein of Dasein* is appropriated in its *Da* as an authentic *Selbst*.

But why “event”? The decision to be authentic is not guaranteed and is not given; it can happen, and it can stay unfulfilled. An event is a happening, a coming-into-being, the unique moment of the decision of en-owning. The authenticity of Dasein at the end of the history of the oblivion of beyng is the eschatological (*Sein-zum-Tode*) moment of being in the event of appropriation [en-owning; *ereignet*]

of the Self. With a properly questioning mind or poetic thinking, man can appoint this moment and prepare to meet it. Finally, Dasein exists by man and through man, through special people such as poets, philosophers and priests.² And in the Event, Seyn-beyng en-owns man.

These are just some semantics, translations and shades of the term *Ereignis*, which took several paragraphs for an approximate clarification.

The same is considered by Raghad Eiríksdóttir speaking of *Ereignis* in her master's thesis.³ To convey the term *Er-eignis* in Icelandic, she used the unusual word *viðureignin*, the military term “assault” (to assault, to take by assault) or fight, that is, a specific clash of two armies. “In accordance with the Heideggerian language,” she divides the term into two roots, forming *Viður-eigninn*. In this form, the term acquires a set of connotations characteristic of Heidegger's thought and gives rise to a number of references to Scandinavian mythological plots and pave an even more ornate trail to mythological analogies and the anthropology of the Hellenic Logos.

The division of the word emphasizes the Germanic root *eigin* more distinctly, which shows itself in the original *Er-eignis*. Ragnheiður interprets the choice of the military term “assault” as the reflection of πολεμος, as the essence of human existence: man fights for his existence, his authenticity, and therefore, for the Event. That is, in Icelandic, an Event is not “en-owning,” “becoming” or “appropriation” but the “assault” and “conquest” of beyng in being-here; the result of the struggle of man, or rather Dasein, for authenticity. And, as in any war, the outcome is not initially predetermined.

2 The *Black Notebooks* read: “... Questioning is the shift to en-owning (die Entsetzung in das Er-eignis)”; and further on the Event: “... and when overtaken by this gift, then “here” (das Da) flashes like lightning and you, defeated, captured, are then happening in Da-sein (bist du zum Da-sein ereignet).”

3 See Ragnheiður Eiríksdóttir *Viður-eign Verunnar — fyrrbærafræði Heideggers til bjargar mannkyninu* — “The Event of Existence — Heidegger's Phenomenology for the Salvation of Mankind.”

The first word of the two-part term — *viður* — is much richer in meanings and semantic shades. First, says Ragnheiður Eiríksdóttir, this word is derived from the root *við*, which means people in plural with the speaker included in this number. That is either “people and I among them” or simply “we.” The inclusion of “we” in the translation of *Ereignis* highlights the role of man and his being-here in his assault of his own authenticity. This refers to another meaning of *við* as the preposition of connection “with” and to another existential of Dasein — *Mit-Sein*, being-with. Dasein is always in connection with, it is never alone and not the only one. This existential does not tell us who is with whom, but indicates that Dasein is always being-with, *við-vera*.

But the word *viður* itself, derived from *við* (we, people), is a homonym of the word *viður*, meaning trees, forest and wood as material. This meaning will allow us to deepen our understanding of the word in Icelandic culture. For instance, wood was the material from which the first people in mythology, Ask and Embla — Ash and Willow — were created, who were bestowed with different qualities by Odin in his triadic image.

Viður as wood, material, subtly refers us to the Greek word ὕλη, also meaning wood. The word ὕλη in Aristotle turns into a philosophical term meaning matter, the substance of which everything consists. ὕλη as the material nature of man is complementary to the myth of humanity created by the Titan Prometheus from clay and ashes, which he was unable to animate without the help of Zeus and Athena, who breathed spirit into his creations. Thus, the line ὕλη/*viður*-wood-matter gives a distant echo of the material nature of man, and he struggles with the final immersion into it (as in *das Man*), fighting for his being.

Finally, *Viður* (*Viðarr*) is one of the names of the As Odin, meaning Murderer. If we apply its meaning to *Viður-eignar*, we will get the kenning “property of the Murderer” or “victim,” “the fallen.” But the myth clarifies itself: Odin under the name of *Vidar* comes to Ragnarök

in order to kill the monster Fenrir, and thus to avenge himself swallowed by the wolf. The name Vidar is emphatically eschatological and anti-Titanic; Odin is not just a killer, he is a killer of a Titanic monster.

This meaning creates an additional traditionalist dimension for the interpretation of the Event. Modernity is the epoch of Titanic triumph, according to Friedrich Georg and Ernst Jünger, and the task of mind is to reject its rational mental constructions. In this case, it means to kill a Titan in a state of ecstasy [being-outside-oneself] of the obsession with the Murderer God. Then one opens the possibility of en-owning, appropriation of beyng. And then: *Viður-eignin er þetta "eitthvað" og þetta "ekkert" samankomið*—our en-owning (our assault) [of beyng] is the appearance of both “something” and “nothing.”

XII

Loki and Prometheus

THERE ARE SEVERAL VERSIONS of the etymology of Loki's name. In the most common version, the origin of the word *loki* is traced from *logi*, meaning "fire." *Logi* is the Titanic embodiment of the devouring fire with which Loki comes into battle during his stay in Utgard, the land of giants. At the same time, he loses this battle, which does not correspond to the interpretation of his name as the patron of fire and fire God. According to another version, the name is formed from the ancient Icelandic *lúka*, meaning both "to finish" and "to lock," that is, referring to something that finishes and locks, puts an end. Asgeir Magnusson, among other hypotheses, indicates a possible etymology from the word *lok*, which means a weed among the plants. The interpretation of Loki's name as The One Who Finishes refers to his role in Ragnarök, and the meaning of the name Weed corresponds to his role and place in the common German-Scandinavian family of Gods, Aesir and Vanir.

Snorri's Edda tells of Loki belonging to the race of giants, born from the Jötunns Fárbauti and Laufey. Loki is a sworn brother of Odin, as mentioned in *Lokasenna*—he is accepted into the family of the Aesir through the ritual of fraternization with the All-Father. Another version says that it is Loki who hides behind the name Loðurr in the triad Odin-Hœnir-Loðurr, and thus he is one of the ancient Gods and

is involved in the creation of man. He has three children from the giantess Angrboða: the serpent Jörmungandr, the wolf Fenrir and the Titaness Hel. Since their birth and by their origin, their destinies are associated with Ragnarök and rebellion against the Aesir. Of all the Jötunn clan of Loki, from Fárbaumi to Fenrir, he alone was [until now] accepted as an equal in the family of the Aesir. His ancestors and his descendants remained with the Jötunns, Loki's elevation did not affect their status in the myth and they did not rise to higher positions.

Traditionally, Loki embodies the figure of the trickster in mythology: he changes forms, and he is the cause of many troubles of the Gods, which he resolves with the help of cunning and guile. With his help the Aesir obtain many of their well-known attributes: Odin gets the spear Gungnir and the ring Draupnir, Sif — her golden hair, Thor — the Mjöllnir, Freyr — Skíðblaðnir and the boar; also Loki, disguised as a mare, gave birth to Odin's eight-legged horse Sleipnir.

Loki is a frequent companion or participant of the myths about Thor as an apparent antipode of the second warrior function. But much more than with Thor, Loki is connected with Odin through ritual fraternization and the similarity of functions. Both Odin and Loki can be called tricksters and patrons of metamorphoses; both break the rules, steal, and use deception to achieve victory. But Loki's cunning and non-conformism are applied at a "lower" level than those of Odin; the All-Father unites two supreme functions, and his transgressiveness and cunning in disputes are addressed to the acquisition of wisdom, while the cunning of Loki is destructive, he forges misadventures, his disputes are deceptive and offensive, and he seeks to avoid payment for losing in disputes. In this light, Loki can act as an initiatically unfortunate counterpart, the shadow of Odin himself, the trickster-Titan. Partly, this was the basis for the later interpretation of Loki as the Norse counterpart of Satan in medieval times.¹

1 This interpretation is continued by many modern followers of tradition, including the modern worshippers of Loki. The existence of developed cults of Loki in ancient times is not known.

But the main role of Loki in the myth is focused on the fulfilment of the Fate of the Gods, and he is fully revealed as an eschatological character in the three acts of the approach of the *Endkampf*.

In the first act, the Gods learn about the offsprings of Loki from Angrboða — Jörmungandr, Hel and Fenrir.

En er goðin vissu til, at þessi þrjú systkin fæddust upp í Jötunheimum, ok goðin rökðu til spádóma, at af systkinum þessum myndi þeim mikit mein ok óhapp standa, ok þótti öllum mikils ills af væni, fyrst af móðerni ok enn verra af faðerni...

But when the gods learned that this kindred was nourished in Jötunheim, and when the gods perceived by prophecy that from this kindred great misfortune should befall them; and it seemed to all that there was great prospect of ill (first from the mother's blood, and yet worse from the father's) [...]

The Gods remove Loki's children to the chthonic regions of Cosmos: the Serpent goes to the bottom of the ocean, Hel is sent underground, and Fenrir is captured, during which Tyr loses his right hand.

The second act—the death of Baldr—is recounted in Vegtám's Song (Baldr's Dreams) and Snorri's Edda.² The youngest and the most beautiful As Baldr, who is also considered to be the personification of spring³, was the son of Odin and a joy among the Aesir and Vanir. In order to ward off dangers from him, Frigg takes an oath from all things in the world that they will not harm her son, except for a small branch of mistletoe. Loki discovers this secret by cunning, gives a twig of mistletoe to the blind Höd and helps him to slay Baldr to death in one shot.

The sudden murder of the invulnerable and beautiful Baldr plunges all the Gods into deep mourning, but for Odin it was the

² See *The Prose Edda*, "Gylfaginning," 34.

³ The third caste understanding of the image and myth of Baldr is built around the seasonal, agrarian and annual interpretation of his death and resurrection after Ragnarök.

hardest to bear the loss: he comprehended better than others what great damage the death of Baldr had caused to the Aesir. Odin, knowing about the fate of the Gods and Ragnarök, alone of all the Aesir and Vanir, understood the true meaning of what had happened: it was the vengeance of Loki for the captivity and exile of his Jötunnn children, and there came the calm before the storm of the End of the Gods. The motive of revenge is clearly discernible in the conversation of Odin, under the name of Vegtam, with the Völva in Helheim about the fate of Baldr. Trying to foresee his fate, he meets the Völva who tells him that a table in Hel is already set for Baldr and that it is impossible for him to avoid death. Odin guesses that he is speaking not to the Völva but to Angrboda, the mother of Loki's monsters.

The song of Baldr's Dream says:

The Wise-Woman spake:

13.

“Vegtam thou art not,
as erstwhile I thought;
Othin thou art,
the enchanter old.”

Othin spake:

“No wise-woman art thou,
nor wisdom hast;
Of giants three
the mother art thou.”

Völva kvað:

13.

“Ert-at-tu Vegtamr,
sem ek hugða,
heldr ertu Óðinn,
aldinn gautr.”

Óðinn kvað:

“Ert-at-tu vólva
né vís kona,
heldr ertu þriggja
þursa móðir.”

The Wise-Woman spake:

14.

“Home ride, Othin,
be ever proud;
For no one of men
shall seek me more
Till Loki wanders
loose from his bonds,
And to the last strife
the destroyers come.”

Völva kvað:

14.

“Heim ríð þú, Óðinn,
ok ver hróðigr,
svá komir manna
meir aftr á vit,
er lauss Loki
líðr ór böndum
ok ragna rök
rjúfendr koma.”

The song ends with a prophecy of Loki's liberation from the fetters and destruction of the Gods. In the Edda, Snorri says that the opportunity of ransoming Baldr from Hel was prevented by the Giantess Þökk, the appearance of which Loki took in order to preclude the resurrection of the God. Only after Ragnarök Baldr will return from Helheim in peace with Höd. The fate of the kindreds Odin and Loki are connected and converge at the end point. In the *Prose Edda*, the episode with the capture of Loki by the Aesir follows the murder of Baldr, but in the *Elder Edda* it happens after *Lokasenna*, the Altercation with Loki.

The Altercation is the third act that brings Ragnarök closer. In the Edda of Snorri, after the capture of Loki, there follows the story of the death of the Gods. The altercation begins with the Gods going to Egir's feast after the death of Baldr, and ends with the punishment of Loki. The Altercation itself gave rise to many versions and interpretations of what was said in it. It begins with the fact that Loki comes uninvited to the feast, where none of the Aesir and Vanir call him a friend — that is, he is already apart from their circle, opposed to the Gods. This is confirmed by the fact that Loki comes not for peace and not for another trickstery, but for discord and enmity, “to dash the mead with malice.”

During the Altercation, Loki gives spiteful replies to each of the Aesir and Vanir, and brings to light their secrets and improper actions or their negative qualities. At this, the Gods now want to pay off, then

to placate Loki and to parry his attacks. A number of researchers believe that this poem is composed under the influence of Christianity and is meant to vilify the old pagan Gods through Loki's words, to show that they are rather "demons" than those who can accept praise and prayer. According to Joseph Harris, the old Norse word *skáld* is associated with the old English *scold*—"verbally insult," or with the old Frisian word *skof*—"mockery"⁴. Harris points out that heroic poems include a deep satirical element inherent in poetry itself, emphasizing its archaic nature and, in our case, close connection between "warrior-like" and "tricksterish." Aron Gurevich argues that addressing the Gods with blasphemy or satire is a sacred practice of breaking the taboo, which only strengthens their supreme status and does not cause them any insult; similar to the Latin principle "What is permitted to Jupiter is not permitted to the bull."⁵ But most agree that this poem belongs to the pagan period.

In *Lokasenna*, Loki reveals those aspects of the figures of the Gods which, in the light of what is accepted in the German-Scandinavian traditional solar-martial ethos, belong to the twilight sphere and are judged. He accuses the Gods of cowardice or behaviour undue for a warrior, and the Goddesses of infidelity and depravity. But not all of Loki's furious accusations are true. Here it is important to understand that the warrior ethos is an external manifestation of the Greek Logos, its being-in-the-world. Odin and Freya carry a deeper, dark-as-concealed dimension (reverse) of transgressive ecstasy and eroticism; Kvasir embodies wisdom among people, and his function is complemented by the warrior aspect rather than reduced to it. The ethos of Loki is close to Odin's, but shifted in the direction of the Titanic, and during the altercation we meet a mixture of three positions: warrior, transgressive-shamanic and tricksteric-Titanic. Loki as the main character mixes all of them, accusing some of what is not characteristic of

4 See *Speak Useful Words or Say Nothing / Old Norse Studies* by Joseph Harris.

5 See *Edda and Saga* by Aron Gurevich.

them with the utmost rigour, or, embodying the Titanic beginning, tries to interpret what is permissible in his own ways and to make it look unacceptable. This can be seen in Loki's speech reproaching Odin for practicing *Seiðr* like a witch and thus being "the unmanly one"; but Odin — to whom, in his warrior-shaman syzygy, ecstatic transgression is not forbidden — retorts that "the unmanly one" is he who "winters eight | wast under the earth, milking the cows as a maid, (ay, and babes didst he bear)."

Freya is the female personification of Eros in the German-Scandinavian myth in the aspect of Aphrodite's love, according to Julius Evola.⁶ She is the expressly independent lover of many husbands, some of whom (Odin-Óðr, Attar) find their tragic fate when meeting the *femme fatale* Mother of the Fallen. In the person of Freya, warrior, poet, priest and philosopher meet the Goddess of Love and Death in one figure. The sacred liberated sexuality is also known in agricultural fertility cults and in initiatic rites, especially in Tantric and Shakta schools in India. But Loki seeks to translate the sexuality of Freya and Frigg into the plane of the vulgar, common Eros from Plato's "Feast" — that is, to vulgarize the ecstatic and initiatic uranic Eros of the two most important Goddesses of the two families of celestial beings.⁷ But such a deviation from the solar-warrior obverse deep into the twilight-ecstatic reverse is appropriate not for all of the Gods and people. In this denunciation Loki achieves his goal; he brings to light [at the feast] *what should remain in the twilight and be concealed, accessible only to a few.*

Here Loki disrupts the order and harmony in the structure of the German Logos, where everything is present in its place and in the proportion of the external and the internal inherent to its Self, bringing discord and conflict between the obverse and the reverse, creating

6 See *The Metaphysics of Sex* by Julius Evola.

7 Sometimes Freya and Frigg are considered as two faces of the same figure of the Supreme Goddess-Wife. Besides, the Edda Goddesses are deprived of hysteria characteristic of the Hellenic Hera.

a chaotic mess, shattering the balance in the structure of the Logos itself, which brings everything to the eschatological finale.

Also, Loki pursues a specific goal with these denunciations — to sow discord among the Gods. If war is the standard of existence of the Germans and their Gods in the world, and game is a refraction of war in the sphere of thinking and philosophy, in the field of the Titanic it is discord and hysterical [emotional] strife. It is noteworthy that Loki rejects all challenges to battle from the insulted Gods; he continues sowing discord and does not let it change from an offensive verbal altercation to an actual duel, just as the conflict does not grow into a dispute about wisdom, where the stake would also be Loki's head.

In his desire to insult Frigg and all of the Aesir even more, Loki finally admits that he was the cause of the death of Baldr, after which the Gods, in response, begin to prophesy the punishment for his actions. The appearance of Thor, who was absent during the feast, puts an end to the strife. Thor does not engage into the exchange of insults, but keeps repeating one refrain — the threat to kill Loki with his Hammer, and at last Loki gives up and disappears with the words:

Loki spake:

64.

“I have said to the gods
and the sons of the god,
The things that whetted my
thoughts;
But before thee alone
do I now go forth,
For thou fightest well, I ween.

Loki kvað:

64.

«Kvað ek fyr ásum,
kvað ek fyr ása sonum,
þats mik hvatti hugr,
en fyr þér einum
mun ek út ganga,
því at ek veit, at þú vegr.

The end of the Titanic discord and confusion [destruction] of the harmony of the German Logos comes from the most militant and solar Warrior God, immeasurable to the Jötunnns. Loki fails to sow discord among the Aesir and the Vanir, but they decide to punish the one who has encroached on the proper order.

Regarding the further fate of Loki, both Eddas tell us the same thing: the Aesir chase and find Loki disguised in the form of a salmon, Thor catches him again, and throws him into a dungeon, tied to a rock with the entrails of his own son. Skadi hangs a snake over his head that drips poison on his face, and Loki's wife Sigyn collects the poison in a bowl. When she turns away, the poison falls on Loki's face, and it causes earthquakes. Loki will be able to free himself from fetters only at Ragnarök, at the same time when his son Fenrir gains freedom.

Ragnarök, or the Time of the Wolf (*Wolfszeit*), is the maximum release of the Titanic principle, which destroys the order established by the Gods in Cosmos and among people. At this hour, Loki and all his children are released, relationships and order among the people are destroyed, "brothers will fight each other." The Wolf Fenrir, having escaped from the chthonic dungeon, swallows the sun. Turning to the Neoplatonic interpretation of the Sun-Apollo as α - $\pi\omicron\lambda\lambda\omega\nu$ — that is, the One — we can conclude that the epoch of the End is the disappearance of the solar order and the opening One, and the triumph of the pure lightless plurality of that being which Martin Heidegger called non-being: being devoid of its essence and staying inertial as the givenness of the present things and objects in their abandonment of being.

Loki arrives at the field of Vigrid on the ship Naglfar, and with him walk the companions of Hel, the dead last people from the underground realm of the afterlife. On the battlefield, Loki fights with the As Heimdall, son of Odin and the guardian of Bifrost and Asgard. Heimdall, under the name of Rigr, asserts three classes of society: Thralls, Karls and Jarls — slaves, free farmers and artisans, and the bloodline of kings and priests, which corresponds to the triadic structure of the Indo-European societies of Georges Dumézil. Heimdall, as the founder of the Divine order among the people, clashes with the one who destroys it, Loki. And they both kill each other in battle. Thus fulfils the Destiny of the Gods, and thus closes the mythical metaphysical cycle.

The difficulty in reading the figure of Loki is that, up to a certain point, he cannot be strictly relegated to the realm of the Titans as, for example, Prometheus. He is accepted in the family of the Aesir through being sworn brothers with Odin himself and embodies the figure of the trickster, helping the Gods and bringing them gifts — their attributes. Besides, Loki is not the only of the Titans who was adopted into the family of Gods. So is Skadi, but she was accepted because of her emphatic militancy, and she remains on the side of the Gods until the end without betraying them. It could be said that the figure of Loki is ambivalent and he is simultaneously the father of grief and a cunning liberator of the same; the riskier image of the transgressive Odin in the universe. But the separateness of his fate and his role in the myth says the opposite.

Ambivalence always implies balance, the harmony of proportion between different sides and manifestations, while the myths of Loki reflect the violation of this balance all over. Loki's nature is not ambivalent but indecisive. He is a God, but only while he is on the side of the Aesir against the Jötunnns and helps them in solving problems, the cause of which is often Loki himself. In this mode of existence, he opposes the Titans, he stands apart from them, although his ancestors and descendants fully belong to them. But once he finally makes the choice, turning to his Self, he discloses his Titanic nature — you could say, his Lokian authenticity of the anti-Divine rebellion. And in this revolt, malice and treachery, he surpasses Prometheus himself. He retains his separatedness from the Titans until the very end; even at Aegir's feast, the Aesir address him as one of the Gods, and at the beginning even say a praise to him as a guest. For him — and in this he differs from all the other Jötunnns — there remains the possibility to decide not in favour of the Titanic but in favor of the Divine until the very last moment.

This distinguishes Loki from all the Titans and Gods, and suggests a very special traumatic and dramatic figure in the structure of the German-Scandinavian myth: *the figure of the Titanic indecision and*

uncertainty, which is extremely close to the situation of modern man and his decisions about himself, the Gods, Heaven and Earth, and the decision about Sein in his Da-Sein.

