

Part I: History of Modern Philosophy

§ 1

The task of the modern era was the realisation and humanisation of God – the transformation and dissolution of theology into anthropology.

§ 2 Protestantism

The *religious* or *practical* form of this humanisation was Protestantism. The God who is man, that is to say the human God, Christ, this and only this is the God of Protestantism. Unlike Catholicism, Protestantism is no longer concerned with what God is in himself, but only with what he is for man; hence, it knows no speculative or contemplative tendency like Catholicism. It has ceased to be *theology* – it is essentially *Christology*; that is, *religious anthropology*.

§ 3

However, Protestantism negated God-in-himself or God as God – for only God-in-himself is, strictly speaking, God – *only in practice*; theoretically, it left him intact. He *exists*; however, not for man; that is, the *religious* man. He is a transcendent being or a being that will one day become an object *for man* up there in heaven. But that which is *other-worldly* to religion, is *this-worldly* to philosophy; what does not constitute an object for the former, does so precisely for the latter.

§ 4

The *rational* or *theoretical* assimilation and dissolution of the God who is other-worldly to religion, and hence *not given to it as an object*, is the speculative philosophy.

§ 5

The essence of speculative philosophy is nothing other than the *rationalised, realised, actualised essence of God*. The speculative philosophy is the *true, consistent, rational* theology.

§ 6 Theism

Taken as an *intelligible (geistig)* or an *abstract being*, that is, regarded *neither* as human nor as sensuous, but rather as one that is an *object for and accessible only to reason or intelligence*, God qua God is *nothing but the essence of reason* itself. But, *basing themselves rather on imagination, ordinary theology and Theism regard him as an independent being existing separately from reason*. Under these circumstances, it is an inner, a sacred *necessity* that the essence of reason as distinguished from reason itself be at last *identified* with it and the divine being thus be apprehended, realised, as the *essence* of reason. It is on this necessity that *the great historical significance of speculative philosophy* rests. The proof of the proposition that the divine essence is the essence of reason or intelligence lies in the fact that the *determinations or qualities of God*, in so far as they are *rational or intelligible* and not determinations of sensuousness or imagination, are, in fact, *qualities of reason*.

“*God is the infinite being or the being without any limitations whatsoever.*” But what cannot be a limit or boundary on God can also not be a limit or boundary on reason. If, for example, God is elevated above all limitations of sensuousness, so, too, is reason. He who cannot conceive of any entity except as sensuous, that is, he whose reason is limited by

sensuousness, can only have a God who is limited by sensuousness. Reason, which conceives God as an infinite being, conceives, in point of fact, *its own* infinity in God. What is divine to reason is also truly *rational* to it, or in other words, it is a being that perfectly corresponds to and satisfies it. That, however, in which a being finds satisfaction, is nothing but the being *in which it encounters itself as its own object*. He who finds satisfaction in a philosopher is himself of a philosophical nature. That he is of this nature is precisely what he and others encounter in this satisfaction. Reason “does not, however, pause at the finite, sensuous things; it finds satisfaction in the infinite being alone” – that is to say, the essence of reason is disclosed to us primarily in the infinite being.

“*God is the necessary being.*” But his necessity rests on the ground that he is a *rational, intelligent* being. The ground for what the world or matter is does not lie in the world or matter itself, for it is completely indifferent to whether it is or is not, or to why it is so and not otherwise. [It is quite obvious that here, as in all sections where the problem is to deal with, and present the development, of historical phenomena, I do not speak and argue from my point of view, but rather let each phenomenon speak for itself. This applies to my treatment of theism here.] Hence, it must necessarily presuppose another being as its cause, a being that is *intelligent and self-conscious* and acts according to reasons and goals. For if this being were to be conceived of as lacking intelligence, the question as to its own ground must arise again. The primary and the highest being rests, therefore, on the presupposition that the *intellect* alone is the being that is *primary, highest, necessary, and true*. Just as the truth and reality of metaphysical or onto-theological determinations depend on their reducibility to psychological or rather anthropological determinations, so the necessity of the divine being in the old metaphysics or onto-theology has meaning, truth, and reality only in the psychological or anthropological characterisation of God as an intelligent being. The

necessary being is one that it is necessary to think of, that must be affirmed absolutely and which it is simply impossible to deny or annul, but only to the extent to which it is a *thinking being itself*. Thus, it is its own necessity and reality which reason *demonstrates* in the necessary being.