This decision of Loki about his Titanic essence results in the *Endkampf* and the death of the Gods, Titans and the entire old world. Loki is followed by his inauthentic people, the mass of *das Man* that drove the Gods out by the noise of its senseless bustle and chatter. And the question of the fundamental decision, both for Loki and for the people, is centred around the eschatology of the End and the question of the relation to death, the death of the world and being-to-death.

* * *

The story of Loki and his proximity to the last humanity of the Wolf Age largely correlates with the myths of the Titan Prometheus and his humanity in the Hellenic Logos.

Prometheus—Προμηθεύς, “Forethought,” was the son of the Titan Iapetus and the oceanid Clymene in Hesiod or Themis-Gaia in Aeschylus, a brother of Atlas and a sworn brother of Zeus. Prometheus played a great and sometimes definitive role in the fate of the Olympians, mortals and their relationships.⁸

In “Theogony,” Hesiod expounds the late mythological tradition of plots related to Prometheus, in the light of the regression of generations of people and the change of metaphysical ages (Golden, Silver, Bronze, Heroic and Iron.) Prometheus, taking the side of the Gods (Aeschylus) in Titanomachy, was well-disposed to people and decided to deceive Zeus at the division of the carcass of the sacrificial bull at Mecone. With cunning, he tricked Zeus into choosing the worst part, bones and fat, leaving people with the meat. For this deception, Zeus deprived men of fire, which was then stolen by Prometheus and handed over to the people, going against the will of the Thunderer.

8 See Mircea Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas*, vol. 1; Hesiod, *Theogony, Works and days*; Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*; F. G. Jünger, *The Greek Myths*.

In *Protagoras*, Plato retells the story as follows: the Brother of Prometheus, Epimetheus (“Afterthought”) bestowed all living beings with qualities and gifts, but through some misunderstanding forgot about man. And then Prometheus, along with fire, stole the skills of Athena and Hephaestus, and gave people the knowledge of crafts. But he could not give them the law of community life, which was owned by Zeus. Seeing the multiplying lawlessness and quarrels between people who cannot live together, Zeus sends Hermes to establish among people the sense of truth and shame that will seal their relationships and will be the law. The skills of Athena and Hephaestus and the truth of Zeus make people involved in the Divine destiny.

The sympathy of Prometheus for humanity is revealed in the story of the last, the fifth humanity, among which Hesiod did not want to live. According to the myth, after the flood that destroyed the previous generation, Prometheus creates people from earth or from clay, but they are incomplete, unfinished. Then Athena or Zeus breathe the Spirit into them, finally making them people, and because of that their nature is twofold, and their kind is called Promethean. Prometheus, rebelling against the law and the will of Zeus, feels love and care for these “last people,” his deception for their sake causing them even more suffering. As a punishment for stealing fire, Zeus sends Pandora to the people, and instructs Hephaestus to chain Prometheus to the rock in Colchis, where an eagle pecks his liver every day.

Aeschylus dedicated his famous tragedy *Prometheus Bound* to the punishment of Prometheus, radically different from the dominant solar Divine orientation of the Greeks and more in the direction of the anti-divine Titanism; Aeschylus sings praise to Prometheus and his deed, but says nothing about the grief that he brought to people. In this he differs radically from Hesiod; Zeus sees in advance the plan of Prometheus.⁹ The story of Hesiod is degradation, while

9 Carl Reinhardt in his study of “Prometheus Bound” suggests that it was Aeschylus who made Prometheus a Titan *par excellence*.

Aeschylus remains optimistic, speaking of the progress and the gifts of Prometheus to the people:

A tale that can be summed in one brief word:
All that of art man has, Prometheus gave.

Prometheus continues to scold Zeus and predicts his decline; as a Seer he knows this secret. For refusing to give it away and boldness in his speech to Hermes, Zeus cast him down to Tartarus, where Prometheus falls, uttering words characteristic of the genius of deceit and lies:

This turmoil is quite clearly aimed at me
and comes from Zeus to make me feel afraid.
O sacred mother Earth and heavenly Sky,
who rolls around the light that all things share,
you see these unjust wrongs I must endure!

The figure of Prometheus, his message of rebellion against the supreme power of God [Zeus] and his understanding of human suffering, gains popularity in the Age of Enlightenment. Prometheus becomes a symbol of the struggle against tyranny and power, including religion. Prometheus is a humanist, the giver of reason (ratio) of Modernity and the patron of progress. He is honoured by Percy and Mary Shelley; Byron in *Prometheus* reflects the idea of the light of rational reason and development that will lead humanity to prosperity:

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind.

The gifts of the Titan to man are associated with progress in the field of technology and with the Industrial Revolution. Karl Marx, the author of a complete materialistic philosophy, admired Prometheus. Prometheus was proclaimed as one of the role models by Adolf Hitler, and in the US the figure of his brother Atlas became the personification

of one of the radical liberal-capitalist ideas — the objectivism of Ayn Rand. According to Friedrich Georg Jünger, Prometheus is the eternal initiator and the embodiment of incessant active formation, the desire for the new [without the completion of the old, something that has been already started]. The passage from the prophecy of the fall of Zeus is often interpreted as the onset of the “Gestalt of the Worker,” in the language of Ernst Jünger; that is, the era of machines, in the Titanic noise, in which the Gods do not live and from which they run away.

More fiery than the lightning, a more loud
 Crash than the crashes of Jove's thundercloud;
 And that earth-shaking torment of the main,
 PoSeidron's trident, he shall break in twain.
 Then Zeus shall learn, beneath that mastering wave
 O'erborne, the difference between lord and slave!

Friedrich Georg Jünger writes about Prometheus:

Compared to his father Iapeth, Prometheus appears as an innovator. He differs from this circle and stands apart. Although he is one of the Titans, he helps Zeus by his counsel in his fight with the Titans. He departs from the Titanic essence in its original form, he estranges himself from it. But he is at the same distance from the gods, and thus he appears as a loner; from all sides he is exposed to light.¹⁰

Where there are no Gods, there are Titans. The enemy of Zeus is man — the one who brings the technical gift of Prometheus to the limit in the light of the *ratio* of Modernity.

Loki and Prometheus share their outsidersness from their Titanic kin and from the Gods who accepted them. They are the carriers of the Titanic, but it is not the dull, poor and gloomy Titanism — it is an active, hard-working, cunning and deceptive will to power, revenge and revolt against the Gods with a *special attention towards man in that struggle*. When Zeus casts Prometheus down to Tartarus,

¹⁰ See F. G. Jünger, *The Greek Myths*.

Promethean mankind (the people of Helheim) remains on Earth, and in the motion to their non-authenticity they achieve what the Titans failed to do in their frontal attack — they banished, scared off, killed the Gods. The difference here is that Prometheus is humanist suffering from his love for people without guilt, while Loki is generally indifferent to them.

In the beginning of their becoming, both Loki and Prometheus help the Gods in fighting the Titans and Jötunnns, but later they oppose them. Loki fights Heimdall, who establishes social division and order among people, which is close to Plato's interpretation of the role of Zeus in bringing the law of truth to people created by Prometheus. Without the law and the due (Wyrð), the last mankind of Prometheus is degraded, it falls away from the Gods, and the Gods depart from them, just as no one ever returned from Helheim.

The two Titans also share such a characteristic feature as the theft of the Gods' attributes: Prometheus stole skills and fire from Athena, Hephaestus and Zeus, and Loki stole Siw's hair.

Aeschylus' Prometheus, being already chained, continues to blaspheme Zeus and insists on his innocence, which brings him closer to Loki in his Altercation. Both turn to lies, whether it is a lie about innocence or undeserved reproaches of the Aesir. Both Titans eventually suffer the fate of being chained to a rock and tormented by animals — an eagle or a snake. Loki is freed at Ragnarök and fights the Aesir, and Prometheus is freed by Hercules following the will of Zeus who softened his anger, which was interpreted as a victory for Prometheus.¹¹

An indirect affinity between Loki and the Titanic in the Hellenic Logos can be found in the murder of Baldr and the Titans' slaughter of the infant Dionysus. Baldr as a young and fair God was to inherit Odin's throne, but fell by the treachery of Loki and the hand of Hod. He becomes a dying and resurrected God, and according to the

11 Zeus allows Heracles to free the Titan in order to increase the glory of his son during his lifetime; besides, he does not completely forgive Prometheus, but only softens regarding his fate.

Prophecy of the Völva, he inherits not just the throne of Odin, but the whole new century, the new beginning in the German-Scandinavian tradition.

While Frigg stands up for Baldr, in the Hellenic tradition, the Titans, instigated by Hera, overtake the fleeing Dionysus, son of Zeus in the form of a baby, and tear him apart, cook him and eat his meat. The heart of Dionysus, his Godly essence, is saved by Athena, and from the ashes of the slain Titans mankind arises, according to another version of anthropogony. Dionysus is the God of Festivity and Joy, ecstatic intoxication and bacchanalia. Without him, they simply do not exist as such. Remember that the Aesir and the Vanir fell into shock and lost all their fun when they saw that Baldr was dead. And Aegir's attempt to make a feast turned into Loki's Altercation. In Greek mythology, Dionysus should also inherit the throne of Zeus and be the future King. Baldr differs from Dionysus in that almost nothing is known about him, except the myths about his death. The question of the nature and the Logos of his coming reign is open. The figure relevant to Dionysus is the shamanic aspect of Odin, who ties (knot) all the centerlines of the German-Scandinavian tradition, converging them at himself.

The Iron Age is inhabited by the mankind of Prometheus, whose nature is twofold—it is created by a Titan, but it bears the Spirit of Athena and the law of Zeus. Man is free to choose between two natures, which in the Scandinavian myth is embodied in the figure of Loki. In accordance with his Titanic decision, he becomes the leader of the last people of Helheim.¹²

This, perhaps, is the special Logos of Prometheus-Loki, the suffering Titans very close to people, and the Logos of their mankind to which we all belong today. In the Iron Age, the fates of Gods, Earth, Heaven and people are in the hands of the latter.

12 In the diaries of 1971–1980s, Ernst Jünger casually notes that there are differences between the Titans, and Surtr is different from Prometheus. The Eddas read that on the field of Vigrid, Surtr's army stands apart from Loki's.

XIII

Man and His Structures

WHAT CAN WE SAY about man, his origin and nature in the German Logos? All the key eschatological and existential lines converge at our last humanity.

The myth of anthropogenesis is reported in the Elder and Younger Eddas with slight differences. The *Poetic Edda*, the Prophecy of the Völva:

17.
Then from the throng
did three come forth,
From the home of the gods,
the mighty and gracious;
Two without fate
on the land they found,
Ask and Embla,
empty of might.

17.
Unz þrír kvámu
ór því liði
öflgir ok ástkir
æsir at húsi,
fundu á landi
lítt megandi
Ask ok Emblu
örlöglausa.

18.

Soul they had not,
sense they had not,
Heat nor motion,
nor goodly hue;
Soul gave Othin,
sense gave Hönir,
Heat gave Lothur
and goodly hue.

18.

Önd þau né áttu,
óð þau né höfðu,
lá né læti
né litu góða;
önd gaf Óðinn,
óð gaf Hænir,
lá gaf Lóðurr
ok litu góða.

In the *Younger Edda* this fragment is described prosaically:

Þá mælti Hárr: “Þá er þeir gengu með sævarströndu Borssynir, fundu þeir tré tvau ok tóku upp trén ok sköpuðu af menn. Gaf inn fyrsti önd ok líf, annarr vit ok hræring, þriði ásjónu, mál ok heyrn ok sjón, gáfu þeim klæði ok nöfn. Hét karlmaðrinn Askr, en konan Embla, ok ólst þaðan af mankindin, sú er byggðin var gefinn undir Miðgarði.”

And the Tall one answered: “When the sons of Borr were walking along the sea-strand, they found two trees, and took up the trees and shaped men of them: the first gave them spirit and life; the second, wit and feeling; the third, form, speech, hearing, and sight. They gave them clothing and names: the male was called Askr, and the female Embla, and of them was mankind begotten, which received a dwelling-place under Midgard.”

The seventeenth verse says that the three Aesir find Askr and Embla on the shore—the first people, made of wood and actually deprived of everything. *Askr* is translated as “Ash-tree,” which refers to Yggdrasil—the World Tree (macrocosm), the earthly projection of which is a man (microcosm). The name *Embla* means “Willow,” a tree often growing near water; she is the first woman¹.

1 Regarding the World Tree, opinions differ, it is identified either with ash or with a yew (Iwar rune). Because of its qualities, yew wood was used to make bows and spears, and was included in military semantics. If we assume that Yggdrasil is a yew tree, then man as his reflection (microcosm) resides in the circle of military semantics and manifestations of the German Logos (God Tyur); if it

Near the water, the Godly triad finds two [anthropomorphic] trees that obviously lack the nature of people and life but possess their form. Initially, the nature of people is ambivalent, as well as of Prometheus' mankind; it includes the material and the spiritual, divine component. To denote the matter of which everything is composed, Aristotle introduces the term ὕλη (hyle), which originally referred to ordinary wood used by carpenters. He took the name of the common crafting material and transferred it to philosophy, expanding it to the concept of matter or substance. In Icelandic, wood is indicated by the words *tre* or *viður*. The latter is rich in connotations considered in the term *Viður-eiginn*, which is conveyed in Icelandic by the notion of Martin Heidegger's *Er-eignis*, event.

Wood (*ὕλη-tré-viður*) is the material of which the first people in the Norse tradition are created, bearing in their nature the original mark of materiality, "the seal of Prometheus." We know nothing of the previous generations of men in the German tradition, except the continental legend of Tuisto, the son of Heaven and Earth, as the primal forefather. All Eddic mythology is already immediately immersed in the situation of the Iron Age and in close vicinity to the Ragnarök. At that, no Titanic Creator is involved in the appearance of people; their connection with matter is shown (what is noteworthy, they appear on the sea shore, probably having emerged from the waters) as a given.

The very image of the tree is paradigmatic for man: the tree is rooted in the earth, but it aspires to the sky, and it craves liberation from the underground grip of the roots. The tree is always torn between Mother Earth and Father Sky. In a broad sense, the trees and the *wood* are a metaphor for the people as the children of a Godly couple. This is reflected in the consonance of the Icelandic words "wood" and "we" [as the existential of *Mit-Sein*], *viður* and *við* respectively.

Three Aesir come to the tree-people. In the *Poetic Edda* they are Odin-Hœnir-Lóðurr, and in the *Prose Edda* they are the sons of Bor,

is an ash tree, the person reflects the already Odinic aspect of the Logos and its semantics.

the brothers Odin-Vili-Vé. The common version is that they are all different names and faces of Odin. Vili and Vé are mentioned in the *Altercation of Loki* as Frigg's lovers. Hœnir is mentioned in the *Ynglinga saga* as one of the two Aesir who went to the Vanir after the conciliation of the two kinds of Gods. Also the *Prophecy of the Völva* says that after Ragnarök Honir will take on the function of the magic lot — perhaps it is about rune divination. It is widely believed that Loki stands behind the name of Lóðurr in the triad of the Aesir, but this version is not confirmed by myths and etymology, only indirectly associated with the characteristic of the gifts of this God to people as the closest to physicality. Edgar Polomé suggests that Lóðurr could be the God of fertility because of the possible connection of his name with the Gothic *liudan* — growth, or the Old Norse *lóð* — harvest, or *ljóð* — a community member.²

The name of Odin connects the triad from the *Poetic Edda* to that of the *Prose Edda*; the second two brothers are Vili — “Will,” from Proto-Germanic *wiljōn, and Vé, whose name is presumably related to *wīhaz, from Indo-European *vīk — “to make divided.” Cleary refers to Edred Thorsson's list of words related to these roots.

- 1) old Norse *vé* — temple;
- 2) old Norse *vé* — grave hill;³
- 3) old Norse *vébönd* — border, according to the custom rope ligature (*bönd*), the place of Thing or judgement.⁴

The root *wih- and a number of its derivatives form words meaning “to sanctify” or giving other words a tint of sanctity. So everything is divided into *sacrum* and *profanum*, the sacred and

2 We refer the reader to Collin Cleary's brilliant essay “The Gifts of Odin and his Brothers,” in which he independently explored the mythological anthropogenesis in the light of Heidegger's question of being.

3 See Pennick Nigel, Jones Prudence, *A History of Pagan Europe*.

4 See Edred Thorsson (Stephen Flowers), *Green Runa*.

standing-before-the-sacred. In this light, Odin-Vili-Ve represent the triad of Inspiration-Will-Sanctification, which manifests gifts to the tree-people.

These three different Gods give different gifts to the future people:

Óðinn	önd+líf
Hæmir+Vili	óð[r]+vit ok hræring
Lóðurr+Vé	lá ok litu góða+ásjónu, mál ok heyrn ok sjón

The gifts of Odin are *önd* and *líf*, breath or life as the Greek Ψυχή, which means “life,” “breath,” “soul.” Hömir, associated with Mimir (the One Who Remembers), gives quite an Odinic Gift — *óð* or *óðr*, inspiration and enthusiasm, ecstasy and poetry. Vili gives *vit* — vitality or mind, reason, ratio, which would be more consistent with the word *hugr*. The second gift of Vili is *hræring*, which literally translates as movement, but in the context of its usage means emotional movement or sensual arousal, which brings it closer to *óðr* in its semantic diversity.

The gifts of Lóðurr are *lá*, hair, which, according to Tacitus, are the attribute of a free German of the upper classes and give him luck (*hamingja*), similar to the Slavic *dolya* (fate, luck, fortune) and *nedolya* (ill fortune); and *litu góða*, which translates as “good countenance” or “nice colour” — according to A. Korsun, blush as a sign of life and its warmth in the body.

Ve as the Sanctifying endows man with form, which corresponds to the embodiment of the idea in matter in Aristotle: the word *ásjónu* carries the root *sjón*, to mature, as in the Greek ἰδέα, literally meaning “visibility”; *mál* — speech or language in their sacred aspects, as well as hearing and vision.⁵

Collin Cleary proposes to consider the name of God and his gift to man in its totality as a holistic concept. As the master of Inspiration,

5 Vision is *sjón*, and form is *ásjónu*, which leads to the hypothesis that Ve gives man the vision of his form (*að sja ásjónu*) — that is, the idea of man in its incarnation.

Odin bestows people with the breath of life/soul as *the inspired ecstatic breath of the soul*. Ve and his gifts become people's ability to see the sacred form in matter, to bring it out of the material into being, to distinguish the sacred and the profane in the world, and most importantly — to endow objects with sacred meaning, to *hallow* them. Hence, Cleary approaches the metaphysics of creativity and imagination:

Will is founded on ekstasis, just as hallowing is. Will depends upon our capacity to register the Being of things — what they are — and to be seized by a vision of what they might be or ought to be.

Hallowing is founded on ekstasis. But ekstasis comes to expression through hallowing. Ekstasis reveals Being to us in a new way and moves us to separate and venerate certain things. Ekstasis also comes to expression through will. This is, again, our capacity to alter or change what is to bring it into accord with a conception of what could be.

[...]

Taking wood or stone and carving a representation of a god out of it is will — and hallowing. First we must be ecstatically open to the disclosure of the Being of the wood or stone — and to its disclosure of itself as a suitable vehicle to bring forth the god. Then we go to work on that material, literally altering it to bring out the god that slumbers within. All such acts of shaping the natural to reveal the sacred are acts of hallowing and of will. The “shaping” here, by the way, may take place only in the mind, as when we “see” that a grove is a place for meeting the gods. The grove is now “changed,” but it has not been physically altered at all. In a sense, therefore, all acts of hallowing are acts of will — but not all acts of will are acts of hallowing, as the example of building a house shows.⁶

Oðr and *hræring* as the inspired motion are, in essence, *ecstasy* — outside-the-self-standing. The gift of ecstasy from Vili (Will) is the will-to-outside-the-self-standing, which is inherent in man by his nature. The gift of reason as the ratio can explain, prove and verbalize the hallowed and the sacred, but the inspiration and hallowing themselves are impossible through reason and by reason. The sacred enters the

⁶ See Collin Cleary, “The Gifts of Odin and his Brothers.”

mind from outside the mind, as stepping-out-of-mind, and entering-into-mind, guided by the will.

Here we are faced with the distinction of will: positive will (which is the Divine gift and *imitatio Dei* of Vili) is the will-to-wonder, standing-outside-the-self; negative will is embodied in apathy or in its worst manifestation as action without the ecstatic openness to being. This negative will is the Titanic will to power and the nihilistic will to liberation from everything, from all forms of normativity and collectivity coming from above, and from hierarchy. Cleary points out that the negative ecstasy of will is the obsession with machines, fanaticism of political extremes, feminism, puritanism, and so on. But in the openness to being, positive will can also be expressed in political action, not only in creativity and thinking. Positive will is *Gelassenheit* (the term of M. Heidegger and M. Eckhart) — giving oneself to being, and negative will is *Seinverlassenheit* (the abandonment by being) and *das Man*. Continuing the line of positive and negative aspects, we can conclude that positive thinking (*vit*, ratio) is questioning-as-evidence of the non-concealment of the truth of being, while negative thinking is delusion and *allucinare*, hallucinations. The mind devoid of inspiration, of the sacred coming from outside and the ability to see the sacred, to distinguish it and to make things sacred is atheistic positivist thinking of Modernity and sullen and dull poverty of the Jötunns.

Inspiration, Will and Hallowing converge as three facets or three lines in one knot of the being of man endowed with the Divine gifts of Óðinn-Vili-Vé [Wōdhanaz-Wiljōn-Wihīz].