“*God is unconditional, general – 'God is not this or that particular thing' – immutable, eternal, or timeless being.*” But absoluteness, immutability, eternality, and generality are, according to the judgment of metaphysical theology itself, also qualities of the truths or laws of reason, and hence the qualities of reason itself; for what else are these immutable, general, absolute, and universally valid truths of reason if not expressions of the essence of reason itself?

“*God is the independent, autonomous being not requiring any other being in order to exist, hence subsisting entirely by and through itself.*” But even this abstract, metaphysical characterisation has meaning and reality only as a definition of the essence of intelligence and, as such, it states only that God is a thinking and intelligent being or, vice versa, that the thinking being is the divine being; for only a *sensuous* being will need some other being outside itself in order to exist. I need air to breathe, water to drink, light to be able to see, plants and animals to eat, but nothing – not directly at any rate – in order to think. I cannot conceive of a breathing being without air, nor of a seeing being without light, but I can conceive of a thinking being as existing in complete isolation. A breathing being is *necessarily* referred to a being outside itself, that is to say, it has the *essential* object, through which it is what it is, *outside itself*, but the thinking being is *referred only to itself*, is its own object, carries its essence within itself and is what it is only through itself.

§ 7 Subject & Object

That which is *object in theism* is subject in *speculative philosophy*. That which is only the conceived and *imagined* essence of reason in theism, is the *thinking* essence of reason itself in speculative philosophy.

The theist represents to himself God as a *personal* being *existing outside reason* and man; as a subject, he thinks God as an object. He conceives God as a being, i.e., as an *intelligible, non-sensuous* being with regard to his idea of it, but as a *sensuous* being with respect to its actual *existence* or its *truth*; for the *essential characteristic* of an objective existence; i.e., of an existence outside thought or perception, is *sensuousness*. He distinguishes God from himself in the same sense in which he distinguishes the sensuous objects and beings from himself as existing outside himself; in short, he thinks God from the *standpoint of sensuousness*. In contrast to this, the speculative theologian or philosopher thinks of God from the *standpoint* of thought, that is why the distracting idea of a sensuous being does not interpose itself between him and God; and, thus unhindered, he identifies the objective, conceived being with the *subjective, thinking* being.

The inner necessity by which God is turned from an *object* of man into his *subject, into his thinking ego*, can be demonstrated more specifically in the following way: God is an object of man and of man alone and not of the animal. However, *what* a being is can be known only through its *object*; the object to which a being is necessarily related is nothing but its own *manifest* being. Thus, the object of the herbivorous animals is the plant; it is, however, precisely through their object that these are distinguished from other animals, the carnivorous ones. Similarly, the object of the eye is light and not sound or smell, it is through this object that the eye reveals its essence to us. It therefore comes down to the same thing whether someone cannot see or has no eyes. That is also why we name things in life with respect to their objects. The eye is the “light organ.” He who cultivates land is a land cultivator (peasant); someone