* * *

If the form of man, in the spirit of Aristotle, given to him by the Gods, is *ásjónu*, the word *lík[r]* expresses the idea of the external appearance, the material body, living or dead. In the Russian language, in the word *oblik* (облик, “external appearance,” “image”) sounds the old root “lik,” homonymic and lexically identical to the Icelandic word. *Lík*

expresses the most material bodily aspect of human structure. Spells of healing, binding, and likening of one's appearance to a corpse are addressed to it. At the same time, being just the external appearance, *lík* is much more changeable than the essence of the one who changes it. Thus, Loki hides from the Aesir taking the image of a salmon ("En eftir þetta falst Loki í Fránangrsforsí í lax *líki*," *Lokasenna*), but they still find and catch him.

Even more ephemeral is *skyggja*—the shadow of material objects and of the body, along with its derivatives: to shade, to cast a shadow, to close visibility and to frown, also regarding the weather. In the language, it is adjacent to *skyggni*—clarity or clairvoyance, *skyggna*—sighted, *skyggna*—to look out. The shadow of the body or objects is present through the tongue as something that is accessible to the eye, and as something that obscures it. At the same time, the shadow is no longer corporeal, it is only a diminution of light, its remainder incapable of autonomy. *Lík* and *skyggja* are the lowest levels of human structure, they limit it from below, and they can be considered as relics of the primary wood of human nature. In order to cast a shadow, no Divine intervention and human existence is necessary.

The life of man is closely associated with the guardian spirits *hamingja*, *fylgja* and *dís*. *Hamingja* is considered as the idea of good luck, happy or unhappy lot in a person's life. Luck can be won in battle and by military prowess, as it is told in the sagas, but it can also end, no longer favouring its owner.

In the *Víga-Glúms* saga, *hamingja* is described as follows:

9. Það er sagt að Glúm dreymdi eina nótt. Hann þóttist vera úti staddur á bæ sínum og sjá út til fjarðarins. Hann þóttist sjá konu eina ganga utan eftir héraðinu og stefndi þangað til þverár. En hún var svo mikil að axlirnar tóku út fjöllin tveggja vegna. En hann þóttist ganga úr garði á mót henni og bauð henni til sín og síðan vaknaði hann.

Öllum þótti undarlegt en hann segir svo: «Draumur er mikill og merki-
legur en svo mun eg hann ráða að Vigfús móðurfaðir minn mun nú vera
andaður og mundi kona sjá hans *hamingja* vera er fjöllum hærra gekk. Og

var hann um aðra menn fram um flesta hluti að virðingu og hans hamingja mun leita sér þangað staðfestu sem eg em.

9. It is said that Glúm had a dream one night, in which he seemed to be standing out in front of his dwelling, looking towards the firth; and he thought he saw the form of a woman stalking up straight through the district from the sea towards Thverá. She was of such height and size that her shoulders touched the mountains on each side, and he seemed to go out of the homestead to meet her and asked her to come to his house; and then he woke up. This appeared very strange to every one, but he said, the dream is no doubt a very remarkable one, and I interpret it thus — my grandfather, Vigfuss, must be dead, and that woman who was taller than the mountains, must be his guardian spirit, for he too was far beyond other men in honour and in most things, and his spirit must have been looking for a place of rest where I am.

Hamingja reflects a person's status and the "glory of worthy deeds," of which speaks the High One. Also *hamingja* does not disappear after the death of the person, but can pass on to their family and friends. Based on the description of *hamingja*, Hilda Ellis indicates that it may have common ground with the Valkyrie as the guardian of warriors.

Even closer to the Valkyries-keepers is the image of *dís*. This word is found as referring to younger Goddesses and fairies at the court of Freya Vanadís, Daughter of the Vanir. *Dís* are also associated with assistance in battles, and their functions are in many ways identical to *hamingja*, but their relation to the Valkyries and Freya is more pronounced. This allows Helen Ellis to conclude that these names are based on the same concept of a female spirit-custodian inherent to anyone.

This circle of female spirits partially includes also *fylgja*, also called *fylgjukona*, which is formed from the female root *kona* in the second part of the word. The first root *fylgja* means "to follow," "to walk beside." *Fylgja* is a spirit constantly accompanying man, often manifested in the form of an animal, which can be seen by those who are endowed with the gift of clairvoyance: prophets, priests, magicians, and so on. Not just a single person but a whole bloodline can have

fylgja as an ancestral spirit, *kynfylgja*, similar to the Latin *Lares* and *Penates*.

Those able to see *fylgja* could see in it their coming destiny, as told in *Njáls Saga*, Chapter 42:

Það var einu hverju sinni að þeir sátu úti, Njáll og Þórður. Þar var vanur að ganga hafur um túnið og skyldi engi hann í braut reka.

Þórður mælti: “Undarlega bregður nú við.”

“Hvað sérð þú þess er þér þykir með undarlegu móti vera?” segir Njáll.

“Mér þykir hafurinn liggja hér í dælinni og er alblóðugur allure.”

Njáll kvað þar vera eigi hafur og ekki annað.

“Hvað er það þá?” segir Þórður.

“Þú munt vera maður feigur,” segir Njáll, “og munt þú séð hafa *fylgju* þína og ver þú var um þig.”

“Ekki mun mér það stoða,” segir Þórður, “ef mér er það ætlað.

Once on a time they two were out in the “town,” Njal and Thord; a he-goat was wont to go up and down in the “town,” and no one was allowed to drive him away. Then Thord spoke and said, “Well, this is a wondrous thing!”

“What is it that thou see’st that seems after a wondrous fashion?” says Njal.

“Methinks the goat lies here in the hollow, and he is all one gore of blood.”

Njal said that there was no goat there, nor anything else.

“What is it then?” says Thord.

“Thou must be a ‘fey’ man,” says Njal, “and thou must have seen the fetch that follows thee, and now be ware of thyself.”

“That will stand me in no stead,” says Thord, “if death is doomed for me.”

Fylgja can reveal one’s destiny to a person. As noted by H. Ellis regarding spirit animals in Icelandic literature, it is difficult to draw a clear line when the animal is a *fylgja* companion of a person or another face of this person, which their spirit takes in a shamanistic journey. The identity of the ancestral spirit or spirit-companion with the appearance

that a shaman takes on during the ritual is known among the archaic practices of Siberian and Asian shamans. Proceeding higher in the hierarchy, we can assume that the animals associated with Odin — the horse Sleypnir and the ravens Huginn and Muninn — can act both as his *fylgja* companions and psychopomps, the soul's guides to other worlds.

Guardian spirits, and especially the example of epy *fylgja* from *Njáls Saga*, are associated with the destiny of man or of his kind. They protect him, assist in the battles (*valkyrja*) and indicate impending death. The Prophecy of the Völva about the first people also stated that they were deprived of their own destiny, *örlöglausa*. They had been devoid of fates before the Gods found them. The text does not say this directly, but we can assume that the intervention of the Aesir's triad, in addition to their gifts, also gave people their destiny. A. Magnusson points out that the word *örlög* has the meaning of addition and creation (*sköp*), destiny (*forlög*) and completion (*endalok*). The main root is *lög*, meaning "law." *Örlöglausa* as a description of the Ash and Willow speaks of their incompleteness (their formlessness, the absence of an inner idea, according to Aristotle) and the absence of the law that would be their fate.

In the myth, the fate at birth is usually determined by the three Norns; they give a person an individual fate, and spin the threads of his life (*örlögþáttur*). E. Thorsson states that the prefix *ör-* in the beginning of the word *örlög* means "ancient," similar to the Greek ἀρχή. One of the meanings of this word is also "to give a scar" or, what would be closer to the tree context, to cut [a form, a law]. The intervention of the Gods at the dawn of mankind itself, of the first people Ask and Embla, tells us that the Gods bestow them with a special destiny, having lasted since their formation as people. This is the fate of being human. Man as a tree growing from the Earth to the Sky.

The fate of man is revealed in the fundamental ontology of Martin Heidegger. Man is a witness of the truth of life, and the Gods need him. But man is also the bearer of absolute freedom. For him, fate

(*örlög*) is not *doom* (*rök*). A person who disagrees with his fate has two ways. The positive path of rebellion is to overcome fate as a hero, in an effort to achieve the Divine: to destroy monsters, to perform feats, and to go against the will of the Gods in order to overcome one's human nature. This is most clearly reflected in the Hellenic mythology of the Heroic age of Hesiod; the paragon of such a hero is Hercules.⁷ The brightest example of the hero in the German culture is Siegfried.

The negative way of rebellion is the escape from one's destiny, the refusal to be man. In this case, fate can overtake and possess a person already as the inevitable doom, which we see in the case of Oedipus, a hero who fails to overcome it. He does not succeed, and this makes him not a warlike hero like Hercules, Jason or Achilles, but a dramatic hero defeated by *fatum*. But what he fails to do is fully done by the last people forming the mass of *das Man*.

The last people are the direct antithesis of the hero, even of Oedipus. Man is the primordial givenness and destiny. The hero is a superhuman, his positive will leads him to deification. The last person or *das Man* is not human anymore; they are subhuman clay (Prometheus) or wooden (*ύλη*-viður) creations. They are the carriers of a negative nihilistic will, their obsession is not enthusiasm (obsession with God, *daimon*) but technical fanaticism of production or sullen network procrastination. The noise of their machines, signals of gadgets and streams of links in social networks drive the Gods out, *kill them*.

While in the Heroic age, man could overcome his nature by will, in the *Wolfszeit* the struggle is shifted to a lower level, and today people are already fighting for themselves, for their humanity against the sub-human visceral movements. After the "death of God," man dies himself.

7 It is noteworthy that after his exploits and deeds Hercules was taken to Olympus, but Homer in *The Odyssey* says that his shadow resides in Hades. In the light of the Icelandic vision, we may assume that it was his *fylgja* or *hamingja* that went to Hades.

In the *Prose Edda*, Odin-Vili-Ve create the world from the remains of the giant Ymir. In line with the meaning of their names as Inspiration-Will-Sanctification, they create the world in an ecstatic volitional opening to the sacred beyng. The death of God is the disappearance of the three Divine components of the world's creation and the disintegration of their gifts-manifestations in man, which means the disintegration of man himself, the loss of his nature and authenticity—there remains only wood. Only *lík* (*líkhamr*) and *skyggja*, bodies (the physicality of the Postmodernist rhizome) and flickering shadows.

But in order to become aware of this path to ignominious death (*Helvegr*), first one needs to realize their destiny, *the sacred law given by the Gods—to be man*.

The Three Men of Johannes Tauler

Johannes Tauler is a Rhineland mystic and a follower of the tradition of Meister Eckhart, who developed his doctrine of detachment from the external and immersion in the deep internal super-divine dimension of man. As in the case of M. Eckhart, in the figure and work of J. Tauler we find a Neoplatonic basis dressed in the language and metaphor of Christianity, and a desire to bridge the gap between man and God. Revealing the teaching of Meister Eckhart about Divinity as the ground (*Grund*) of God, Tauler transfers it to man, his structure and the inner dimension of the divine spark in his Soul. At the same time, he directly indicates that he takes the basis of his teaching from the Neoplatonists:

Many masters, old and new, have spoken of this inward nobility that is hidden in the ground: Bishop Albert, Meister Dietrich, Meister Eckhart. The first one calls it an image in which the Holy Trinity resides, the second spoke of the spark of God in the depths of the soul that does not know rest until it returns to the divine depth from which it had originated and in which it had been in its uncreatedness.

This was said before the birth of Christ and before the Christian Holy Fathers by other great teachers, such as Plato, Aristotle and Proclus, who knew about this inner virtue and testified about the depths of the soul.

This is what they and similar Christian teachers, including Meister Eckhart, wrote:

The soul has a spark, a depth in itself, whose desire and thirst for God cannot be extinguished by anything but itself. Give it all things created in heaven and on earth, and they will not satisfy it, and they will be unable to quench its thirst. This is within it by nature.⁸

One can reach the Divine ground as his internal apophatic dimension, for which it is necessary to renounce all external and the actual existence of a person belonging to a certain epoch. This is one of the reasons for Tauler's strong criticism of the typical sins of the Church. But more important in our consideration is his triadic hierarchical structure of man:

Each man, though he be but one person, is, nevertheless, three men in one. First he is just the *outer man*, animal, living in his senses; the second is the *inner man*, whose life is in his reasoning faculties; the third is the man, that is, the soul, in its highest part, that part which we call the spirit: and all these three are one and the *same* man.

In his innermost depths man is the abode of God; and whosoever is wholly turned inward and immersed in his innermost, is so steadfastly and completely moved into divine rest that neither joy nor suffering, nor life nor death, shall shake him.⁹

Tauler's three men are: the carnal man, the image of everydayness and bodily life; the inner man, the image of a rational and volitional man; and the concealed man, the core of the soul and the Divinity in it, whom Tauler calls the Master. Through austerity and detachment, man can ascend from the first man to the third, overcome his hostility

8 See Johannes Tauler, *The Kingdom of God Within Us / On the Depth of the Soul*.

9 See Johannes Tauler, *The Kingdom of God Within Us / On the Trinity of Man*.

to detachment, enter into the innermost Light of God and identify with it.

If one is granted this, the Spirit of God will ascend, look into Himself and rapture the soul that was able to leave everything, to Himself and into Himself. It will happen in an instant — and the faster, the more completely. Here the innermost man will become one with God's Spirit.

Staying in the apophatic centre does not mean literal death or isolation of a person from the world. On the contrary, one who has revealed the apophatic Deity (*Grund*) in himself can participate in the affairs of the world, and this participation will not weaken the being-in-God but will bring the light of deification into the world and the affairs of man (which resonates with the positive will of C. Cleary). Through man, based (rooted) in the Divine, the distance between God and the world disappears and the created dissolves into the uncreated.

As a result, we have two temporal geographical and paradigmatic poles in the German Logos that constitute human anthropology. The first pole is ancient Scandinavia up to its christianization in the XI century and the first centuries after it — the time of *recording*, not creation, of the Eddas, and of the expressing the structure of the myth: Ask and Embla, the triad of the Gods Odin-Vili-Ve/Odin-Honir-Lóðurr and their gifts. The second pole is continental Germany, the Rhine, the late Middle Ages, the embodiment of the Hellenic-Germanic synthesis, pagan Hellenic wisdom enclosed in the language of theology of M. Eckhart, J. Tauler and J. Böhme.¹⁰

To what extent is it possible, taking voluntarism into account and based on C. Cleary's interpretation, to compare the triple structure of the man of the Eddas and the man of the Rhineland mystics?

¹⁰ The Eddas were recorded in the XII–XIII centuries, and the writings of the Rhineland mystics date back to the XIV century. We cannot speak of their familiarity with these texts; rather, here we observe history in its symbolical coincidence passing the baton from the North to the continent.

Poetic Edda	Prose Edda	Johannes Tauler
Óðinn — önd	Óðinn — líf	Hidden Master
Hænir — óð[r]	Vili — vit, hræring	Inner Man
Lóðurr — lá, litu góða	Vé — ásjónu, mál, heyrn, sjón	Outer Man

In the structure of a general comparison, at first glance, there is an asymmetry reflecting the difference between creationism and manifestationism or, in another language, the lower metaphysical position (metaphysical regression) of the established Christianity compared to heathen integrity and completeness. So, the whole structure of man in mythology is Divine, his various aspects are given by the Aesir, hallowed and accentuated by the meanings of their names-manifestations. In Johannes Tauler, only the hidden Master, the third man, is of one nature with God. But if we turn our gaze from the apophatic Abyss of the Divine — from the inside out — we will see that the life and deeds of the two preceding men are deified by their groundedness in the Deity. What is given as a fact in the Eddic myths is already a conquest, overcoming and restoration in the times of medieval Christianity.

In Tauler's description, the outer man is characterized by his external perception and appearance. This correlates with the gifts of Lóðurr — hair and a pleasant look. If we could tell for sure that the etymology of his name was related to Loki, it would strengthen this identification. In Snorri's Edda, Ve also gives man form, vision, hearing and speech — different physical qualities, which, however, are sacred by virtue of his name.

The inner rational volitional man is close to the gifts of Vili (Will) — the mind and emotional mobility. Honir's gift of inspiration to the second man can be interpreted if we consider him as being in the middle, from which it is possible to move further inside or outside, to the outer person. Then the gift of Honir is the inspiration that, according to Cleary, can make a person open to being or obsessed with nihilism (positive and negative aspects of will). In this case, the duality

of Collin Cleary's existential regimes is transformed into the graduality of man's trinity of Johannes Tauler, where the inner man becomes a mediator. (The inner man as one who is aware of his destiny and the possibility of going up and down, for the outer man is not even aware of his position as the "outer" from the path to the inner Deity).

The hidden Master is very close to man gifted with an inspired life and breath by the Supreme God Odin himself. Looking at the world from the apophatic point of the Divine ground (*Grund*) and acting from within it, man deifies all his aspects and actions; this is the realization of positive will, detachment-as-openness-to-being (*Gelassenheit*).

Myths and Tauler describe different ways of being and reaching the ground. The path of Odin is ecstasy, trance, shamanism and abundance, whereas the Rhineland mystics speak about austerity, belittlement, escape to the inner world (in the initial stages of attainment) and detachment; thus, two types can be considered: the ecstatic shaman of the myth and the ascetic monk of the Rhineland theology. Obviously, ecstatic practices in medieval Christian reality inevitably resulted in excommunication and ostracism. But despite the difference between the stepping-out-of-self and entering-deeper-than-self, these paths have a common aspect: distancing from the normative daily (external) aspect of the Self and the everyday Mind and thinking. Odin and his followers practice wonder and *ectasis*, the altered out-of-Self state, while a Christian neo-Platonist practices *enstasis* (ενστάσις) or enthusiasm (ενθουσίασις) in its original meaning: the entering in God. This asymmetry points to a close dimension of Odin's path embodied in accordance with the epoch and metaphysical conditions of the orthodoxy of creationism.

Finally, the outer man is the one who does not even know the possibility of going (the narrative and metaphor of the way is often used by J. Tauler) inwards, to another person and Master. It reflects the level of *lík* and *skyggja*. When a person does not dare to go and

to open to being, from under the guise of man begins to appear his sub-human nature, wood.

The Tradition mentions using human parts, particularly nails, as a construction material — just like wood — for the ship Naglfar, which Loki will sail in Ragnarök.

Faust Enlightened

Faust is truly a Prometheus among people, his faithful disciple and follower. Like him, the mysterious doctor embodies the archetype of the man of Modernity, with his struggle against God, faith in science and progress, and tragic fate.

The legends of Dr. Johann Faust outgrew the image of the real person already in the era of the Reformation, having become part of the German culture of that time, often mentioned by different authors. His story gained its most complete and most well-known form in Johann Wolfgang Goethe and became the *opus magnum* of his art.¹¹

In *Faust* Goethe himself is reflected as a man expressing his era and its contradictions. As well as Johann himself, Faust, a scientist passionate about progress, strict sciences and the new worldview, is at the same time well-versed in alchemy, grimoires, theurgical magic and even practical invocations. In this way, he belongs to the paradigm of “The Rosicrucian Enlightenment” of Frances Yates, describing the dualism of interests and aspirations typical for the “fathers” of natural sciences and Modernity, the state of transition and/or the gap between the occult-mystical Renaissance and secular Modernity. Faust’s story illustrates the final liberation of man from his nostalgia for the past and his taking of the side of the Modern era.

At the beginning, we see Faust almost broken and dissatisfied with life. He resorts to theurgy and summons a spirit, but his success is mediocre — the spirit quickly evaporates, and the doctor laments that it, the image and likeness of God, is incomparable to him, the lower one.

¹¹ See J. W. Goethe, *Faust*.

Later Faust reveals his condition and mood in a conversation with the servant, Wagner:

Is parchment, then, the holy well-spring, thinkest,
 A draught from which thy thirst forever slakes?
 No quickening element thou drinkest,
 Till up from thine own soul the fountain breaks.

...

I, godlike, who in fancy saw but now
 Eternal truth's fair glass in wondrous nearness,
 Rejoiced in heavenly radiance and clearness,
 Leaving the earthly man below;
 I, more than cherub, whose free force
 Dreamed, through the veins of nature penetrating,
 To taste the life of Gods, like them creating,
 Behold me this presumption expiating!
 A word of thunder sweeps me from my course.

...

To all the mind conceives of great and glorious
 A strange and baser mixture still adheres;
 Striving for earthly good are we victorious?
 A dream and cheat the better part appears.
 The feelings that could once such noble life inspire
 Are quenched and trampled out in passion's mire.

Faust is a man whose existence is already on the border of authenticity. He aspires to higher ideas and knowledge, and two wills struggle inside him: he dares to be like God, to know and to rule (the spirits and forces of nature), but fails; his efforts crash against everydayness, and Faust begins to realize that he is *bored*.

Ancient philosophy began with wonder — it was the *fundamental mood of the Dasein* of the Greeks and the European Logos at its very dawn. In the XX century, Martin Heidegger concludes that in his time the basic mood of Dasein is boredom, the person is bored in their here-being, Dasein is bored, and man is boring to it.¹² Faust is still

¹² See Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* and Appendix #2.

saved by the fact that he is able to identify boredom and to admit that he is bored. This means that he is not yet stuck in the swarming of everyday life that destroys all the beautiful impulses of soul and mind. In this he still maintains a distance from the “last people” of F. Nietzsche, who are not difficult to recognize in the townspeople by their speech in the subsequent scene at the gate.

In the next fit of overcoming apathy, Faust starts translating the New Testament into the German language, and this passage reveals a complete change in the mindset and outlook of the person of the Enlightenment. In the spirit of the deism of natural philosophy, Faust begins not just to translate the Scripture but to correct it in accordance with his time.

“In the beginning was the Word.” I read.
 But here I stick! Who helps me to proceed?
 The Word — so high I cannot — dare not, rate it,
 I must, then, otherwise translate it,
 If by the spirit I am rightly taught.
 It reads: “In the beginning was the thought.”
 But study well this first line’s lesson,
 Nor let thy pen to error overhasten!
 Is it the thought does all from time’s first hour?
 “In the beginning,” read then, “was the power.”
 Yet even while I write it down, my finger
 Is checked, a voice forbids me there to linger.
 The spirit helps! At once I dare to read
 And write: “In the beginning was the deed.”

This passage reflects a shift in the perception of the sacred (in this case, the sacred in the context of Christianity) from the philosophical and priestly (word and thought) to the military (power) and, finally, to craft (deed). Faust’s interpretation bears the echoes of the first steps of the Worker of E. Jünger, enthralled by production and interpreting everything else through it.

Faust is distracted from further translation of the Scriptures by an importunate spirit, on whose counsel Faust invites Mephistopheles himself. In this figure, Goethe depicts the Devil, but he bears the imprint of the Age of Enlightenment. He enters the room dressed as a student, he is shifty and tricky, and not as omnipotent and unstoppable as some of the Titans. In Goethe's *Faust*, Mephistopheles is closest to man and acts as a complete double of Faust himself. Mephistopheles introduces himself like this:

I am the spirit that denies!
 And justly so; for all that time creates,
 He does well who annihilates!
 Better, it ne'er had had beginning;
 And so, then, all that you call sinning,
 Destruction, — all you pronounce ill-meant,—
 Is my original element.

Mephistopheles appears as the embodiment of nihilism, because “the spirit, always accustomed to deny,” tells us not about the completeness of denial at some point, but about the endless process of denial and denial, again and again, the eternal “no.”¹³ Here the devil mirrors the Titanism of becoming in the process of nullification of be-ing, bringing it to non-be-ing (the be-ing devoid of its essence).

Mephistopheles offers Faust a deal, promising to fulfil all his desires, which differ from ordinary people's dreams. But the deal is to play this game forever. Faust and Mephistopheles agree that death will overtake the doctor at the peak of his glory if he exclaims “Beautiful moment, do not pass away!” The evil genius of nihilism knows no pauses and stops. The Gods dwell in eternity in heaven, away from the world of becoming, but if modern man stops for a moment, he is immediately destroyed by the flow of time cascading into the abyss. The

13 The features of a trickster and deceiver make it possible to draw archetypal parallels between Mephistopheles and Loki, whose figure is also important in the question of man's choice between the Divine and Titanic paths.

connection of Mephistopheles with the Modern Era is emphasized by the fact that, having changed his appearance, he instructs a student who came to pay a short visit to Faust in how to comprehend sciences and at the same time how useless this occupation actually is. At the end of this conversation, he leaves the knowledge-thirsty student his autograph in the album, a quote from the book of Genesis, 3:5:

Eritis sicut Deus scientes bonum et malum.

And ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Mephistopheles identifies the science of the Enlightenment with the fruit of the Serpent of Eden.

Faust and the Devil embark on a journey to different realms, countries and eras, meeting people and mythical creatures, Gods and demons, emperors and kings on their way. In the course of his wanderings, Faust loses his honesty and goodness, for which he was esteemed by the ordinary people at the beginning of the story, engaging in deception, adultery and so on. At the end of the drama we face a modern Faust who says about himself:

I'll win power, and property!

The deed is all, and not the glory.

This passage is the opposite of the maxim of the High One in the *Poetic Edda*: “but one thing never, I ween, will die, — fair fame of one who has earned.” Faust is already obsessed with pure action and the will to power and property, quite in the spirit of the Protestant ethics of capitalism. He calls himself no longer “the likeness of a deity,” but “the king of nature”; rejecting the desire to get rid of boredom in his aspiration for God, he remains in the element of matter. The initial mixing of positive and negative will results in the victory of the latter; Doctor Faust closes himself from being, and with this phrase begins the quick path to his ruin. Faust is possessed by quite an industrial idea of conquering the forces of nature. Watching the ebb and flow

of the waves — “a useless waste of energy” — the spirit of *der Arbeiter* speaks in him:

However tides may flow,
 At last they nestle round the hills below:
 So they are tamed in their exuberance,
 A modest height tops their proud advance,
 A modest depth draws them forcefully on.
 Quick, through my mind, leapt plan after plan:
 Let rich enjoyment be mine for evermore,
 To keep the noble ocean from the shore,
 To channel all the wide and watery waste,
 And urge it backwards to its own deep place.
 Step by step I know how to design it:
 That's my desire, so be brave and promote it!

Faust succeeds in getting the coastal lands, where he evolves an ambitious construction project and modification of the shore. The servants of Mephistopheles, the lemurs, erect a great palace, drain swamps and build a dam. Faust is delighted with the sounds of shovels and the sight of crowds of workers, while Mephistopheles has already given the order to dig his grave. Looking at his achievements, Faust utters the last praises to man free from everything and capable to achieve happiness on earth by his will. And wishing to stop the beautiful moment, Faust falls dead.

The Angels, by God's permission, save his soul from Mephistopheles. Thus Goethe reflects the spirit of the time in his drama: the Angels save Faust from the Devil for his merits as a worker who wanted to ennoble man's will and freedom. The unthinkable substitution of virtue by sin in Goethe is sanctioned by the God of deism and rationalism. In fact, by losing the argument for Faust's soul, Mephistopheles won the entire mankind. Man sought to become God, but was satisfied with becoming the king of nature. The negative will wins, opening the way to Modernity and its strategies. But modern Faustian man is still not the very “last,” despite his God-fighting and

progressivism; he dreams of great projects, the transformation of the world of nature according to his will, albeit Titanic. This is a proportional antithesis to the divine transformation. Faust is still struggling with boredom, trying to inspire his being with engineering projects.

Speaking about the modern person of the XXI century, we can admit that he has lost much of the spirit of Faust and his passion. The last global projects of mankind, largely fueled by the workers' ideology of socialism and the possessive spirit of capitalism, ended with the primary exploration of space. After that man gradually retreats back from global projects to local concerns of the "everyday world." Even the relics of the space program are already commonplace. The world of media, virtuality, social networks and the Internet of things (the third and fourth industrial revolutions) is more important, more powerful and more significant today than the ideals of the second "classical" industrial revolution.

The active negative will disintegrates into negative passive willlessness. Modern man is a tired Faust; he did not die, but boredom overcame him, he plunged into it so deeply that he does not even realize the fact that he is *fundamentally and hopelessly bored*. The routine of daily operations, message exchange, Internet surfing and consumption of signs compose his familiar, cozy, meaningless world as an endless stream of news feeds, photos, scraps of quotes and reposts.

Looking back, we cannot imagine Faust abandoning his engineering and, in a sense, militant transformation of nature for a new episode of a series, or exclaiming "Beautiful moment, do not pass away!" when his picture or post would collect 100 "likes" on Facebook. It is unthinkable and does not match his scale, but fully corresponds to the last mankind won and inherited by Mephistopheles. The endless stream [the process] of social media becomes the embodiment of his eternal spirit of negation [the negation of permanence, fragmentation of discourse, disintegration of the Logos into logemes].

Only ruined and blurred meaningless shadows, *skyggja* (the population of Helheim), remain of people and their nature (the possession

of the Logos). Faust is still the bearer of a special individuation of Modernity; he seeks to realize and to distinguish himself through will, to assert his modern self. The people of Post-Modernity only declare their individuality, *de facto* only multiplying the homogeneity and monotony of their appearance and anthropological status. Nothing new is happening in their world, there is no Event. There is only the idle talk of the mass of *das Man*.

The Relation of Man and World

Defining *deep boredom* as the fundamental mood of Dasein, arising from its finiteness and temporality (the immersion in time and history), M. Heidegger proposes to ask from this state the question: what is the world?¹⁴ What is the attitude of man to the world, which is perceived as all being in general (*das Ganze*)? Man is a part of being, but he is not within it. What is the position of man in being? In the introduction, Heidegger defines man in a dual position as part of being and at the same time its master and servant. What is the difference between man's relation to the world from, for example, the relation of an animal or, going even further, a stone? Heidegger gives a preliminary definition: man is world-forming (*weltbildend*), the animal is poor in world (*weltarm*), and the stone is worldless (*weltlos*). He starts his detailed consideration of the world and three possible relations to it from the middle thesis that "the animal is poor in world."

In their being, animals definitely enter into relations with the world, to some extent they are open to it and interact with it. But Heidegger says the animal is "poor in world." It is "richer" than the stone, but "poorer" than man. Poverty is not absolute deprivation as the lack of relation to the living, but it is scarcity, deprivation and insufficiency in comparison.

Living in the world, the animal interacts with other animals, plants and things in general, but the availability of being is limited for

14 See Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*.

it. Heidegger gives the example of bees: they fly, land on pistils and pollinate other flowers, but they do not know what a plant is as such; they have no understanding of stamens *as* stamens, their structure and number, the concept of the stem and the roots of the plant, its place in the ecological niche and the hierarchy of biological systems. A beetle crawling on a stalk perceives it as a road, but not as a stalk or future hay. Or, when a person walks with a dog — does the dog really *walk* with us? When we sit down to eat and the dog also eats from his bowl — does he really *eat with us, lives with us in the house*? Animals cannot perceive such concepts, they are attributed to them by man. Animals do not walk, but wander and run; they do not eat as we do (they do it by themselves or in our accidental neighborhood), do not die as we die. The being of an animal is the obsession with the cycle of a limited set of its permanent activities: the swarming of bees, the running of a dog around the yard, digging holes, eating food and so on. In this, the animal is definitely “of the world,” but this *world-ness* is limited, and the animal’s being is poor-in-the-world. The animal is surrounded by the deprivation of being from all sides.

The situation with the stone is even worse: it is completely devoid of the world (*weltlos*) and worldview. Seeing a stone lying by the road, we can say, “the stone is pressing on the ground.” But its “pressure” does not mean any feeling of the soil, the awareness of its own weight and the fact that the stone *presses* on the road. If we take it and throw it into the field, nothing will change for it at all. A dog on the road may run up and down chasing cars, or it can frolic in the field or gnaw on some roots — that is, to do its own business in the same mode of obsession. The stone is so devoid of everything that we cannot even seriously say that it is “deprived” of something. Being deprived means initially having an open opportunity to be endowed and rich with something in relation to which one can realize and measure one’s deprivation. The stone is worldless, and thus it is not even deprived of world and being; it just does not have any access to them at all, and these categories are not applicable to it. Therefore, the stone has no

access to the ground, road, meadow or bottom of the ditch as something that is the basis of its lying. It just *is*, and that is all, no matter where it lies and what happens to it, around and under it. It makes a difference for a lizard basking on a sun-warmed stone: it will not lie on a cold stone, constantly looking for a warmer one. However, the stone itself is again closed from the fact of its temperature, the warming sun or the lizard on it. It is completely and utterly enclosed within itself, to the extent that it is devoid of the possibility to become aware of its world-lessness.

The other extreme is man who forms the world (*weltbildend*). Being is revealed to man in all its integrity, and he is aware of his intermediate position as part of being [of this whole], in which he resides because of his abandonment, while his homeland is being that is in his language. Comparing man to animals, we come to the obvious conclusion that man perceives the world around much deeper and wider than bees, beetles or dogs — he does not live by obsession, he is aware of mortality, life, integration into the ranks and systems of being, he predicts the destiny of things. Hence — from the greater openness to the world in man — arises his ability to get the insight of other lives, with difficulties, but still to imagine the being of insects, animals and stones, while the latter cannot escape the cycle of their poorness-in-world and gain an insight into another life even as a guest or witness.

Moreover, by virtue of his nature man can form the world, and world-forming is one of the most important events. About man, Heidegger says: “we constantly relate to things; we constantly express being.” Man takes an intermediate position between things and being; as its master he is able to endow it with being in the word (*λόγος*) and language. Here again there is a difference from animals, which certainly have signal systems of varying degrees of development, but do not have the language and can only imitate human speech with sounds, while human word has a fundamental power of being. Standing in the gap, man has the power over things in the possibility of word-forming through the Logos.

Heidegger speaks of the sketch or project (*Entwurf*) as the structure of the world-forming word yet unspoken, but possible to be spoken. In the moment of the *projecting sketch*, the possibility of human mastery over things and world-forming is fulfilled; the moment of being-here and existence in the constant protruding of sketching, projecting the possibility as simultaneous stepping-out-of-self and standing-in-self.

Man can also create (τέχνη) things from other things, which later becomes his destiny. And already in our days we see how a person becomes a servant of technology, a bio-organic appendage that generates content and supports its circulation, as well as the production and trade of gadgets.

Through the possibility of world formation through language, man attributes to animals greater openness to the world and participation in it than there actually is. Man says “the dog lives with us,” “the stone lies,” “bees pollinate” and so on, from his wealth in the language endowing them with more world-ness (the degree of relation to the world).

From the point of view of traditionalism, we can object to M. Heidegger that Tradition knows many animals who are open to the world, talking and even wise, animals that help people. A little closer to Heidegger are the images of stone creatures with their impoverished Titanism and a kind of obsession with God-struggling and scarcity; but they are different from a simple roadside cobblestone. Here one may ask: is it possible to fit this view of stone, animal and man into the paradigm of traditionalism? Or is it possible to approach traditionalism from the disposition described by Martin Heidegger?

Heidegger builds his description out of the depths of the Iron Age, from the disenchanting and simplified (flattened) world. He asks from the last times, and the depth of his question [about being] exceeds the aspirations of traditionalism. In the world contemporary to him everything is just like this: simple stones, animals poor-in-world, bored [world-forming] man. The figure of the latter corresponds to

traditional poets and priests as those who magically endow things with being and invoke Gods and spirits into the world. Contrary to the socio-political hierarchy of Plato in *Phaedrus*, philosophers and poets coexist in the ontological and existential hierarchy, stand above all and perceive in a more subtle way than others. When we say “man,” we mean only them.

On the other hand, as it is man who is in the position between, and it is he who is world-forming, his word-sketch is an event of world-formation and power, it follows that it is in his power to speak out, to bring from the silence the word which will become world. This word can be — as well as it cannot be — traditionalist in its essence and constitute the magical world of living stones and wise talking animals. This word has already been.

But today man is bored, Dasein is bored, the Logos disintegrates into fragmentary and meaningless utterances that cannot affirm anything in a sketch. Dasein needs a new Word, Another Beginning. Heidegger says that in the sketch man is the transition (*Übergang*), and if man speaks from his in-between-position, then everything will be possible — and even what is impossible from the point of view of the common sober mind.

The Mood of Boredom

One of the existential components of Dasein is its mood (*Stimmung*) in regard to its presence in the world; in other words, Dasein gives a certain evaluation to the state of the world in which it resides. Heidegger notes that attuning to the fundamental mood (*Stimmung*) is also entering into Dasein.

After these extremely brief explanations, we will consider how Martin Heidegger determined the mood of Dasein in his time and draw a number of analogies with the state of Heathenry in our era. Such an interpretation of Heidegger, of course, implies some voluntarism, but the vividness and solidity of his examples of Heathen

traditionalism makes them very useful for understanding the situation of contemporary Heathyenry.

Heidegger devotes an entire academic semester to the study of the mood of Dasein, the central concept of which becomes Boredom (*Langeweile*).¹⁵

In German, the word *Langeweile* literally means “a long time,” which is expressed in its two roots. In Russian, the word “boredom” has no etymological connection with time, so when we are using this word, the emphasis on the *length* or *duration* of this boredom eludes us; and no less important, we risk missing the important nuance of the *disjunction of time* in the event of the interruption of boredom and the accomplishment of a certain event.

To understand the nature of boredom, Heidegger suggests several situations.

The first situation describes a person who is facing the need to wait for his train for a few hours at the station of a small town. During these hours, this character performs a number of actions, such as walking around the uninteresting town, repeatedly studying the uninteresting schedule, opening-reading-and-closing-books, etc. In the end, this person admits that he is *just bored*. This boredom, which the hero understands and admits, represents the experience of pure time, its duration, which cannot be filled with anything.

The second mental experiment puts our character in a situation where he visits a noisy party with his wife and friends after work. Throughout the evening this person drinks, listens to music, smokes, communicates in nice company and all in all has a good time. After the party he even tells his wife that the night was very successful, lively and enjoyable. But as he arrives home and gets ready for sleep, he is engulfed by the feeling that *the time has been wasted*. All the events of the busy evening and the friendly party *collapse into the void of boredom*; the time has been spent on nothing, wasted. This second

15 See Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*.

experience of boredom is more serious, for here time captures the events with which it has been filled and casts them into the abyss.

The third type of boredom is total boredom, in which *there is no subject*. In this state, time and boredom are so dense that they are not even recognized as such, because there is no longer a person capable of realizing that he is bored. There is only an endless and meaningless routine and an ordinary “someone” who performs it. It is the state of final boredom, of the abyss of time-as-duration itself.

Drawing the results of these experiments, Heidegger concludes that the mood of Dasein in modern times is boredom. Dasein is bored, because there is no *beyng* in the world. The authentic experience of Dasein by man is an awakening in the midst of boredom, in the centre of falling into time and immersion in duration.

The traditional worldview tells about cyclic Time, which moves from the better state of things to the worse. Hesiod spoke of the Golden Age, when people and Gods lived together, and of the Iron Age, with the people of which he did not want to live. The Indian tradition tells of four epochs: Satya Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga and Kali Yuga. The duration of each Yuga decreases with the cosmic involution, and the density of Time and material determinism within the Yuga only increases. Therefore, Kali-Yuga is at the same time the shortest in length but the most dense in the duration of Time, so much that it seems infinitely long. According to traditional doctrines and traditionalism, today humanity is in the heart of Kali-Yuga, or the Iron Age. This is the eschatological time, the time of the end and the destruction of the world. In Heidegger this corresponds to the oblivion of *beyng*, which in the Heathen picture of the world is personified by the Gods and the Divine. The Gods are Eternal, and their Eternity is the Eternity *above Time*. In the Iron Age, the Gods are distanced from man, as *beyng* is concealed and alienated from *be-ing*. Man is completely immersed in Time.

In contemporary Heathen practice, there is the negative concept of “ritualism,” which refers to a person to whom the Heathen tradition

has meaning and importance only on certain traditional celebrations. This is a kind of “weekend tradition,” the essence of which is limited to the recurrence of these meetings. The overall percentage of “ritualists” in Heathen communities of the world is very high.

These “ritualists” can be classified as belonging to the second type of boredom, according to Heidegger. The adherents of “weekend paganism” are *bored in tradition and at celebrations*. If they were bored like the person at the station — that is, by the force of circumstances and the inability to fill this time — they would never appear at the celebrations anymore. But we are talking about the repeated attending of celebrations and rituals — about the second type of boredom filled with events, communication, emotions and experiences of time. And this time, later, in such people falls into nowhere. Coming home, they admit that, other things being equal, they could have gone to the cinema, to a concert or a football match. For them, paganism and rituals are a kind of filling up the time, constantly falling into the abyss, killing the boredom and veiling the duration of time and the lack of meaning in life.

Apart from this, we can clearly see the third type of the bored in the Heathen environment, those who turn tradition into a total routine, without reflecting either on their participation or the meaning of the rites, nothing at all. It is a purely mechanical — technical — execution of a meaningless life, completely immersed in time.

Dasein is bored. Man is bored. This is his fate in a world alienated from *beyng*, in Kali-Yuga. For the vast majority, this is a given that does not contain any contradictions, since in their mind there is no subject who is able to recognize the world, his own life and Dasein as full of boredom.

The boring approach to tradition spells the death of the revival of Heathenry. To prevent this, it is necessary to correct our thinking and questioning of *beyng*, about the Gods, and about Dasein. And here it is time to raise the question of “What should we do?” From the perspective of Heathen traditionalism there is the following answer. The

Gods are Eternal over Time, hence their concealment, as well as the oblivion of the [theo-ontological] being, is a problem of a metaphysical character, related to the degradation of human nature and self-oblivion of man.¹⁶ However, the Gods are Eternal. In Tantrism, the concealment of God is the play (Lila) of Maya, the Illusion that is the embodiment of Shakti — the divine Consort of the God Shiva, who is his dynamic and creative power. In other words, the fact that the Gods are concealed and alienated from the world, as eternity from time or being from existence, is a play of Illusion, which itself is a manifestation of the Divine. The Gods are manifested through their concealment; this is a magnificent paradox, the Zen koan of Kali-Yuga.

The key point of Heathen traditionalism is not the call to return to the past literally, as in turning the wheel of Time backwards, but a breakthrough to Eternity, to what remains unchanged at all times but can be concealed. Correct thinking allows a Heathen to ask questions about the Gods (and being) in the right way and to bring himself and Dasein out of boredom and the immersion in Time. We will now leave out the methods of achieving this state, pointing out that they will be the traditionalist answer to the question of overcoming boredom. The overcoming of the negative forces of Time, boredom, Kali-Yuga and finally, Death is achieved not so much through some “role-playing,” but through a correct understanding of the eschatology of our era and the nature of the concealment of the Gods and being. The Gods give man the meaning of life, the Divine *Nosce te Ipsum*.¹⁷

As we pointed out, *Langeweile* is “long-time-ness” or “duration” in literal translation, and the way out of it is the unlocking of time-boredom, the breakthrough of an Event. Heidegger sees thinking

16 Heidegger pointed out that the Greeks regarded the Gods rather not as individuals but as being that contemplates things.

17 Latin “Know Thyself,” the motto carved above the entrance to the Delphic temple of Apollo. Self-knowledge is always the knowledge of man’s own divine Nature.

from the immersion in boredom or existential horror (*Angst*) as the last stronghold of the possibility of this unlocking.

Heidegger raises the question of a New Beginning of philosophy, Another Beginning that will result from the starting conditions different from the pre-Socratics of Greece and the whole Platonic Apollonian structure of Western thinking and philosophy.