else, the object of whose activity is hunting, is a hunter; he who catches fish is a fisher, and so forth. Now, if God is an object of man – and he is indeed that necessarily and essentially – the essence of this object expresses nothing but man's own essence. imagine to yourself that a thinking being on some planet, or even on a comet, happened to glance at a few paragraphs of Christian dogmatics dealing with the being of God. What would this being infer from these paragraphs? Perhaps the existence of a God in the sense of Christian dogmatics? No, its inference would be that the earth, too, is inhabited by thinking beings; in their definitions of God, it would discover only the definitions of their own essence. For example, in the definition “God is spirit,” it would only see the proof and expression of their own spirit; in short, it would infer the essence and the qualities of the subject from those of the object. And with complete justification, because in the case of *this particular* object the distinction between what the object is in itself and what it is for man dissolves itself. This distinction is valid only in the case of an object which is given in immediate sense perception and which, precisely for that reason, is also given to other beings besides man. Light is there not only for man; it also affects animals, plants, and inorganic substances; it is a being of a general nature. In order to know what light is, we therefore observe not only the impressions and effects it makes upon ourselves, but also upon beings different from us. Hence, in this context, the distinction between the object *in itself* and the object *for us*, that is, between the object in reality and the object in our thought and imagination is necessary and objectively founded. God, however, is an object *only* for man. Animals and stars praise God *only in a human sense*. It belongs therefore to the essence of God himself that he is not an object of any other being except man, that he is a specifically human object, that he is a secret of man. But, if God is an object *only* for man, what does his essence disclose to us? Nothing but the essence of man. He whose object is the highest being is himself the highest being. The more man is the object of animals, the higher they

must rank, and the closer must their approximation be to man. An animal whose object was man qua man, that is, man in his specific human nature, would itself be a man and no longer simply an animal. Only equal beings are equal objects for one another; that is, beings as they are *in themselves*. Now, it is true that theism, too, knows the identity of the divine and the human essence, but this identity forms its object only as *sensuous* identity, only as *similarity or affinity*, because, even if it grounds the essence of God in the spirit, it conceives God as a sensuous being existing outside man. Affinity expresses the same thing as identity; but concurrently connected with it is the sensuous idea that the related beings are two independents; that is, sensuous, beings existing apart from each other.

§ 8 Theology & Philosophy

Ordinary theology turns the *standpoint of man* into the *standpoint of God*; by contrast, the *speculative* theology turns the *standpoint of God* into the *standpoint of man*, or rather into that of the *thinker*.

For ordinary theology, God is an object just like any other sensuous object; but, at the same time, he is also a subject for it, and, indeed, just like the human subject. God creates things that are apart from *himself*, he is referred back to himself in a reflexive self-relationship and is related to other things existing apart from him; he both loves and contemplates himself simultaneously with other beings. In short, man makes his thoughts, even his feelings, the thoughts and feelings of God; his own essence and standpoint are made the essence and standpoint of God. Speculative theology, however, reverses this.

In ordinary theology, God is thus a *contradiction with himself*, for he is supposed to be a non-human, a *super-human* being, and yet with respect to all his determinations, he is in truth only a human being. In speculative theology or philosophy on the other hand, God is in *contradiction to man*;

he is supposed to be the essence of man – at any rate of reason – but he is in truth a non-human, a super-human, that is, an abstract being. In ordinary theology, the super-human God is only an edifying phrase, a mere idea, a toy of fantasy; in speculative philosophy, on the other hand, he is truth, bitter seriousness. The acute contradiction experienced by speculative philosophy arose from the fact that it turned God, who in theism is merely a being of fantasy, an indefinite, nebulous and remote being, into a definite and encounterable being, thus destroying the illusory magic which a distant being has in the blue haze of the imagination. No wonder then that the theists have been vexed by the circumstance that although Hegel's *Logic* understands itself as the presentation of God in his eternal, world-antecedent essence, it nevertheless deals – for example, in the doctrine of magnitude – with extensive and intensive quantity, fractions, powers, proportions, etc. How, they exclaimed in horror, can this God be our God? And yet, what else is this God if not the God of theism who has been drawn out of the fog of the imagination and brought into the light of the determining thought; the God of theism who has created and ordered everything according to measure, number and weight taken, so to speak, by his word? If God has ordered and created everything according to number and measure; that is, if measure and number, before they assumed reality in things existing apart from God, were contained in the intelligence and, hence, in the essence of God – and there is no difference between God's intelligence and his essence – does not, then, mathematics, too, belong to the mysteries of theology? But of course there is a world of difference between what something appears to be in the imagination and what it is in truth and reality. No wonder then that the one and the same thing appears as two completely different things to those who rely only on appearance.