An acute issue is the complementarity of Heidegger's solutions and Heathen traditionalism — not at the level of forms, but at the level of structures and language. Today this question is only inviting its thinkers from the Heathen philosophical environment.

Resume

I) Man in the German Logos is the embodiment of the border, the metaphor of which may be a two-sided medal or a tree. The highest dimension of man in his *imitatio Dei* or *er-eigene Da-Sein* is the existence on the border of Nothingness, the apophatic Abyss of the Divine and the truth of beyng. “To carry Chaos,” as F. Nietzsche put it.

The lower dimension is the loss of Divine inspiration and the authenticity of being — the existence of the border with sterile matter and the chthonic abyss of shadows.

The Logos (thinking, word, speech, harvest, lightning) possessed by man [and possessing man] is a string stretched between two abysses, and it constitutes the identity of man and the identity of a people (*Volk*).

Between the upper and lower dimension of man there lies the gradient of his anthropology and the caste structure of society; looking through it, it is possible to consider history as degradation from the Golden age to the Iron Age, from the wonder of beyng to the indifferent mutual boredom of Dasein and man.

At its limits, the gradient of the states of human existence is compressed to a two-sided medal. In the German-Scandinavian tradition, the obverse and reverse correspond to the warrior and shamanic

aspects of Odin and the two upper castes of warriors, heroes and kings, and priests, poets and philosophers. More broadly, covering not only the period of tradition, but also the entire *historicality*, this medal can be reduced to authentic and non-authentic modes of existence. It is more appropriate to talk about the tree, resonating with the myth of the creation of the first people, which is rooted in the earth but in its growth *aspires* to reach the sky. And, grounded (*Gründung*) in the Divine, man can deify (J. Tauler) the acts of his everyday life; man as the tree is *already rooted deeply in the sky, growing from the sky towards the earth, giving it the seeds and the fruits of the Divine*.

(II) Man as a tree embodies the struggle for his own nature and destiny in the last days. The struggle for man in the *highest* meaning of his nature and destiny. Philosophizing is an aristocratic way, like poetry and transgressive ecstasy. The path is fraught with death.

Members of the aristocracy were committed to fire after their death; by ritual cremation of their bodies on fire, their spirits were shown to heaven, in contrast to the inhumation of common people.¹⁸

When a funeral pyre is lit, its first victim is the wood of which it is composed. In the light of the fire, the *Thing* was held and offerings to the Gods were made. The life of man as a carrier of wood nature is the ritual of deification through the self-immolation of its created part in a ritual fire that witnesses the truth of being and the Gods.¹⁹

The self-immolation of man is the detachment of Meister Eckhart and the way to the Hidden Master of Johannes Tauler, as well as the way to the *Thing* of the Aesir. The road to the Gods is the road to the Sky — the rising flame of human nature in the authenticity of Dasein.

Heraclitus taught:

18 There is also the case of burial mounds as hills built above ground or arranged with an internal space, which, together with ritual objects confirming a noble person's status and glory, insulates their body from the surrounding land.

19 In Scandinavian and German languages, the name of the first man, Ask, and the word for "ashes" differ in one letter: Old Icelandic and Swedish *aska*, Danish *aske*, English *ashes*, German *Asche*.

ἄνθρωπος ἐν εὐφρόνῃ φάος ἄπτει ἐαυτῷ ἀποθανῶν ἀποσβεσθεῖς ὄψεις,
ζῶν δὲ ἄπτει τεθνεῶτος εὐδῶν, ἀποσβεσθεῖς ὄψεις, ἐγγηγορῶς ἄπτει
εὐδοντος.

Man kindles a light for himself in the night-time, when he has died but is
alive. The sleeper, whose vision has been put out, lights up from the dead;
he that is awake lights up from the sleeping.²⁰

²⁰ Fr. 26, translated by John Burnet. The Night is the *Wolszeit* and *Seynsverlassenheit*, in the darkness of which man kindles a flame from within himself in his his own name.

XIV

The Concealment of Europe

LIVING IN THE geographical space of Russia, historically we consider Europe, Germany and Scandinavia in particular, as the West. At best, we distinguish the West of the continent and the generalized West of Europe, England, the United States, Australia and the “civilized” world as a whole. The West as a paradigm of thinking, values, education, culture etc., that is, the metahistorical and supra-geographical West. To us, Continental Europe on the map is something whole to the left of our territorial borders. But let us put ourselves in the place of the German. We will find ourselves in the heart of Europe, in Germany. Looking from the center, we will see the whole of Europe as a periphery, a neighborhood around our dominant position. The central position in the geography of Europe is historically confirmed by the Germans themselves at all levels: military, dynastic, cultural and philosophical. The Germans become the hegemon of Europe, its heart, whose power extends to the surrounding peoples and States. At the same time, it is the continental pole of the German Logos that historically expresses the fate of the whole of Europe, while the pole of Scandinavia tends to the passive perception of the waves of history from the continent.

Today, the German Logos and the Logos of Europe are in an identical state of decline, inauthenticity and disintegration; the destinies of

Germany and Europe are entwined as one in their unfavourable position. But Europe is not only the German Logos, it originates from the Hellenic Antiquity, its philosophy, politics and structures. Hellenism is the beginning of Europe, Germany is its completion (the First Beginning by M. Heidegger).

The Metaphysics of Concealment

Nowadays we see the German Logos in the twilight of the question of its concealment or the twilight of the coming death today. Night is on the doorstep, and it covers all geographical poles of the German space. But let us look into its darkness through the eyes of poets, Hölderlin and Novalis, and make it closer to us, so as to hear the hints of the Gods in its silence.

One of the etymological hypotheses states that the word Εὐρώπη means “sunset.” In German, the synonym of Europe is *Abendland* — the Country of the Evening or Sunset. In the Icelandic language until the XIX century, according to S. Sabinin, the word *Norðrhalfa* was used to refer to Europe as a whole, meaning “the Northern part [of the world]”; the word for Africa was *Suðrhalfa* and for America — *Vestrhalfa*. The whole space of Russia and Asia is *Austarhalfa*, the Eastern part. We, being in this part, look to the West from us and perceive Europe as “Vestrhalfa,” without drawing special differences between Europe as such, its North, and the American continent. In the Russian language, the word “West” directly refers to the sunset, setting down, falling over the horizon. But placing ourselves in the location of the German, we must see ourselves from above, “in the North” (the Scandinavian pole of the German Logos) and in the heart of Europe — *Miðrhalfa*, *Miðrgarðr*, Heartland.¹

1 The term “Heartland” is used in geopolitics, but in this case we should note its poetic dimensions: the Country of the Heart, the Heart of the Country, the Heart of the Earth.

The essence of the thing lies in the word given to it by the poet, a name exposed in what is revealed by man in the presence of the Gods, Daimons, Norns and muses. The decline of Europe is its nature and fate, the whole of Europe is the space of eschatology and sunset, the twilight of Apollo and of One. The Icelandic language clarifies that this is the concealment of the Light of the North, the vertical pole of Tradition. On the Celtic Cross map, it corresponds to the transition from the upper point of the *I* sound on the left of the circle to the point of the *U* sound (the West, geographically on the other side of the Atlantic), and from it to complete soundlessness, the death of the lower point of the *Yr* rune.

Europe as the *Abendland* is in full compliance with the traditional eschatology, especially German-Scandinavian, the conservatism of Otto Spengler (*Der Untergang des Abendlandes*), traditionalist philosophy of Julius Evola and historical oblivion of being of Martin Heidegger. Europe is the land of the Evening of the World, and nowadays it arrives at this existential, historic and metaphysical hour. You can see that in the Iron Age Europe comes to itself—*the Land of Sunset meets its Twilight*—but how does it meet it? On the one hand, the decline of Europe is its disintegration, the decomposition of its Logos and identity, and in this state of [self-forgetfulness] it, as the Country of Sunset, embodies and meets the Sunset itself. The self-forgetfulness and self-concealment of Europe is its essential sign, which it sends to itself. Some—just a few people—should notice that something is missing, and in this lack comprehend the missing in its stead. But if the decline of Europe is its essence, its existential, *Sein-zum-Tode*, then the Sunset and the Night call it to look in their darkness openly, open-to-the-death as the moment of its supreme existential historical Self (*Selbst*) and of the authenticity of its Dasein. We are faced with the aporia of the should-be-hidden [the Sunset of Europe as the essential moment of its destiny] and the meeting of the concealment in the open [the Sunset of Europe experienced by it as the moment of *Selbst* in death]. But there is a time gap between the

currently concealed Europe² and the moment of authenticity. The end has not yet come, but Europe still has not woken up. There is a delay, a pause, the expectation of the moment of *the event*. It has not yet come — and it may happen that Europe will miss it, remaining in non-existence, deciding not to be disclosed at all — the Country of Sunset, and Germany as its geographical heart, reside in concealment.

In the German-Scandinavian tradition, there are a number of plots related to the concealment and departure of mythological figures until a certain time, sometimes eschatological as well.

The Saga of the Ynglings, bearing a visible sign of euhemerism, says that after his death Odin went to the Home of the Gods to eternal life. His distant descendant Swegde, a Swedish ruler of the branch of Freyr, makes a vow to find Odin's abode and Odin himself.

Svegðir fór enn at leita Goðheims. Ok í austanverðri Svíþjóð heitir boer mikill at Steini, þar er steinn svá mikill sem stór hús. Um kveldit eptir sólarfall, þá er Svegðir gékk frá drykkju til svefnbúrs, sá hann til steinsins, at dvergr sat undir steininum. Svegðir ok hans menn váru mjök druknir ok runnu til steinsins. Dvergrinn stóð í durum ok kallaði á Sveigði, bað hann þar inn ganga, ef hann vildi Óðin hitta. Svegðir hljóp í steininn; en steinninn laukst þegar aptr, ok kom Svegðir eigi aptr.

Swegde went out afterwards to seek again for Godheim, and came to a mansion on the east side of Swithiod called Stein, where there was a stone as big as a large house. In the evening after sunset, as Swegde was going from the drinking-table to his sleeping-room, he cast his eye upon the stone, and saw that a dwarf was sitting under it. Swegde and his man were very drunk, and they ran towards the stone. The dwarf stood in the door, and called to Swegde, and told him to come in, and he should see Odin. Swegde ran into the stone, which instantly closed behind him, and Swegde never came back.

Swegde was undoubtedly a man of heroic type, who dared to look for Odin himself. He is a historical person involved in a series of

2 Here we can perceive the synchrony with the ancient myth of young Europa hiding from Zeus.

genealogies of real rulers and events, he is close to man as such and he lives in a world where the Gods (in Euhemerus' interpretation) are dead. His desire could be interpreted in line with the classic archetype of the hero, but also as the way of death, because Odin goes to the home of the Gods after death, and Swegde looks for him there. But the ruler of Sweden does not die, an atypical event happens to him: invited by the dwarf, he enters the stone and hides in it forever. A direct understanding of this story suggests that Swegde was profanely drunk and the dwarf easily fooled him and brought him to death. Snorri offers a more solar interpretation, quoting Tjodolf from Hvinir in the same passage:

The day-fearing	En dagskjarr
spawn of Durnir	Durnis niðja
warden of the hall	salvörðuðr
betrayed Sveigdir	Svegði vélti,
who into stone	þá er í stein
the rash hero	hinn stórgeði
ran after the dwarf.	dulsa konr
The bright hall	ept dvergi hljóp;
of Soekmimir	ok sal bjatr
built of giants	þeirra Sökmímis
was enriched	jötunbygðr
by the chieftain's presence.	við jöfri gein.

Here the event is shown as the death of the hero who has fallen from the deception of chthonic forces, who has lost his bright mind and reason in wine. The dwarf, called the “hater of the world,” embodies the chthonic forces that oppose the divine; they also bring Swegde to the home of the Jötunnns (jötunbygðr) — the space of the underground poverty and scarcity.

This story can be read in a more Odinic way, non-dual and open to Twilight and Night. A strong positive will to the discovery of the Divine in its maximum concentration in the figure of Odin makes Sweigre the way to the Allfather gone from the world. Odin invites the

chieftain to follow him — this is the way to concealment, to the dungeons, through the chthonic spaces of poverty of the God-forsaken world. This path can be taken only by a hero; to get his invitation and to see the gates opened by the *Zwerg* messenger is possible only in a state of intoxication, at dusk after sunset. The bright and direct warrior's mind — the militant thinking, the light obverse — in the state of intoxication sees what an ordinary person sees not. In this state, it is able to see the sign of God and entrust itself to it, to follow it and be concealed forever *for this world*. Sweigre is an Yngling most loyal to Odin; he repeats his journey and his events.

The motive of concealment in a stone or rock is close to the figure of the king hidden in a mountain or under a hill waiting for the hour of his return. In Germany, near Paderborn, there is Mount Odenberg, or the mount of Odin. In this mountain, sleeps Wotan himself, according to legends. According to another version, Wotan is hidden in the Alpine mountain Untersberg on the border with Austria. On the modern map of Germany, Odenberg is located almost in the centre, as the Bavarian part of the Alps is close to the centre of Western Europe. The place where Wotan is concealed emphasizes the centrality of German spaces and the centrality of its position in the German-Scandinavian myth. The Brothers Grimm tell the German legend of Geroldseck Castle, where German heroes dwell — Ariovistus and Siegfried, who will return when twilight engulfs Germany (*Untergang*).³ Later, the place of Wotan in the mountain is taken by various great German monarchs: in Odensburg, Odin is replaced by Charlemagne; in Untersberg, by Friedrich I Barbarossa or Friedrich II, or Charlemagne again.⁴ Under the mountain, Friedrich I is waiting for the right hour to return, sending ravens to find out what is happening in the German lands — in this he retains the features of the Odinic myth. According to another version, Friedrich I is sleeping under the Kyffhäuser

3 See Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm *Deutsche Sagen*, München, 1965.

4 The Alpine region Berchtesgaden in Bavaria is rich in legends and myths about the local mountains, which are petrified witches, giants, etc.

mountain. His grandson Friedrich II, who fought actively with the Guelphs, is also considered not dead but hidden in the mountains. His coming is associated with eschatological expectations and religious reforms, as during his lifetime he was considered a heretic. As you can see, the mountain and the great Wotan or Emperor concealed in it are the archetype of eschatological expectation in the German Logos. The outline of this expectation is found in pagan tradition and antiquity, and is finally connected with politics and power already in the Christian dual faith. The motive of the hidden hero, king or army is found in Germany, Austria, Switzerland (Alps), England and Denmark (Holger Danske of the Renaissance).

Christian eschatology, which gives a new impetus to the subject of hidden rulers, is unthinkable without soteriology — the doctrine of salvation, the desire of which transforms the images of emperors and warriors into heroes hidden in mountains. But for the German Logos, the theme of salvation is irrelevant; it carries the taste of decline and refusal from fight, salvation from death [here and now], which is the key to all life (placing the accent from here-death to the afterlife). In the later stories two different narratives intertwine, German and Christian, affecting each other, re-interpreting images, attributes, the locations of myths and the names of the characters. In contrast to the Abrahamic salvation, the Germans await not the Savior but the return of the king, the hero and the commander with his army; they are waiting for Sweigre. The “soteriology” of the German Logos is not salvation but battle in the frenzy of obsession with the God of war and meeting with death. Therefore, the Germans mainly expect the return of the heroic figures, and not for the hidden Imam, like Shiites, or Christ like the laymen of the third caste.

In this picture of the world, the event of disappearance of the supreme God Odin and Sweigre is an excess and anomaly in the fabric of the myth. Gods and heroes do not die like this — it is an ignominious “death,” they are not removed from the fabric of history and metaphysics but go into concealment. The singularity of this gesture

confuses the warlike Germanic thinking and, in a strictly Apollonic way, it interprets it as insidious machinations of the Jötunnns and *Zwerge*, the helplessness of the clouded mind struck by the chthonic spell of deception. The key element of the story is that Odin/Wotan conceals himself (or remains in concealment), being the paradigmatic figure of the German Logos, which includes bright militancy and gloomy shamanic ecstasy. In the Saga of the Ynglings it is also stated that Odin could travel assuming the appearance of a dead man (*eða dauðr*). Starting from this fragment, it is possible to get away from Snorri's euhemerism and to read the entire story about the death of Odin, Sweigre's search for Odin and his entering into the rock like a journey to death and self-concealment, paradigmatically resonant with the change of traditions in Europe, Nietzsche's "death of God" and the etymological essence of Europe as the *Untergang des Abendlandes*.

Going into concealment, as well as shamanic death—a journey into the lower worlds—happens entirely in the space of Odinic twilight and is sanctioned by the Allfather. This behaviour, being a voluntaristic gesture of the supreme God pointed at the realms known only to him, stands out of the German ethos. The texts mention it only in clues and hints, fits and starts, in the context of chthonic interpretations. But in general, concealment fits into the ecstatic-transgressive semantics of Odin, his myths, names, and structures of thinking of the dark reverse of his figure. Since Odin as an outer figure includes the king and warrior archetypes, this affects the further myths of concealment, where his supreme figure is replaced by the figures of great chiefs, kings, and emperors (the Ghibellines).

The motive of the leaving and hiding of Odin can be seen in "The Prophecy of the Völva" in the *Poetic Edda*, in the verses devoted to the description of the onset of Ragnarök. After the appearance of the first signs of the End and the sounds of Heimdall's horn, Odin descends into the cave, where under the roots of Yggdrasil in a stream lies the head of Mimir. To vouch for its life, Odin gave one of his eyes.

46.
 Leika Míms synir,
 en mjötuðr kyndisk
 at inu galla
 Gjallarhorni;
 hátt blæss Heimdallr,
 horn er á lofti,
 mælir Óðinn
 við Míms höfuð.

46.
 Fast move the sons
 of Mim, and fate
 Is heard in the note
 of the Gjallarhorn;
 Loud blows Heimdall,
 the horn is aloft,
 In fear quake all
 who on Hel-roads are.

The kenning “the sons of Mim” is usually associated with the Titans and monsters, which is indirectly confirmed by his proximity to the world of the chthonic powers: he is lying under the root, which leads to the Hrimthurses (*Prose Edda*). But Mimir himself is the carrier of great wisdom (associated with the Jötunns) and guards its source, where also the pledge of Odin lies. The name Mímir or Mím goes back to the meaning of “memory” — the one who remembers. Among the names of Odin, Snorri calls him a Friend of Mimir.

At the first lightnings of the Ragnarök, Odin goes underground (dies in his journey or conceals himself within the mountains), in the lower worlds of chthonic poverty, where he talks with the old and wise much-remembering friend. The moment of the descent into darkness is preceded by the gathering of the Aesir at the *Thing* before battle. The *Thing* is also a sacred place (Vé), in the centre of which burns the fire in whose light the Gods make their decision. And before this meeting, Odin leaves from the world into the darkness of the lower worlds (the descent from *I* to *U* and Yr-Jule on the Wheel of the Year) in order to learn the wisdom of the Night, its darkness and poverty. It is not known what questions he asks Mimir: what is the meaning of all that has been lived? What will be the End? What will be the New Beginning? The secret of Odin and Mimir’s conversation is shrouded in the same darkness as what Odin told Baldr on his deathbed; the attempts to find out this secret lead to death.

In the *Speeches of Vaftrudnir*, Odin asks the giant, which of the creatures will survive the Great Winter? Fimbulvetr is the Night of the World in the German-Scandinavian tradition. It begins with the death of Baldr and ends with Ragnarök. The word *fimbul* is translated as “great,” but A. Korsun translated this two-rooted word by the phrase “the winter of giants.” This translation emphasizes the Titanic nature of this Winter — it is not just great in the sense of a “long duration,” but also embodies the essence of Titanism, its [great] poverty and scarcity. Fimbulvetr is the scarce time; the long burden of the dull beggar days of the last times. The moment to which several poetic lines are devoted in the Eddas unfolds in history for centuries for the Germans and Europe as a whole as the process of the decline of their own Self; there comes the final oblivion of being and the oblivion of the fact that “something is forgotten”; the German lands are scarce in great poets, thinkers and leaders. Wotan leaves and takes warriors, heroes and kings, priests and poets with him. Hölderlin (“Germany”) and M. Heidegger are one of the last ones to note this loss.

In the language of Neoplatonism, this act of concealment of the Divine can be described as the fulfilment of the return, επιστροφή, from the lower boundary of the emanation back to the paternal Mind, *Nous*. The historical process of the discovery of Germany and Europe then is the diminution of the light of ideas, the onset of twilight, the fall into multiplicity. The name of One in the Hellenic tradition is Apollo, Ἀπόλλων, the Sun-God. His departure is the coming of the Night, πολλα — the dark time of the absence of the emanations of the Mind, asserting the sacred order and hierarchy of the levels of being. In the night of [the absent Mind] one can fall into the gloomy madness of matter, or enter into the sacred madness of the ecstatic God.

Another figure who departed ahead of time and concealed himself in the lower world is the As Baldr, the solar son of Odin. Killed by the insidious deception of Loki, he will return from Helheim only after Ragnarök and will rule the world. But the myth reports very little information about him. Certain accents in his myth timidly indicate

that his archetype is even more closely related to the Dionysian circle, moved to the area of youth, emphasized aesthetics and festivity. But now the beautiful Baldr is dead.

* * *

For Martin Heidegger, the history of the West is the way of forgetting *beyng*, predetermined from the very beginning of its Logos and its thinking since the emergence of philosophy in the pre-Socratics and Plato. Not only in the sphere of philosophy, ideas and thinking, but also in actual history, mankind is falling and losing the authenticity of its existence and *Dasein*. The way of thinking and the history of the peoples of Europe follow as a natural embodiment of the incorrectly formulated main question of philosophy: the identification of *beyng* with *being*. Therefore, the actual history of Europe and the Germans is concealment, gradual abandonment of man by being, and great thinkers and poets mark the milestones of this path. M. Heidegger considered Hegel and Nietzsche to be those who had completed the first Beginning of Western thinking; they are the last words of Europe, and Heidegger himself is a final point in this existential-historical statement. After them there is only disintegration, mixing of fragments, replication of simulacra and chatter (*Gerede*) of the post-war Postmodernism.

Heidegger's pessimism is close to traditionalism and eschatological subjects of mythology, but he thinks wider than traditionalists. They are focused on metaphysics, the essential expression of which is Plato and the vertical plane of the world of ideas and the world of copies, emanations and the ontological hierarchy of the world, which is repeated in the policy of the State. Heidegger places Plato in the broader context of the oblivion of *beyng*, which began in the Pre-Socratics (Parmenides, Heraclitus, Anaximander, and others). Plato expresses the already accomplished birth of the Logos, all that will be only continued, commented, interpreted and repeated in philosophy, society, politics and Western culture in the next thousands

of years. Plato records the accomplished oblivion of beyng, “nailing” the world of ideas (the special noetic being) over the emptiness of the not-being, Nothingness. The eschatology of Martin Heidegger’s beyng also tells us something quite different from that of the traditionalists. The ancient man of tradition lives in the space of the eternal return, the cycles of the Year, life and death, the afterlife and rebirth of his own soul and the whole world after the End. Mythological consciousness recycles its structures and aspires for the same in the future. Traditionalists also insist on a similar restoration based on metaphysics, rather Vedanta than Platonism, rightly exposing the delusion of progress, humanism and liberty of Modernity and Postmodernity. Traditionalism is clearly aware that it is impossible to literally go back to the myth, so the traditionalist restoration *a priori* is a variation of the conservative “post-modernism,” essentially the same, but in very different conditions and paradigm of thinking. For Heidegger this is unacceptable, because here the question of the truth of beyng again eludes, piled with metaphysical constructions and the rigidity of hierarchical structures of classical Platonism. Cosmos is covered by ideas above, by *chora* below; the Abyss of Nothingness is concealed.⁵

All this is a reissue of the same First Beginning, wrong in its basis. And it is already over. Ahead lies — and this is only an opportunity but not a predetermined reality — perhaps Another Beginning, open to the truth of beyng as Nothingness and not repeating the mistake of the first philosophers of Antiquity. The philosophy and thinking of this other Beginning is so radically different from the dominant millennia of normative thinking that it is almost impossible to imagine this *other Logos*, other man, history and world — it is *wonderful* and exciting, intoxicating and destructive for our mind. According to Heidegger, after the sunset of the West, what will return will not be the same; something different will be born. The birth (the Event, *Ereignis*)

5 We do not touch upon the Neoplatonism open to the apophatic dimension of which Heidegger says little, and which differs from Plato’s Cosmos closed above and below. In the neo-Platonic view, the horizons converge with Heidegger.

is not a givenness set by many subtle existential nuances of Dasein, of man, history and language.

But until the Event happens, M. Heidegger witnesses the scarcity of time. Heidegger characterizes the state of Germany after Versailles as a great need (*Not*), but even greater need is experienced by the existence of man (*Daseinsnot*). The awareness of the depth of the need of existence is necessary to make a decision about Dasein. The word *Daseinsnot* contains three roots: *da* — here, “place,” *sein* — being, and *not* — need. It can be translated as the need of existence and as the need-for-the-space-[for]existence. Heidegger speaks of the place of Dasein in the *Black Notebooks*:

“The true constancy of existence (Dasein) is *persistance in the search for a place* at the hearth of being-as-worthy-of-questioning.”

This persistence stems from the knowledge of the deepest historical and existential needs of the people and the Motherland.

M. Heidegger speaks about his homeland at an evening dedicated to his native land in 1961. In the German language the phrase “an evening devoted to the homeland” is expressed by the word *Heimatabend*. It contains the old root *heim* — home, homeland, country, and the root *Abend* — evening, as in *Abendland*. Heidegger talks about the special feeling of *Heimische* — the feeling of the Fatherland, the sense of one’s origins and the homeland embodied in such small German towns and villages as his native Meßkirch. But more broadly, *Heimische* is also a historicstate of the seclusion of a people (*Volk*) in their native land, their connection with it and, implicitly, a state of authentic deep kinship with space, patriotism and populism. Remaining true to himself and his method of dealing with language, Heidegger points to another word — *Unheimlich*, which means “terrible” or “horrible,” with a touch of abnormality of this characteristic. In the word *Unheimlich* he also highlights the root *heim*, and with the prefix *un-* he forms the word *Unheimische*. This word has the meaning of “homelessness” and “rootlessness,” and carries a shade of fear and horror. *Unheimische* is a terrible and horrifying loss of man’s roots and ties with the

Homeland, with the authenticity of existence here and now, in the quiet country of Germany. This is the coming of *Heimatabend*, the sunset in *Abendland*. For Heidegger, this is an evident state of things in post-war Germany. Further, he points the way in this oblivion. As in the case of the sound of the word λήθη (concealment) in the word ἀλήθεια (the unconcealed). Heidegger calls to abandon duality and to abolish it in synthesis as the third. In concealment, the openness is visible; in chatter, there sounds speechlessness, there is a certain message of the homeland in the ugliness, and authenticity emerges in non-authenticity. Pairs of opposites simultaneously differ and point to each other; they are to be understood without opposing, without putting an “and” or “or” between them, without και.

Heidegger says that it is necessary to make a turn (*Heimkehr*) in the word *Unheimische* to the word *Heimische* sounding in it; in the word *rootlessness* it is necessary — by the effort of sensitive will — to cultivate the ascent to the Homeland. Homelessness and the loss of homeland in some way still tells us about it and leaves the way open-in-concealment. It is close to the poetic approach to the Night, to recognize in it the signs of the departed Gods and to understand the meaning of the loss of the homeland.

In a short essay, also devoted to the Schwarzwald province in which he lived, Heidegger justifies the superiority of the countryside over the city. He poetically describes in prose the nature surrounding his house and village in the valley, the forest, winter and night. The countryside, its life, the being of simple peasants and their view of the world for Heidegger are much clearer and closer than the bustle of cities and burghers. With a peasant friend, you do not have to talk of philosophy, you can just sit and silently gaze at the dark sky. The village is in harmony with the surrounding mountains and especially the forest.⁶ The city is an alienating modernity, leveling everything in its universality and globalism; all megacities on the planet, in fact, and

6 See Martin Heidegger, “Creative Landscape: Why Do We Stay in the Provinces?”

even in appearance, are absolutely the same. The province, the village, is a space where people live in their authentic *Heimische*. Such is the conservative position of Martin Heidegger, where we can trace the distant notes of the German passion for isolation and dislike of living in a crowded society and close neighbourhood (the conglomeration of alienated bodies in urban areas), which was reported by Tacitus.⁷

The situation of existential and historical homelessness and existential need (*Daseinsnot*) in Heidegger is complemented by a particular problem, the anomaly of delay expressed in the refrain of “still not,” or *noch nicht*. The end of Western philosophy, the Logos of the First Beginning, comes with Hegel and Nietzsche. But the transition (*Übergang*) to Another Beginning does not occur. Hölderlin speaks of meager times, “the space between times.” Heidegger comes and comprehends the whole path of the Logos and the error of interpretation of the truth of being, but there is no Other Beginning *here yet*, and the Night is *still there*. Heidegger saw World War II as a window of an existential-historic opportunity, but the extreme affectation of the Third Reich by the structures of Modernity and its defeat have not met the expectations. The window was closed, the darkness thickened, there is no Other Beginning yet. The problem of *noch nicht* becomes the narrative of the Night itself; any event that claims to change the situation is subjected to a powerful erosion of doubt and indecision of “what if still no?”. *Dasein* in man still does not dare to be authentic. In this respect, *noch nicht* acts as an essential manifestation of nihilism-as-a-process, as an eroding force or a sterile force, Titanism, the will to power of which is always doomed to failure. The antithesis of the “has not yet been” is only “already has been,” the already-Event as fulfilment, *Er-Eignis* as an instantaneous en-owning and appropriation. But while being does not return to history, history itself as “what is, what was and what will be” still does not exist.

7 See p. 14, “The Sides of the Term ‘Heathenry.’”

In postwar Germany, pinned between the United States and the Soviet Union expressing two extreme types of non-authenticity, Heidegger is deeply pessimistic. Even in the diaries of the 1930s, he relates the return of life with the appeal to the Gods. In an interview with “Der Spiegel,” published posthumously at his request, Martin Heidegger concludes that in the current existential and historic conditions — in all the scarcity and homeland-deprivation of the environment and man — “only a God can save us.”

There is only one possibility for us: in thinking and poetry, to get ourselves ready for the appearance of God or for the absence of God and death; to prepare to perish in the face of the absent God.⁸

8 The interview with M. Heidegger for “Der Spiegel,” 1966, published in 1976.

X V

Wald und Nebel

ALREADY IN ANCIENT TIMES, many peoples associated their qualities with the space that surrounded them and acted as the cradle of their culture. It is a well-known tradition to consider the place of residence as the centre of the Universe, and the character and spirit of the people as a reflection of nature and a normative model for ordering the world around. For example, Proclus associated the emergence of philosophy with the special mild climate of Greece, which freed the Greeks from the incessant struggle for existence.

In the second half of the XIX century, the German thinker Friedrich Ratzel formulated the evolutionist theory of development of the people and the state called *organicism*. It is based on the thesis of the inextricable connection of earth and space (*Raum*) with the people who develop in their conditions. Geography, relief, climate, soil properties and other factors are reflected in the cultural and political evolution of the people, who are rooted in their native soil. Moreover, with gradual intellectual development, a people begins to reflect and to comprehend their living space (*Lebensraum*) and their connection with it. People are connected with their space, they reflect its properties in their mentality, mind and culture; they duplicate geography on a higher level. This is partly consonant with the ideas of Herder on the “national spirit,” the *Volksggeist* of Romanticism. The state is a living

organism, developing and expanding in space and also inseparable from the people.

The spaces of the continental Germans are occupied mainly by forests, chains of hills and the majestic Alps in the South. The German word *Wald*, a forest, dates back to the Proto-Germanic *walþuz and originates from Old Norse *vǫllr* with the same meaning. Another possible etymology is the Proto-Germanic *walda, *geweald* in Old English, *vald* in Icelandic, with the meaning of “power,” “force,” “to force.” Forest as a natural phenomenon in the Germanic languages is adjacent to the concept of strength, power and authority.

In tradition, the first people are created by the Gods from trees (*tré*), and in the Icelandic word *viðr* (forest), in the light of philosophy, human nature is connected with the category ὕλη, the matter of Aristotle. Tacitus says that the Germans hated the idea of temples, and they dedicated whole groves and oak forests to the Gods, and at the same time they lived in the forests, in the “temple” of their Gods, together with them.

The *Teutoburger Wald* in the North of Germany, in the lands of Saxony, is historically significant for the German identity. In this forest, in 9 AD, the troops of Arminius defeated the legions of Quintilius Varus, sacrificing hundreds of soldiers to Wotan. According to ancient historians, the Germans were unequalled in battles in forests and marshes, which were their home.¹ Later, in the town of Paderborn in the North of Teutoburg, Charlemagne gives shelter to Pope Leo III, who crowns him as Emperor of the Frankish Empire.

So, since ancient times, forest hills have been home to the Germans, the living space which is closely connected with the military archetype, victories and power. This distinguishes them from the steppe spirit of the nomads and from the peoples of the sea. *Wald* is the power of the mighty forest, it is the might of the Germans flavoured with the blood sacrificed to Wotan.

1 See “Ancient Germans. The History of Latin-German Wars in the Descriptions of Ancient Historians.”

To the South of Teutoburg, stretching along the Rhine towards the territory of modern Bavaria, there lies *Marciana Silva* — the border-line forest that used to separate the lands of Rome from the lands of the Germanic barbarians (the Marcomanni). Some sources describe it as the Great Forest which is connected with Teutoburg and is the one and only large forest in Germany. Another name of this great forest is the *Schwarzwald*, the Black Forest. It is also located on small mountains and consists of coniferous trees, oaks, maples, beeches and ash trees, with mostly rocky soil of red and white shades. The density of the forest and the character of its trees make it too thick to be walked by man and permeated by the rays of light, whence its name probably comes. In the *Schwarzwald*, the Danube has its source — one of the largest rivers in Europe.

The region of *Marciana Silva* was actively developed by the Romans, who left many monuments in the South. The region has many citadels and castles, including Geroldseck. In the Middle Ages, the region was almost devastated by the plague, adding the taste of Black Death, *Schwarzer Tod*, to the word “Black” in the forest’s name. In the XX century in Meßkirch in the South *Schwarzwald* lived Martin Heidegger, who taught at the University of Freiburg just a little to the north and left many memories of this forest in his works.

The reflection of the *Schwarzwald* in the traditions and legends is *Myrkvid*, *Myrkviðr*. Its name consists of the words *myrk* — dark, gloomy, and *viðr* — forest. In the sagas, this forest is the border between the Germans (Goths) and the Huns; in the Song of Atli (Attila) it is the subject of bargaining and inheritance as a territory of status, possibly a sacred space. But the semantics of *Myrkvid* — the Dark Forest — indicates that it carries the semantics close to the Titanic gloom or death. This is emphasized in Loki’s Wrangle in verse 42. In it, he replies to Freyr:

42.

“You had paid gold
to buy Gyimir's daughter
and likewise sold your sword;
but when Múspell's sons
ride across Mirkwood,
you won't know then, fool, how to
fight.”

42.

“Gulli keypta
léztu Gymis dóttur
ok seldir þitt svá sverð;
en er Múspells synir
ríða Myrkvið yfir,
veizt-a þú þá, vesall, hvé þú
vegr.”

The Titans of Muspell, according to the Völva, come from the South. *Myrkvið* as a Dark forest through which they ride and invade the Aesir is the historical *Schwarzwald*, which served as a border between the Germans and Romans in the South and Huns in the East. Here opens the horizon of archaic metaphysics of German politics: those who attack us are the sons of Muspell, the Titans of the fiery world who violated the border of the Black Forest. The Germans are on the side of the Gods at Ragnarök; those who are against them are against the German Gods. The Romans invade the lands of the Germans across the Black Forest border, but in the year 9 Teutoburg becomes the Northern border of their successful expansion. Every forest in Germany is fraught with death to its enemies.

Much later, an image of a Dark Wood is used by Dante as the space of death and the entrance to Hell. That is how the great Italian poet and Guelph begins his legendary poem:

The Divine Comedy
Inferno

When I had journeyed half of our
life's way, I found myself within a
shadowed forest, for I had lost the
path that does not stray.

La Divina Commedia
Inferno

1 Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra
vita
mi ritrovai per una *selva oscura*,
ché la diritta via era smarrita.
[...]

Ah, it is hard to speak of what it
was,
that savage forest, dense and
difficult,
which even in recall renews my
fear:
so bitter — death is hardly more
severe!

4 Ahi quanto a dir qual era è cosa
dura
esta selva selvaggia e aspra e forte
che nel pensier rinova la paura!

Dante describes the journey through the forest valley as a terrible dream, in which wild animals chase him deeper into the dark thicket, where he meets Virgil. The demonic horror of the nocturnal forest firmly persists in the Christianity of the Renaissance.

There is a forest firmly associated with the Titanic principle located in the East between Midgard and Jötunnheim — *Járnviðr*, or Iron Wood. The *Völva* says that in this forest the “old one” (old woman, crone) breeds wolves, and from this bloodline of wolves Fenrir will come — the son of Loki and Angrboda, a chthonic monster.

40.
The giantess old
in Ironwood sat,
In the east, and bore
the brood of Fenrir;
Among these one
in monster's guise
Was soon to steal
the sun from the sky.

40.
Austr sat in aldna
í Járnviði
ok fæddi þar
Fenris kindir;
verðr af þeim öllum
einna nokkurr
tungls tjúgari
í trölls hami.

In the *Prose Edda*, the High One tells us that the Iron Forest is inhabited by witches and that is why it is called so, *Járnviðr* being a kenning for the territory of witches. One of the wolves of this forest, the Moon dog, will swallow the moon, and Fenrir the sun, and that will be the beginning of Ragnarök.

Iron Forest as a Titanic space, with all its semantics and structures of poverty and god-fighting, is the archetype of the modern city, the metropolis opposing the provincial landscape, *Heimland*. Teutoburg is the embodiment of military prowess of the Germans, and the *Schwarzwald* carries borderline semantics like Odin and his syzygian duality of the warlike and ecstatic, gloomy and dark (*myrk*) dimension of the German Logos. Jarnvidr is the space of alienation, the Iron Forest of the Iron Age (*Wolfszeit*), of the non-authentic Dasein of technological civilization (O. Spengler).

The beginning of the new cycle is associated with the Hoddmímisholt forest, in which a man and a woman, Liv and Livtrasir, found refuge from the flames of Surtr. They had lived on dew there, until they came out into the light. The word Hoddmímisholt is a curious and complicated *heiti*. The first part, *hodd*, according to A. Magnusson, means “treasure” or “gold,” or “pause.” The second part, *mímis*, refers to Mimir and memory. The third one, *holt*, is an Icelandic word with the old meaning “forest” and the more modern one “bald hill” or “grove,” a small forest. Thus, Hoddmímisholt is the Golden Grove of Mimir or the Hill of Mimir’s Treasures. Another interpretation refers to a nobleman’s burial mound and is indirectly confirmed by the location of Mimir’s head beneath the earth, where he is visited by Odin. The third meaning of *Hod* adds to this space, whether it is a forest or a mound, a shade of a pause, a break, waiting between the End and a new Beginning, a new cycle. Here the forest acts as something that preserves and keeps the treasure safe in the German Logos in the era of Ragnarök. And this “gold” is people.

For the Germans, the forest is everything: power, life, the space of war, the border of the inhabited world, a refuge and even the territory of the enemies (Jötunnns), which is thought of as a certain Iron [anti] forest. Particular forests are particular manifestations of one archetypal Great German Forest.

Friedrich Hölderlin devotes his poem “The Oaks” to the forest, comparing the strength of the oak to the Titans and Gods at the

same time, in their freedom and liberty on earth and under the sky. For Hölderlin, the forest is a space of freedom and original integrity, where he wants to enter and stay, if not for the attachment to human society that burdens him. This urge is also reflected in the images of the late Ernst Jünger.

The forest acts not only as a metaphysical image, but also as a paradigm of thinking, which was extensively used by Martin Heidegger. He loved to think during his long and thoughtful walks through the *Schwarzwald*, its well-trodden and untrodden paths, which are laid by the forest itself. Sometimes, as Heidegger noticed, a clear path can simply dissolve in the grass and merge with the forest. Thus, the well-trodden (something that was *thought*) flows into the previously unimaginable and amazing. Heidegger devoted his work *Holzwege* ("Forest Trails") to the forest. Often he invited his guests to such walks; Ernst Jünger recorded the memories of one of them in his diaries.²

For Heidegger, the German forest, the particular space of the *Schwarzwald*, in which he walked and pondered, was a place of the fulfilment of the act of being and history, the moment of reflection of the past and the sketch of the future. The *Schwarzwald* around Meßkirch was particularly and literally existentially sacred to the thought of Heidegger. Through the example of a dense forest and a clearing in it, he non-dually reveals his key term ἀλήθεια. *Heidegger, as a true German, philosophizes through the forest.* The dense darkness of a forest (*Dickung*) is the thinking (*Denken*). In it, the philosopher and the poet take a walk (*Gang*) and wander on its paths (*Wege*³), entering the clearings (*Lichtungen*) of the unconcealed truth of being.

Wandering through the forest is a dive into the dark (*schwarz, Myrk*), entering the space of chaotic wildlife, a walk with a taste of death, war, sacrifices and nightly shamanic mysteries hidden from

2 See Ernst Jünger, *Seventy Years Gone By*.

3 The German word *Weg* means both "way" as a noun and "go away" as a verb (*weg-gehen*). It has a common root with the Icelandic *veg, the first root in the name of Odin *Vegtamr*, the Traveller.

prying eyes on the border with Nothingness. The borderline nature of the *Schwarzwald-Myrkvid* is the ability of the Mind to wonder and think, to move out-of-itself and back-into-itself. The opposite of sacred madness is the foolish insanity of the last people lost in the depths of Jarnvidr.

The *Schwarzwald* is located on a chain of small mountains adjacent to the Alps, which, together with the Black Forest, form the southern natural frontier; the border. mountains also play an important protective role for the Germans, starting with the Roman campaigns. Later, in the mountains hide Gods, heroes and emperors until the End of times. At the same time, according to tradition, rocks, mountains and huge boulders are frozen or sleeping giants, Thurses or Jötunnns.

Mountains imply a challenge of overcoming and conquering the peaks of the manifestation of the heroic archetype of the defeater of giants. The top of the mountain is the abode of the Gods of Olympus, a place where you can either fall or soar straight up to the divine. The mountain is a cosmological analogue of the World Tree, which is also rooted in the earth, but its top aims to the sky. The mountain peak as the point of One and the base of the mountain as the foundation of Many. Mountains can serve as an example of non-duality, since without mountains there are no valleys — the ridge of the mountain is a rise to the peak and descent into the valleys at the same time. Here we find the possibility of Odinic and philosophical interpretation of the relief and nature of German spaces.

The mountains are the embodiment of the spirit of those who conquer them; Alpine stories tell of the high-growing flower Edelweiss (*Edelweiß*—“Noble White”), which valiant young men find among inaccessible rocks and bring to beautiful maidens. Inside and under the mountains, dragons and dwarfs hide and guard the treasures that Siegfried finds (a manifestation of the Jötunn’s nature of concealment). Sweigre also goes away into an opened rock.