§ 9

The essential qualities or predicates of the Divine Being are the essential qualities or predicates of speculative philosophy.

§ 10 Speculative Philosophy

God is pure spirit, pure essence, pure activity – *actus purus* – without passions, without predicates imposed from outside, without sensuousness, without matter. The speculative philosophy is this *pure spirit, this pure activity realised as an act of thought – the absolute being as absolute thought.*

Just as once the abstraction from all that is sensuous and material was the necessary condition of theology, so it was also the necessary condition of speculative philosophy, the only difference being that the abstraction of theology was itself a sensuous abstraction (or ascetics) because its object, although arrived at through abstraction, was nevertheless conceived as a sensuous being, whereas the abstraction of speculative philosophy is only spiritual and ideated, having only a scientific or theoretical, but no practical, meaning. The beginning of Cartesian philosophy – namely, the abstraction from sensuousness and matter – is also the beginning of modern speculative philosophy. But Descartes and Leibniz regarded this abstraction only as a subjective condition for cognising the non-material being of God; they conceived the non-materiality of God as an *objective quality independent* of abstraction and thought. Theirs was still the standpoint of theism, that is to say, they considered the non-material being as the *object* and not as the *subject*, i.e., the *active principle*, the real *essence* of philosophy itself. It is of course true that God, in both Descartes and Leibniz is the principle of philosophy, but only as an *object distinguished* from thought and hence a principle only in a general sense and only imagination, but not in reality and truth. God is only the *first* and the *general* cause of matter, movement, and activity; the particular movements and activities, the definite and concrete material things are,

however, considered and cognised independently of God. Leibniz and Descartes are idealists only in a general sense, but when it comes to particular things they are materialists. God is the only consistent, perfect, and true idealist because he alone perceives things in complete freedom from darkness or, in the sense of Leibniz's philosophy, without the mediation of the senses and the imagination; he is pure intellect, that is, pure in the sense of being separated from all sensuousness and materiality; for him, material things are therefore pure creatures of the intellect, pure thoughts; for him, matter does not exist at all because its possibility is anchored only in dark, that is, sensuous, perceptions. And yet man, according to Leibniz, carries within himself a good portion of idealism, for how else would it be possible for him to conceive a non-material being without possessing a non-material faculty and, consequently, non-material perceptions? In addition to the senses and the imagination, man possesses intellect and the intellect is precisely a non-material, a *pure* being because it thinks; the human intellect, however, is not *quite* as pure as the divine intellect or the Divine Being because it lacks pure infinity and extension. Man, or rather this man Leibniz, is therefore only a *partial*, a *semi-idealist*, whereas *God* alone is a *complete idealist*, "*the Perfect Philosopher*" as Wolff expressly calls him. This means that God is the idea underlying the absolute idealism of the later speculative philosophy, but only in its completed form and only as unfolded in all its details. For what after all is the intellect and what, in general, the essence of God? Nothing other than the intellect and nothing other than the essence of man, though severed from the determinations that, at a given time, constitute the limitations of man, no matter whether real or imaginary. He whose intellect is not at odds with his senses, he who does not take the senses to be a limitation, also does not take the intellect without the senses to be the highest, the true intellect. What else is the idea of a thing if not its essence having been purged of the limitations and obscurations to which it is subject on account of its coexistence with other things in reality? Thus,