Romano Guardini, considering the motives of vital space in Hölderlin, speaks about the image of the mountains in his works:

The mountain is the place and expression of God's power and dominion; from here, the deity looks around countries and times, makes and weighs decisions, determining fate; the place where the throne of the "supreme power" is located. The image of the mountain merges into the image of even greater heights — the heights of ether [as the abode of the gods]. In another connection, the mountains act as a place where there appear images of sacred meaning, verbal expressions of divine wisdom and beauty.⁴

In Hölderlin's poetry, major figures are also the mountains of Greece and, more broadly, the East, the Caucasus, and his native Swabia together with the Alps, in the spirit of Hellenic-Germanic synthesis. Mountains are the essence of will and spirit and the ascension to the abode of the Gods. Their slopes are covered with Dionysian vineyards, and the descent along the mountain path can become an intoxicating metaphor — a change of the strictly Apollonian mountain vertical mode towards Dionysian playful hills, descending from the Sky to the Earth, from the Sun to the darkness of the valleys and the Night.

Analyzing the image of the rivers, especially the Rhine in his eponymous hymn "To the Rhine," Guardini shows how the image of the Alps unfolds in the poetic picture of Hölderlin: the Rhine is the father of streams and cities, to which it gave life; it is a metaphor for the flow of life of people and time, but it itself originates in the mountains; the Alps are its parents who fetter its young and turbulent stream, directing it to the valleys, where it — the Rhine — will find its maturity and completeness. Another brilliant poet, Stefan George, also dedicated several verses to the Rhine.

The top of the mountain symbolizes the peak of spiritual ascent and realization; above is only the Sky and flight. A special situation is expressed in a volcano as a mountain which has an internal dimension of the descent to the bowels of the Earth, falling into darkness. A volcano as it is, with maximum expression of domination over the

4 See Romano Guardini, "Hölderlin. The Picture of the World and the Divine Aspiration."

valleys, is the Greek Mount Etna; in the Germanic space, volcanoes are located in Iceland; there is a way to the “heart of the Earth.”

The severe nature of the mountains is clearly embodied in the Scandinavian pole of the geography of the German Logos—in the mountains and fjords of Norway and Sweden, ice and volcanoes of Iceland. Life in this space is a continuous test, a heroic deed, which fully corresponds to the German warrior spirit. Scandinavians fight with nature, which is nothing but Titanism congealed in stone. The greatness and danger of the surrounding mountains and many kilometres of ice fjords require no less greatness from a person who wants to conquer them and establish his will.⁵ Here one can see the organicist origin of the mythological (the localization and preservation of the traditional heritage longer than on the continent, and also the deep, original and strong faith dualism in the Alpine region, covering the German and Eastern Slavic peoples) and linguistic (language purism) conservatism, and also a certain detachment from the historic events in continental Europe.

In *Germania*, Tacitus describes the characteristic feature of the ancient Germans—the desire to separate their place of residence from other tribes and settlements. For the Germans, the vast free spaces around the settlement are their chosen status and “positive isolation.” It is broken by the invasion of the Romans and the Huns; the continent is rapidly becoming populous and quickly developing, spurring the resettlement of Germanic tribes and numerous clashes with the Romans, Celts and each other. The resettlement of Norwegians in Iceland and Greenland is a distant echo of the Germans’ desire to live in a sparsely populated space, where strangers are rare—scarce but free land, once again challenging the Scandinavian spirit. In this most Northern space of the German Logos, most separated from the continent, folklore and tradition are preserved. Icelandic skalds have long composed songs and sagas, mentioning animals and plants that

5 A traditionalist view of the metaphysics of the mountains was expressed by Julius Evola in his book *Meditations on the Peaks*.

are known in Norway and to the South, but which have never existed on the islands, as noted by medievalists and philologists.

The complete opposite of the forest and mountain landscape of the space of life and development of the Germans, saturated with life and height differences, aspiring from the ground to the sky in heroic deeds and mental impulses, is a flat and small-hilled desert. It can be assumed that the hot, meager and flat space of the desert would be equivalent to anti-life in general for the Germans. There are no giant mountains, with which Thor fought, there are no forests, cold shadows, swamps and so on, which means that the development of the German ambivalent ethos and way of thinking is impossible in this space. “Woe to him in whom deserts hide” — this maxim of Friedrich Nietzsche fully expresses the German spirit. In the realm of thinking and ontology, the desert is the birthplace of creationism and its metaphysics embodied in the Abrahamic religions, whose intentions are softened and compensated by Hellenic Platonism and local beliefs of various peoples.

Our thinking is possible only in the forest, for only its dense darkness carries the possibility of the clearings of insights, to which lead twisted paths of thoughts, given more volume by the shadows. The desert is the space of the self-referencing nihilism as the lack of concealment and the revealed-in-concealment. The desert postulates a rigid dualism of heaven above and earth below without clear paths and connections between them. In the desert, only the horizontal path and aspirations of blind faith are available to man, whence comes the veneration of prophets and miracles as the moments of connection with God and Heaven (from above to below). The ultimate embodiment of the desert in the intellectual space of Europe is offered by Postmodernism in the form of the concept of total immanence of the smooth flatness of J. Deleuze’s rhizome expressed in virtuality and screen. Despite the fact that the geographical landscape of Europe has not changed *de facto*, its intellectual and political state

is the embodiment of flattening, desertification, immanentization of problems and fragmentation of integrities (the grinding of mountains into sand).

In the situation of a new post-war round of desertification, Ernst Jünger describes a special *Gestalt*, to which—as to one of the options—come traditionalists and opponents of modernity. The peak of the Conservative Revolution took place during the Weimar Republic and the first years of the Third Reich, but after the war they found themselves in a deeply marginalized position, and the authorities blocked any discourse contrary to the left-liberal post-war consensus. This forced a number of thinkers who and who remained faithful to the ideals of aristocratism and Tradition to look for other ways of existence in a world of increasing pressure and decomposition, when they—once officers, ideologists, publishers and participants of different events—were in a situation of crisis and existential uncertainty.

Jünger speaks of the Forest Wanderer, *Waldgänger*⁶. In the name and the call to leave not just somewhere or from somewhere but into the Forest, hides a deep connection and a significant role of forests for the Germans. In his work, Jünger talks about a certain rebirth of dictatorship trends in the society of democracy and the fact that under the cover of electoral loyalty to the government, the people hide alienation and rejection of the regime. Political protest becomes impossible within the system. Modernity, expressed in technologization and the new media, envelops the ordinary person denser and subtler than direct propaganda.

A Walker in the Forest we call the one who in the course of great changes found himself lonely and homeless, and, in the end, saw himself consigned to destruction. This could be the fate of many, if not all—but another opportunity had to be presented. It is that the Forest Wanderer decides to resist, intending to join the struggle, most likely hopeless. Thus, the one who has gone to the Forest is the one who has kept the original connection with freedom, which from the point of view of time is expressed in the fact that

6 See Ernst Jünger, *The Forest Passage*.

he, resisting automatism, refuses to accept its ethical consequence — that is, fatalism.

Jünger maintains a specific optimism; in the last times he talks about another possibility, another path that had not been thought of before or that was hidden. The forest wanderer has a number of opposite features relative to the *Gestalt* of the Worker — the archetype of modern man fused with technology, tanks, artillery and production facilities.

Considering the power of technology and the techniques of lulling vigilance we can clearly trace Heideggerian motifs — Jünger speaks through the image of a passenger on a modern ship. While the systems of the ship are in order, the person enjoys the comfort of traveling on deck, he does not think about the mechanics and technology that comprise the ship and move it. But when a shipwreck happens, man becomes an absolute hostage of technology and its imperfections, because of which he dies. The ship is a metaphor for modern society. Jünger ponders the question of how to maintain freedom in such a situation and comes to the key idea — the call to the Retreat into the Forest. However, Jünger does not say that this retreat should be a literal flight into the forest, followed by armed guerrilla fighting. This is only a literal reading of the call, but not the only one. The Forest Wanderer is a variation of inner migration and detachment from the dominant order of the system, and this strategy resembles the position of the late Julius Evola.⁷ The Forest Wanderer can remain in society, be in sight and perform civil functions, internally staying at a distance, in the forest.

Jünger defines a number of key provisions of the *Gestalt* of the one who retreats: “no” as a fundamental and radical denial of everything, the absence of fear of death and the imperative “here and now.” In other words, a person who is in the inner forest is so detached from the surrounding environment that at any moment — here and now — he can retreat into the Forest already in reality, committing an

⁷ See Julius Evola, *Ride the Tiger*.

act of rebellion or just going into seclusion (Tacitus describes that the ancient Germans were not attached to specific places, easily moving through the forests, setting up and leaving their camps) or implementing a different strategy. The main thing is to get rid of the fear of death. To die here and now is an act of freedom, a radical “no.”

Returning to the image of the ship, Jünger says that during a shipwreck the Forest Wanderer does not panic and calmly meets the death of the ship and his own. Unfolding this metaphor, we see that it is close to the understanding of the Night in German poets and the imperative to live and comprehend the moment of one’s own death. In the Forest Wanderer’s relationship with death we can trace the existential of *Sein-zum-Tode*.

Just like Heidegger, with whom Jünger corresponded, Jünger attached great importance to language and poetry in the *Gestalt* of the one who retreated into the Forest. Language and poetry give rise to the creative force that can transform the world of decline, which he also justly identifies with the desert:

The law and the rule of all visible and even invisible kingdoms start with *naming*. The word is the building material of the spirit, and in this capacity, it serves it for the erection of the most daring bridges; and at the same time, language is the highest means of maintaining power. All conquests of countries, fulfilled and conceived, are preceded by insights, projects and spells in words and language, and even before that, in poetry. We can even say that there are two types of history: the history of the world of things and the history of the world of language; and the latter can open the possibility of not just the supreme knowledge of the world but also a more effective power. Even profanity in order to exist has to resort to this power again and again, even if it has to apply violence for this. But sickness passes and turns into poetry.

[...]

Language is weaved around silence just like an oasis grows around a spring. And the existence of poetry proves that some have already managed to enter the timeless gardens. Time lives on it.

Even in the epoch when language is reduced to an instrument of technologists and bureaucrats, and when, in order to simulate freshness, it tries to borrow things from prison slang, it still remains intact in its resting power. Dirt and dust cling only to its surface. One who digs deeper reaches water in any desert. And with the water, fertility comes back.

A veteran of two world wars, Ernst Jünger speaks of the determining role of poetry in the time of the twilight of the Sunset Land, appealing to the image of the mighty and life-asserting German Forest, through that expressing and touching upon the main strings of the German Logos in times troublesome for it. According to Jünger's definition, a writer is a *Waldgänger*.

* * *

Pondering the German landscape and Gods while walking through the *Schwarzwald* in 2015, I paid special attention to a certain natural phenomenon that radically transforms the whole landscape and can be interpreted in the language of metaphysics and mind. This phenomenon can be found in the mountains, vales, along the Rhine, in small villages and towns; in fact, it accompanied me during the whole journey through the South, in Freiburg, and in the North on my way to Paderborn.

Even in sunny weather, it is rather dark in the *Schwarzwald* thickets, but when the fog envelopes the forest, it hides everything around. The dense, grey and opaque fog entirely conceals the path and cuts a person off from the whole environment, turning any movement into a deadly risk of falling down from a rock or running into an obstacle, losing one's way completely. The fog hides everything from sight and brings the cold. The *Schwarzwald* fog in the mountains and forests differs from the fog of the Siberian steppe familiar to me, in which one can move more freely in the vast fields. But fog in the mountains is the shroud of death.

The *Schwarzwald* enshrouded in thick fog changes its essence, it becomes another forest — *Nebelwald*, the Fog Forest. The word *Nebel*,

“fog,” having one root with the Latin *nebula* and Greek νεφέλη, also has the meaning “to darken” like twilight. There is the German idiom *Nacht und Nebel*, meaning secret and hidden business or unknown circumstances concealed in fog and darkness.

Nebel is related to the word *nifl*, which is the first root of the word *Niflheim*—the Home of Darkness or the World of Ice, one of the most ancient chthonic worlds in the German-Scandinavian tradition. In the Icelandic language, fog as a natural phenomenon is denoted by the word *þuka*. It appears in a dismal part of the jarl’s *níði* (vituperative poem) in the *þáttr* of Thorleifr the Jarl’s Skald. The Jarl, dissatisfied with his strand of praise, threatens the old skald, under the guise of which Thorleifr is hiding, to kill him if he does not make a better strand. And the old one recites the Fog *Vísur* (*Þokuvísur*). We know the first four lines of its verses preserved until our days.

Fog arose to the East,
Snow and hail to the West,
From the plundered wealth
Smoke flies to the shores.

Þoku dregr upp hið ytra,
él festist hið vestra,
mökkur mun náms, af nökkvi,
naðrbings kominn hingað.

After the verse is said, the Jarl’s halls are covered in fog, in which the old mage finishes reading the *níði*. When it is finished, the weapons in the halls come into movement and kill everyone present except the Jarl, who loses his consciousness, beard and most of his hair, as well as his health. In this way, the fog of *þuka*/*þoku* relates to the magical fog bringing death.

Another word close to the semantic circle of “fog” is the word “*rökkur*” (Old Norse *rökkr*). It sounds in the word *Ragnarök* and also in *Götterdämmerung*—“the Twilight of the Gods” of Richard Wagner. The fog is related to the twilight and the time of its appearance—it comes during sunset and dissipates mainly after sunrise (although it also can stay for several days in a row), which places it in the space of the metaphysical Night and its semantic circle. The fog is something

that conceals paths and obscures sight, takes the shadows away from things and shows only their elusive silhouettes.

For the mind, fog is obscuration or intoxication; such is the poetic use of the word *Nebel*, perhaps related to the Old English word *nēowol*. The thickening of fog in the absence of the sun — Ἀπόλλων [ἔν] — hides the paths of thinking and enclouds the spaces of the clearings; fog is the delusion of the mind, the madness of the grey opaque monotony with no end or clearing. But fog is not disorder; it is the absence of the semblance of order as something present; in fact, fog is hallucinating. One of the meanings of the Latin word *allucinare* is “to wander without a purpose,” which often happens in *Nebel*.

Asserting the state of fundamental boredom as the basic mood of Dasein in our days, Heidegger compares it to the fog clouding in the abyss of *being-here*.⁸

There may also be a more Odinic (Dionysic) interpretation of the fog, relying on the poetic meaning of intoxication, related to both Greek Dionysos and Odin as the God of frenzy and altered states of consciousness. Tradition knows that he, sitting on his throne, drinks only wine or mead, which means he is always in a state of intoxication. The intoxicating mead is always the Mead of Poetry stolen by Odin, so he dwells not in the vulgar intoxication as the darkening of mind but in the poetic intoxication-as-expansion (blurring) of the boundaries of the mind. In the intoxicating evening and morning haze, the poet, sheltered from the light of the Sun that brings clarity, sharpness and prosaicism in the landscape, breaks the daytime structure of the language, sentences and word order, composing elevated, tragic poems equal to the heights of philosophical thought — the trails to the mountain peaks of being.

Schwarzwald and *Nebelwald* are, in fact, the same archetypal forest, and the words “black” and “fog” share the same semantics of twilight and sunset. Poetry includes the perspective of a non-dual

8 See Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* / §19.

understanding of the fog that envelops the forest, Germany and Europe as Hölderlin's "scarce time," the twilight of Spengler and traditionalists or Heidegger's *Daseinsnot*. The intoxicated poet stands on Gods' side, but he also sympathizes with the Titans and boldly turns his gaze into the chthonic abyss, not shunning to testify to its darkness. The thinker, in the fog of historic and noetic oblivion, looks for the signs of beyng and, listening to the future, silences-out the due-to-be-thought at the midnight hour.

Earlier we talked about *Ereignis*, highlighting the root *eigene* sounding in it, following Martin Heidegger's interpretation. But the etymology of this word leads to its old form *Er-augen*, where the word *Auge* means "eye" and, in a broader context, vision as such. *Ereignis* is [the event of] beholding, seeing.

We also meet this word in the enigmatic 28th verse of "The Prophecy of the Völva":

28	28
...	...
I know where Othin's eye is hidden, Deep in the wide-famed well of Mimir; Mead from the pledge of Othin each morn Does Mimir drink: would you know yet more?	Allt veit ek, Óðinn, hvar þú auga falt, í inum mæra Mímisbrunni. Drekkr mjöð Mímir morgun hverjan af veði Valföðrs. Vituð ér enn — eða hvat?

The völvá speaks about the eye (Old Icelandic *auga*) that was left as a pledge of the life of Mimir, the One Who Remembers. An important nuance was lost in translation — the prophetess calls Odin *Valföðr*, the God of the Fallen in battle. Mimir drinks from the stream where lies the eye — the pledge of his life, and he drinks not water but mead. Mimir is closely related to the chthonic region of the dungeon, and his stream hides under the root of Yggdrasil. There are certain semantic ties here: concealment, descent and death (val/fall), the God meeting

with memory and vision. Odin descends to Mimir before Ragnarök, where we can trace the moment of concealment and delay. Odin loses one eye, but the second one remains with him. We can identify this eye with the vision of the essence (*Augen=eigene*) and authenticity (*eigene*) of Dasein in the solar militant manifestation of the German Logos (obverse).

The descent into concealment — the coming of *der Untergang des Abendlandes* — is the acquisition of the wisdom of a different vision, a new mode of authenticity, primarily associated with the semantics of the Night and immersion into the Titanic abyss, in the darkness of which is concealed the pledge of ecstatic-transgressive (and poetic) wisdom of the inner and eschatological dimension of the German Logos and its Gods. Its acquisition is *Er-eignis*, the event of the appropriation of the lost and, for the time being, concealed vision (“eyes” again: *Augen=eigene*), in which everything appears in a different light.

Since ordinary vision is no longer enough, the eye is closed, it becomes blind, “starts blinking.” A one-eyed gaze [of the sun’s eye] cannot rip the veil of the blinding fog. German identity still cannot find the forest path to itself. Even after Going into the Forest, a person does not find that forest, a powerful life-affirming *Wald*, which is his ancient home. In the misty forest, one is like a homeless man in the heart of his home, because he cannot see and recognize it, to take root in it again and to settle his future. This is the paradox of the concealed Germany and Europe, its fate as the *Abendland*, in the spirit of Heideggerian aporias of non-dual thinking of the history of being. The longer Europe remains in this fog, the more man forgets that once there was life. And, blindly bumping into oaks and maples, he is unable to comprehend that the grey veil hides something more than itself and illusory emptiness. Behind the fog, man cannot see the trees; accidentally running into them, he still cannot see the forest. In other words, people are rapidly losing the ability to comprehend large categories and narratives, while finally losing touch with the roots, culture, language, people, homeland and its nature. The fragmented

culture becomes an object of export, an advertisement for tourists, a bunch of simulacra and an entertainment product integrated into the monotonous grey landscape of globalization. The feeling of national identity is destroyed by the policy of *diversity*, opening the abyss of the European crisis of recent years.

Only the bright light of the returning sun, the sunrise of Another Beginning, can dispel the fog of oblivion. But so far: has the fog cleared? Not yet.

XVI

Resume: the Last Horizon

THE WORD “NOSTALGIA” contains two Greek roots, νόστος — “place,” “homeland,” and άλγος — “pain.” Nostalgia is an experience of heart-ache about the lost or abandoned homeland (*Heimatland*; nostalgia in German is *Heimweh*), about what a person once saw and knew. Literally, the feeling of pain about a place that was given in perception and experience, about something concrete. Nostalgia is the dominant existential state of traditionalism; out of this pain grows the rejection of the modern world, which replaces the old order (*forneskja*) in the same space and landscape. But traditionalism itself appears in the era of Modernity and, in the words of Mark Sedgwick, is a “precursor of Postmodernity.” Traditionalists were those who, experiencing pain (άλγος), had no direct experience of the life in the traditional space (νόστος, *Heimat*) that they were longing for. This is vividly embodied in Julius Evola, “a traditionalist without tradition.” There is *pain*, but there is no experience and memory of *what* causes it and where it leads.

Apart from *Heimweh*, the idea of nostalgia in German is expressed by the complex word *Sehnsucht*. The first root is formed from the word *Sehnen*, meaning “longing,” “yearning.” The word *Sucht* means “mania” with a pronounced shade of pain and thirst.

In Greek mythology, elevated and eroticized passion or desire are personified in Aphrodite's companion Himeros (Ήμερος). In the dialogue *Symposium*, Agathon calls Eros the father of Himeros and Pothos — the incarnation of longing and the desire for unity.

Οὗτος δὲ ἡμᾶς ἀλλοτριότητος μὲν κενοί, οἰκειότητος δὲ πληροί, τὰς τοιάσδε ξυνόδους μετ' ἀλλήλων πάσας τιθεὶς ξυνιέναι, ἐν ἑορταῖς, ἐν χοροῖς, ἐν θυσίαις γιγνόμενος ἡγεμών πραότητα μὲν πορίζων, ἀγριότητα δ' ἐξορίζων-φιλόδωρος εὐμενείας, ἄδωρος δυσμενείας ἴλεως ἀγαθοῖς θεατὸς σοφοῖς, ἀγαστὸς θεοῖς-ζηλωτὸς ἀμοίροις, κτητὸς εὐμοίροις-Τρυφῆς, Ἀβρότητας, Χλιδῆς, Χαρίτων, Ἰμέρου, Πόθου πατὴρ ἐπιμελῆς ἀγαθῶν, ἀμελῆς κακῶν ἐν πόνῳ, ἐν φόβῳ, ἐν πόθῳ.

It is Love who takes from us our sense of estrangement and fills us with a sense of kinship; who causes us to associate with one another as on this occasion, and at festivals, dances and sacrifices is the guiding spirit. He imparts gentleness, he banishes harshness; he is lavish with goodwill, sparing of ill-will; he is gracious and kind; viewed with admiration by the wise and with wonder by the gods; coveted by those with no share of him, precious to those whose share is large; the father of luxury, delicacy, glamour, delight, *desire* and *longing*.¹

Passionate longing has also become a feature of man after Apollo divided the original Androgyne into two sexes on the order of Zeus. In the dialogue *Phaedrus*, Socrates points out the important role of aspiration (Πόθος) that leads a person to the knowledge of the higher spheres of life. *Sehnsucht* was one of the leading themes in German romanticism and idealism as the desire to merge with the immortal and infinite principle, to overcome the growing gap between the world and God, man and nature.

The idea of strong yearning, mania and *longing* — *Sehnsucht* — does not imply any specific place; it is a pure thirst for something unknown and uncertain, but at the same time maniacally possessing human

1 See Plato, *The Symposium* [197d], translated by M. C. Howatson (italics by the author).

existence. This obsession is like the power of Eros or the muses, the genius of poets or philosophers.

The connection of *nostalgia* and *Sehnsucht* makes the existential picture of romantics, conservative revolutionaries and traditionalists clearer. There is pain and longing, but there is no reason for it and no data in existential experience. The longing for tradition is not based on living in it. The *nostos* of tradition is available only as memories, texts, relics and artifacts. It is in the past, but not in the present. This is the existential state of Hölderlin's "meager times," the decline, the Iron Age. There is nostalgia without a "homeland," but at the same time it is felt towards the sacred (oriented to *something*) *Sehnsucht*.

Sehnsucht is peculiar to poets, writers, philosophers and conservatives close to the element of war. In other words, to all those who can be considered people. On the opposite pole there is the mode of existence of the "last people." They do not feel nostalgia for the past, gods and myth, but praise progress and movement into the future, the "bright tomorrow of humankind" and the disenchantment of the world. When it comes to Tradition, authentic existence, the highest ideas and meanings of human existence and man's fundamental ontological role in the history of being, *Sehnsucht* does not flare up inside them. But from the depths of their material being awakens hysterical *Eifersucht* — jealousy, from the German word *Eifer* — "zeal," "passion," with an undertone of pain expressed in *Sucht*. Sick jealousy is a trait of the Titans and the last people who see the Gods and [real] people close to them. In love affairs, jealousy is expressed as the unhealthy desire of undivided possession of the object of love — it is easy to recognize the Titanic nature of the Jötunns, devouring and hiding in their insides everything they can reach. Titanism conceals man from the light rays of the Gods, because contact with them is the threat of being deprived of the object of one's love and exposing one's own essential poverty and inferiority. *Eifersucht* of the last people is the fear and hatred of the Gods, Mind, thinking, poetry and philosophy;

the substitution of the supreme for the comfortable and convenient, meaningless simulacra.

The word *Sehnsucht* sometimes acts as a synonym of the word “boredom.” *Sehnsucht* is inherent in those who seek their homeland, and who therefore, one way or another—for example, through the denial of the surrounding non-homeland—distinguish the signs of the Gods in the Night. They do not miss something but they long for it. Longing is not in vain and not empty, it is wearisome and active, it contains meaning and message, related to what a person yearns for. The negative reflection of longing is boredom, when *nostos* disappears from *nostalgia*—there is no more reason for pain, the meaning disappears from *Sehnsucht*, along with *Sucht*. Senseless longing is boredom, when a person does not know what to do with himself and can not comprehend the causes of time flowing to nowhere. Then he plunges into the abyss of movement, eventfulness, holidays, events, conferences, concerts, films, tourism and so on and so forth. And all sorts of attempts at role-playing tradition and reconstructing it, clubs of historical reenactment and almost all of contemporary Heathenry in Europe, USA and Russia, take their rightful place in this series. All this has an external character and is meant to anesthetize the feeling of loss of time and meaning. Man tries to fill the empty time with something. Finally, there comes the moment when he is immersed in boredom so much that he stops perceiving himself as someone who is bored. The night of his existence becomes so dense that he forgets that there was once light and nostalgia for it.

Philosophy in Ancient Greece began with the wonder of the world—it was the basic mood of *Dasein* at the time of the First Beginning of Western thinking, its existence and man. In the heart of the 20th century, at the end of this Beginning, Martin Heidegger concludes that the basic mood of *Dasein* is boredom. *Dasein* is bored, people and history are boring to it as nothing happens in them.² The

2 See Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts Of Metaphysics*.

most radical and hopeless form of boredom is when man forgets that he is the “one who is bored” and the unawareness of the surrounding boredom. Between wonder at the beginning and boredom at the end there lies Sehnsucht-Nostalgia, the mood of Dasein in those few who penetrate into the metaphysics and history of beyng, and witness that beyng has abandoned the world.

The place towards which the nostalgia is felt is *da* in *Da-Sein*, the place of “here,” in which Seyn-beyng reveals itself. The state of *Sucht* (mania, attraction) precedes the final need (*Not, Daseinsnot*) of the epoch from which Heidegger calls to find the path to Dasein. By changing the letter *h* to *y*, we get *Seynsucht*—the thirst and the longing for *beyng*.

And here again the specifics of the meaning of the word *Sehnsucht* manifests itself. Recently we talked about Sehnsucht-Nostalgia of traditionalism as the longing for the past and the thirst for restoration based on the tradition and Platonism, and generally about the hope of bringing back what *had been*, with allowance for what *is* (here is a dialectic: thesis-antithesis-synthesis). But the meaning of *Sehnsucht* implies pointless longing and thirst; we only accentuated it by looking back. This means that nothing prevents us from looking before us and interpreting Sehnsucht-Seynsucht as the longing for Another Beginning, which is absolutely unknown, which has never been given in experience and existence, and which cannot be read in ancient texts. From this state, we understand our foreignness to the space of “here,” but looking around we are searching for a home, a Fatherland, not in the past but in the future, which is absolutely unknown to us and lives beyond the distant horizon of any “tomorrow,” rooted in the same already finished “here.” And we can only engage in questioning, which is again done only by a few, whom Heidegger called “the single,” *Einzelne*. A number of enigmatic entries in the *Black Notebooks* are devoted to them.

Those few single ones who inquire about Another Beginning are even more sparse and scattered these days. But the dizzying

bottomlessness of their questioning bring them together in a union that is hidden from themselves. After all, a meeting of singles can only happen in solitude.

Who are these [people] who establish Being and think the truth of Being? Strangers in existence, strange to everyone, well acquainted only with what they are looking for; for in the search there is a most bottomless proximity to the find, to what, in its concealment, only draws us on.

The image of the “strangers in being” refers to the state of the *Unheimische*. The thinkers of the future are strangers in the modern age, which is non-being; it is *being*, abandoned by *beyng* and deprived of its essence; hence the desire to found — to find-out and to silence-out — their own country (*Heimatland*), the place of *da* for *Dasein*.

And further:

Every *transitional* thinker who crosses the borders necessarily dwells in the twilight of his inherent duality. Everything seems to be pointing back to the past and amenable to calculation from there, but at the same time it is a rejection of the past and a random establishment of some future (*Künftiges*) that seems to be missing futurity (*Zukunft*). He has no “place to go” — but this homelessness is his incomprehensible belonging to the land in the concealed history of Being.

Heidegger also paid great attention to the category of people (*Volk*), its role and place in the history of *beyng* and the structure of *das Geviert*, sometimes putting it in the place of “mortals” on the axis of the Gods-mortals. Contrary to the idea of constructivism, according to which a people is an artificial assemblage of a whole from the sum of single individuals, citizens, M. Heidegger writes that the concept of a people is not quantitative but qualitative. The mass is not a people, already not a people and not yet a people; the mass is *das Man*. But the single ones, the few, are those who are the voice of the people. If the spirit of the people lives in them, they are open to its existence and are immersed in it, then through them the people speaks. Mainly these are

poets, artists, philosophers and rulers. The case of Heidegger himself (or E. Jünger), who lived and philosophized in the province, in close proximity to peasants and artisans, speaks of the need for harmony and integrity of the common people and those who are the voice. For they speak not for themselves, they bear the existential and historic responsibility of the *word* for the whole people.

Even when:

...people will again take no notice of the warnings (*Mahnmal*) of the great questioners—because people are cheerful and happy because of the possession of the “truth,” and can keep questioning away from them as a dubious sign of weakness, or even abandon it for good.

Even then, the single ones are responsible for them, like the driver rules the carriage and pacifies the rebellious horses. Like a sighted one in darkness leads the bereaved people to the light. Where are these few today, scattered in the fog-enshrouded forest, those who must break the veil of silence with their speechlessness, from which a new word of the German Logos will be born?

Or Death?

Man in his being is immersed in being, but by virtue of his anthropology he is open to Nothingness as the truth of being, and this is his uniqueness as a special instance in being. In his existence in the midst of being, man has the ability to create a new being and through this creation to dominate it, man has τέχνη. Martin Heidegger sees *techne* as the fate of Western man laid by the ancient Greeks. At first, τέχνη concerns only what is external to human existence, craft and production. In the world of Tradition, craft and production are included in the hierarchy of Divine emanations and demiurgy, the archetype of which is the Platonic demiurge who creates the phenomenal world contemplating the supreme world of ideas. A thing is the embodiment of an idea in form, in this being close to *poesis*.

The ontology of creationism gives an impetus to an even more imperious realization of τέχνη, since the nature surrounding man is even more demonized; he postulates the difference between God and the world, and, consequently, placing existence over being, and the sterilization of the latter.

In the disenchanting world of the concealed Gods, the power of τέχνη grows, which Jünger expresses in the Gestalt of *der Arbeiter*, the Worker. But moreover, man turns τέχνη on himself. Since the essence of *techne* is the production and manipulation of being, and man in one of his roots is also being (albeit special), it opens the boundaries to the production and reconfiguration of himself and his nature. Man becomes *work*, the process of self-production, in which he falls deeper into being and moves away from being, his home in history.

Man and society turn into a constructor, which they themselves assemble using the criteria of citizenship and freedoms (liberalism), classes and economic relations (Marx and economic liberalism), nation and race (the ideology of the third way) or biology and physiology, in the field of taxonomy of animal species. In the relationship of the authorities and society, Michel Foucault reveals the essence and mechanisms of biopolitics in the transformation of the population, making them acquire features necessary to the authorities, including both physiological qualities and opinions.

Postmodernity makes the next move. Manipulations with man-as-being become an endless process embodied in the left-liberal ideology of identity and its boundless and kaleidoscopic variability: gender, racial, subcultural, religious, behavioural, etc. The ultimate anti-anthropological vector is the doctrine of transhumanism and the concept of posthuman as a machine or virtual consciousness without biological parts.

The process of fragmentation of identities (individuality becomes dividuality) reveals its nihilism. Man who perceives himself as just being thereby powerfully destroys himself in τέχνη and technology. In this we can recognize the will to power over oneself and one's essence,

to freedom from order expressed in the infinite variability of combinations. The chthonic Titanism of the abandonment-by-God-and-being in the language of traditionalism.

By destroying himself, man brings himself to nothing, a negative dynamic identity. Any fixation of the status of the *dividual* is an act of fascism, an invasion into the cozy world and the setting of boundaries in it, *terminus* — which means the [political] dictatorship of the word. Nihilism is a process that goes into nothing, the anthropological Night of man, in which it is possible [is it?] to turn from *Nihil* to *Nichts*, from nihilism as the process of oblivion to Nothingness as the truth of being exposed in the nullification of being between the grindstones of τέχνη. M. Heidegger uses the term *Gestell* to refer to the work of man on the destruction of himself and being — and in this, therefore, he destroys the entire structure of *das Geviert*: he frightens the Gods away and banishes them; he turns the earth into a deposit of resources and raw materials; he interprets the sky as the material lower boundary of dead space; he abandons the people; he turns the thing into a commodity and, later, into a trademark, a simulacrum of the sign.

The word *Gestell* is translated as “frame(work)” or “stand.” *Gestell* is the essence of technology and a new — the last one — way of existence of man and the appearance of being. *Gestell* is a negative reflection of poetry at the end of history. Being can be manifested in the world only through technical production, which captures man and he exists only through it. *Gestell* expresses the current state of technological development and the occupation of human existence and the natural world by technology. It is the essence of nihilism that lies in the oblivion of Nothing and the busy structuring of being.³ After all, *Gestell* is all that is fashionable and up-to-date; comfortable and representative (Heidegger did not live up to the triumph of the postmodern semiurgy — the shift from the production of gadgets and things to the production and distribution of signs and trademarks, but we believe

3 See Martin Heidegger, “Hegel.”

that it generally continues and deepens the essence and the grip of *Gestell*).

In the XX century, Heidegger said that Germany was caught in the clutches between America and Russia, which expressed the two poles of liberal degeneration and the *Machenschaft* of Sovietism. But Heidegger did not see the present days when there is no Soviet Union and America has moved on the last path even further. Today, Europe is trapped in the grip of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on the one hand (the Internet of things; the transformation of social institutions and states into services and applications; the transfer of production functions from humans to robots and artificial intelligence; the virtualization of the economy and society) and Islam on the other (the collapse of the post-colonial *status quo* in the East; the rise of Islamic radicalism and terrorism; the migration, demographic, and identity crisis in Europe).

* * *

In this situation, it looks more and more likely that Europe (and its man) take the final decision *not to be*. Europe is going towards its death, it is committing suicide. But it is not done consciously, because the modern man and his Europe are, in fact, anti-Europe and post-man who is deprived of space (*da*) and the authority to decide on the *er-eigene des Dasein*. Germany and Europe are dying, but this is not an authentic death. It is not recognized as the inevitable horizon of *Sein-zum-Tode*, but only euphemized and otherwise removed from the field of vision and thought.

Is it possible that the *Sehnsucht* of those single ones in whom the voice of the people dwells and resounds has turned into *Todesehnsucht* — the thirst for death? In death, many romantics and poets saw the path to finding a home, which the modern world ceased to be. The participants of the mysteries and even Odin himself saw a path to wisdom and rebirth in death. Is it possible that their silence is a gesture sanctioning the current state of affairs as the desire to die

and destroy everything? If this is so, and death is the final fate, which, however, has never been questioned in other cases, it should be experienced with dignity and authenticity.

The right comprehension and experience of death in the heart of oblivion is fulfilled by those few who carry the silent voice of the people, who in its death reveal the space of fundamental questioning about this people's future [the Beginning]. And the existential alienation from the homeland is their tragedy and the cause of their longing.

But if we are wrong, then the further fate of Europe is decay and decomposition of its own corpse, which will provide enough heat for a comfortable existence of the South and attract scavengers and parasites. The horizon of the end of the world, Ragnarök, will be passed unnoticed. No one will come to Vigrid, the fire of war will go out without flaming. The eternal today of the posthistoric world will reign. Or it will be swept away by another great migration. In any case, Europe, and with it Scandinavia, Germany and all those who were affected by its Logos in history, will disappear from the face of history, leaving behind a mountain of forgotten monuments that inherit the fate of Syrian Palmyra.

In this perspective, we can recall the exclamation of Hesiod and proceed from it, saying that it is best for all humankind to commit suicide literally and devastate the globe in the most literal sense. For such a fate is better than a straw death in the foggy delirium of non-self. A global sacrifice in the last flame of the funeral pyre of humankind.

Speaking about the decline of Europe, Julius Evola remained optimistic and argued that if Europe was the first to enter the period of decline and darkness, then its fate is to be the first to come out of it, and to be reborn.

On the contrary, Martin Heidegger in his last interview to “Der Spiegel” magazine, in the second half of the XX century and already after the death of Julius Evola, said that only a God can save Europe — and us. A God is the last hope when man [still] does not dare or when his decision is to refuse.

The Last God

The eschatology of *beyng* is realized in the fulfilment of *Ereignis* — en-owning, possession and assimilation of *Dasein* by man [by those whom Heidegger called the single or the upcoming] in the age of the End. Martin Heidegger linked this moment to the arrival of a special figure to whom he devotes the most enigmatic few passages — the Last God, *der letzte Gott*.

The Last God is not a God from any tradition and is not associated with the eschatological figures of German-Scandinavian mythology, who also come and go in the context of Ragnarök: Odin, Baldr or the Lord of the World from the 65th verse of the Prophecy of the *Völva*; he is not associated with Dionysus — the God of metaphormoses and sudden theophanies. The Last God is a previously unknown figure, of which there is no word or prophecy in any tradition.⁴ This is the purely philosophical God of Martin Heidegger — he is his poet, prophet, conjurer and questioner — and the philosophy of Another Beginning, which comes *only once*, and its theophany is fleeting.

In Heidegger's *Black Notebooks*, the Last God is also called The Other God, different from those known to us, who are no longer able to help us in the matter of the decision of the question of *beyng*. Here the difference between man and the Gods/the Last God is indicative. A common traditionalist vision tells us that in meager times man needs the Gods — the sacred, the hierarchy and the order — hence the craving for literal or dialectical restoration, the calling out to the Gods and the longing for their return. For the majority of human masses, the Gods are not needed and not interesting, and thus they are interesting to the Last God. But the Last God or The Other God is extremely interested in those singular ones and future people who are the voice of the people, and from the space of the time of the End question *beyng*. The Last God *needs man to prepare* the *Ereignis* at the moment of which he will come.

4 A God without Tradition and a traditionalist without Tradition — are they close?

The Other God needs us — this phrase can be put into the following form: Being, coming out into its truth as an en-owning, being a gap for the Divine and thus “being,” forces man to move into Da-sein and become its guardian. Will man be sufficiently “strong” to become this — that is, will he turn to the bottomlessness of Being once again, or will he persevere until the end, stuck in his “own” — “affairs” and “experiences”?⁵

The event of the appearance of the Last God is hinged on man’s decision about Dasein and his witnessing of the truth of beyng. The openness to beyng affirms the space for the sacred, and it allows the Gods to come together in the decision to be like Gods.

In the figure of the Last God we can detect (to the extent possible and permissible) Hellenic and Teutonic traits: his subtlety in view of the preparing-beforehand, silencing-out questioning of the few and the avoidance of noisy and swarming masses of *das Man* is similar to the fair and easily-scared Gods of Hellas, who flee from man when suddenly meeting him; on the other hand, the eschatological nature of the context of his appearance, the detachment, the passage in silence and the scarcely perceptible hint in the direction of man are congenial to Teutonic gloom, devoid of Dionysian-Bacchanalian indolence and aesthetics. But the Last God is not warlike and not ecstatic; he is not summoned by a militant roar in battle, or ecstatic rhythms of skalds, or intricacies of poetic language. The arrival of the Last God is silenced-out, and in the silenced-out speechlessness of the deafening quietness he does not so much come to us, approaches and remains among us as the one who came, but walks past us in the distance, giving us a subtle sign (*Wink*; a nod, a sign, a hint).

Heidegger describes the nod of the Last God as the ripening of *Seyn*-beyng from its Beginning to its End, like a fruit grows and ripens to the readiness to be plucked and granted by God. From here, one can interpret the situation of the oblivion of beyng and the involution of the world as the process of ripening of a fruit on a branch,

5 See Martin Heidegger, “Ponderings II–VI: Black Notebooks 1931–1938.”

which sooner or later must fall [be plucked?] and be sacrificed. The myth suggests an analogy with the apples of the Goddess Idunn, the wife of the God of poetry and eloquence Bragi, which supported the youth and unfading life of the Aesir. Idunn was once abducted and concealed in Jötunnheim, and returned afterwards; this plot pictures a typical Titanic gesture of stealing and appropriating the sacred attributes of the Gods.

The sunset of beyng — reflected in the fall of man, the loss of authenticity of the German Logos and Europe as a whole — is a process of natural movement from the Beginning of Western philosophy to its End, understood as the natural ripening of the results hidden in the seed of this fruit. But this “ripening” is not “rotting”; the End present around us should be understood as a positive possibility of proper maturation and comprehension of this maturation as a token of something new. Death is the moment of natural and long-awaited separation of the fruit from the nourishing branch and roots.

The last God is not the God of the End — not the ending but the beginning God. His nod, hint, or timid sign are evidence of the accomplishment of the Event and the New Beginning, the moment of the unconcealment of beyng in it. He passes and nods: the event has happened.

Heidegger has the following passage:

The Last God.

The utmostly-coming in its arriving, which, when constituted, happens as an event.

The coming as the essence of being.

Ask Seyn-being itself! And in its silence, God will answer as the Beginning of the word.

You can go round the entire being, but you will never get on the trail of God.⁶

6 See Martin Heidegger, *Geschichte des Seyns* (1938/1940).

Heidegger speaks of questioning of beyng (*Frage des Seyns!*)—it is done by philosophers, the last ones in scarce time. And beyng answers, and its answer is the word (*Wort*), but the Beginning of the word is the silence in which God hides-and-appears. Silence is his space; from it he is silenced-out; that is, he comes out and answers the pre-word, pre-sound, pre-language. In everyday speech, our attention slides past the silence (as the moment of death—the space between Yr and Algiz—is euphemized in tradition as the heroization of the fallen and the hope for his posthumous glory and Valhalla) preceding the spoken word. But it is in this, from this, and by this very silence that the Last God reveals himself. In this he is different from all that has already been said and manifested as being, going around which we can find no trace of him. For he dwells in silence and speechlessness of beyng, from the Void of which his abundance storms down on us in the language. The coming of the Last God is a New Beginning of the limitless possibilities of fate, writes Heidegger.

But the Last God himself does not create anything and does not guarantee any order. He just gives a hint, a slight nod somewhere in our direction, passing us by in response to our invitation. Or he may not come at all.

The single ones will meet with the Gods at the *Thing* in the “gloomy land, in the lightless realm,” in the light of the blazing fire of Seyn-beyng, and man will see the last God passing in the distance.

The appearance of the Last God is [his] sign for the transient wanderers.

His sign (*Wink*) is a sign of the accomplishment of the transition from *Untergang* to *Aufgang*.

His time is the silent moment of Midnight.

He appears before us on the other side of death.

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