according to Leibniz, the limitation of the human intellect arises out of the fact that it is burdened with materialism, that is to say, with dark perceptions; and these dark perceptions spring only from the circumstance that the being of man is interrelated with other beings, that it finds itself in the context of the world. This relatedness, however, does not apply to the essence of the intellect; rather, it is in contradiction to it, because the intellect *in itself*; that is, according to its idea, is something non-material or something which is *for itself* – an isolated being. And this idea, this intellect, purged of all materialistic perceptions is precisely the divine intellect. But what was just *an idea* with Leibniz became *truth and reality* in later philosophy. *The absolute idealism* is nothing but the *realised divine intellect* of Leibnizian theism, nothing but pure intellect which has been systematically unfolded, which strips all things of their sensuousness turning them into pure entities of intellect and thought, and which, unhampered by anything alien, is occupied with itself alone as the essence of all essences.

§ 11

God is a thinking being; but the objects that he thinks and encompasses in himself are, like his own intellect, *not distinguished from his being*, so that in thinking other things he thinks only himself and thus persists in an *uninterrupted unity with himself*. But this *unity of the thinking and the thought* is precisely the *secret of speculative philosophy*.

Thus, for example, in the *Logic* of Hegel the objects of thought are not distinguished from the essence of thought. Here thought exists in an uninterrupted unity with itself; the objects of thought are only the determinations of thought itself, that is, they have nothing in themselves that would resist their complete dissolution in thought. But that which is the essence of *Logic* is also the essence of God. God is a spiritual and an abstract being; but he is at the same time both the essence of all beings

and that which encompasses all beings so as to form a unity with his abstract essence. But what are these beings that are identical with an abstract and spiritual being? They are themselves abstract *beings* – *thoughts*. As things are in God, so they are not outside God; they are just as distinguished from the real things as the things constituting the object of *Logic* are from those given as the objects real perception. To what, therefore, is the distinction between the divine and the metaphysical thought reducible? Only to the one imaginary distinction – that between imaginary and *real* thought.

§ 12

The difference between *God's knowledge* or *thought*, which *precedes* and *creates* all things as their *archetype*, and *man's knowledge*, which *follows* things as their *copy*, is nothing but the *difference* between a *priori*, or speculative, and a *posteriori*, or *empirical knowledge*.

Although theism looks upon God as a thinking or spiritual being, it regards him at the same time as a *sensuous being*. Hence, it directly links *sensuous and material* effects with the thought and will of God – effects that are in contradiction to the essence of thought and will, expressing nothing more than the power of nature. Such a *material* effect – hence merely an expression of sensuous power – is above all the creation or bringing forth of the real material world. Speculative theology, on the other hand, transforms this sensuous activity which contradicts the essence of thought into a logical or theoretical activity; the material creation of the object into a speculative creation out of the Notion. In theism, the world is a temporal product of God – the world exists for several million years, but God's existence antedates this; in speculative theology, on the other hand, the world or nature comes *after* God only according to rank or significance; the accident presupposes the substance,

and nature presupposes logic according to the notion and not according to sensuous existence and, hence, not according to time.

Theism, however, attributes to God not only speculative but also *sensuous* and *empirical* knowledge understood in its highest perfection. But just as God's pre-worldly and object-antecedent knowledge has found its realisation, truth, and reality in the *a priori* knowledge of speculative philosophy, so too has the *sensuous knowledge* of God found its realisation, truth, and reality in the empirical sciences of the modern era. The most perfect and, hence, divine, sensuous knowledge is therefore nothing but the most sensuous of all knowledge, the knowledge of the tiniest minutiae and of the most inconspicuous details – “God is omniscient,” says St. Thomas Aquinas, “because he knows even the most particular things” – the knowledge that does not just indiscriminately put the hair on the human head together into a tuft, but counts and knows each one of it, hair for hair. But this divine knowledge, which is only a matter of imagination and fantasy in theology, became the *rational* and real knowledge of the natural sciences produced through the telescope and microscope. Natural science has counted the stars in the sky, the ova in the spawn of fish and butterflies, and the dots on the wings of the insects in order to distinguish one from the other; alone in the caterpillar of the willow moth, it has anatomically demonstrated the existence of 288 muscles in the head, 1,647 in the body, and 2,186 in the stomach and intestines. What more can one ask? We have here a clear example of the truth that man's idea of God is the idea of the human individual of his own species, that God as the totality of all realities and perfections is nothing other than the totality of the qualities of the species compendiously put together in him for the benefit of the limited individual, but actually dispersed among men and realising themselves in the course of world history. In terms of its quantitative scope, the field of the natural sciences is too vast for any single individual to traverse. Who will be able to count

the stars in the sky and at the same time the muscles and nerves in the body of the caterpillar? Lyonet lost his sight over the anatomy of the willow caterpillar. Who is able to observe simultaneously both the differences of height and depth on the moon and at the same time observe the differences of the innumerable ammonites and terebrates? But what one man cannot accomplish and does not know, can be accomplished and known by all men collectively. Thus, the divine knowledge that knows each particular thing simultaneously has its reality in the knowledge of the species.

What is true of the Divine Omniscience is true also of the Divine Omnipresence which has equally realised itself in man. While one man heeds what is going on on the moon or Uranus, someone else observes Venus, or the entrails of the caterpillar, or some other place never penetrated by the human eye under the erstwhile reign of an omniscient and omnipresent God. Indeed, while man observes this star from the standpoint of Europe, he also observes it simultaneously from the standpoint of America. What is absolutely impossible for *one* man alone to achieve is possible for two. But God is present in all places at one and the same time and knows everything simultaneously and completely. Of course. But it must be noted that this omniscience and omnipresence exists only in the imagination and fantasy, and we must not lose sight of the important distinction between the merely imagined and the real things we have already mentioned several times. In the imagination, to be sure, one can survey the 4,059 muscles of a caterpillar in one glance, but in reality, where they exist apart from one another, they can be viewed only one at a time. Thus, the limited individual can also conceive in his imagination the whole extent of human knowledge as limited, but if he really wanted to make it his own, he would never reach the point where it ends. Take just one science – say history – as an example, and try in thought to “dissolve” world history into the history of the individual

countries, these into the history of individual provinces, these again into the chronicles of towns, and the chronicles, finally, into family histories and biographies. Would it ever be possible for one single man to arrive at the point where he could exclaim: “Here, at this point, I stand at the end of the historical knowledge of mankind!” In the same way, our life span – both the past as well as the possible future – appears to us in the imagination as extraordinarily short, no matter how long we extend it; and we feel compelled to make good this evanescent brevity by an infinite and unending life after death. But how long in reality does a day, or just an hour, last! Whence this difference? From the following: Time in the imagination is *empty* time, that is, a nothing between the beginning and the termination of our reckoning of it; the real life span is, however, fulfilled time where mountains of difficulties of all kinds lie midway between the now and the then.

§ 13 God & Man

The beginning of speculative philosophy, in so far as it is a beginning without any presuppositions whatsoever, is nothing else than the beginning without presuppositions, or the aseity of the Divine Being. Theology distinguishes between active and reposing qualities of God. Philosophy, however, transforms even the qualities of repose into active ones; the whole being of God into activity – human activity. This is also true of what was mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph. Philosophy presupposes nothing; this can only mean that it *abstracts* from all that is immediately or sensuously given, or from all objects distinguished from thought. In short, it abstracts from all wherefrom it is possible to abstract without ceasing to think, and it makes this act of abstraction from all objects its own beginning. However, what else is the absolute being if not the being for which nothing is to be presupposed and to which no object other than itself is either given or necessary? What else is it if not the being that has been subtracted from all objects – from all things distinct

and distinguishable from it – and, therefore, becomes an object for man precisely through abstracting from these things? Wherefrom God is free, therefrom you must also free yourself if you want to reach God; and you make yourself really free when you present yourself with the idea of God. In consequence, if you think God without presupposing any other being or object, you yourself think without presupposing any external object; the quality that you attribute to God is a quality of your own thought. However, what is *activity* in man is *being* in God or that which is imagined as such. What, hence, is the Fichtean Ego which says, “I simply am because I am,” and what is the pure and presuppositionless thought of Hegel if not the Divine Being of the old theology and metaphysics which has been transformed into the *actual*, *active*, and *thinking* being of man?

§ 14 Pantheism

Speculative philosophy as the realisation of God is the *positing* of God, and *at the same time his cancellation or negation; theism and at the same time atheism*: for God – in the sense of theology – is God only as long as he is taken to be a being distinguished from and independent of the being of man as well as of nature. The theism that as the positing of God is simultaneously his negation or, conversely, as the negation of God equally his affirmation, is *pantheism*. Theological theism – that is, theism properly speaking – is nothing other than *imaginary* pantheism which itself is nothing other than real and true theism.

What separates theism from pantheism is only the imaginary representation of God as a personal being. All the determinations of God – and these must be predicated of him, otherwise he would be nothing and not at all the object of the imagination – are determinations of reality, either of nature or of man or those common to both, and hence *pantheistic* determinations; for that which does not distinguish God from the being of nature or of man is pantheism. God is distinguished from the world, from

the totality of nature and mankind, only with respect to his personality or existence, but not with respect to his determinations or to his essence; that is, he is only *imagined to be* but is *in truth not a different being*. Theism is the contradiction of appearance and essence, imagination and truth, whereas pantheism is the unity of both – pantheism is the *naked* truth of theism. All the conceptions of theism, if taken seriously, carried out, and realised, must necessarily lead to pantheism. Pantheism is *consistent* theism. Theism holds God to be the cause, indeed, to be the living, personal cause, to be the creator of the world; God has brought forth the world by his will. But the will alone does not suffice. If the will is there, the intellect must also be there; *what* one wills is a matter of the intellect. There can be no object without the intellect. The things that God created existed therefore *in* God prior to their creation; that is, existed in him as the objects of his intellect, or as intellectual entities. As theology has it, the intellect of God is the comprehensive unity of all things and essences. Whence could they have sprung if not out of nothing? And what difference does it make whether you think of this nothingness in your imagination as independent or transpose it into God? But God contains everything or is everything *in an ideational way*; that is, in the way of the imagination. This ideational pantheism, however, leads necessarily to the real or concrete; for it is not far from the intellect of God to his being and from his being to his reality. How should it be possible to separate the intellect from the being, and the being from the reality or existence of God? If things are in the intellect of God, how could they be outside of his being? If they result from his intellect, why not then also from his being? And if in God his being is directly identical with his reality, if the existence of God cannot be divorced from the concept of God, how then could the conception of the object and the real object be separated in God's conception of things?

How, therefore, could the difference that constitutes only the nature of the finite and non-divine intellect, namely, the difference between the object as given in the imagination and as existing apart from it, occur in God? But once we have no objects whatsoever left *outside the intellect of God*, we soon will have nothing whatsoever left *outside his being* and finally nothing *outside his existence*. All objects *are* in God and, indeed, actually and in truth, not only in the imagination; for where they exist only in the imagination of God as well as of man, that is, where they are in God only in an ideal, or rather imaginary way, they exist at the same time outside the imagination, outside God. But given that we have no objects and no world outside God, we would also no longer have God outside the world; that is, God taken not only as an ideal or as imagined, but also as a real being. In *one* word, we thus have Spinozism or pantheism. Theism conceives God only as a purely non-material being. But to determine God as non-material is nothing different from determining matter as a nonentity, as a monstrosity, for only God is the measure of what is real; only God is Being, truth, and essence; only that which is true of God and in God, that alone *is*, what is negated of God, that also does not exist. To derive matter from God means, therefore, nothing but to want to establish its being through its non-being; for to derive means to establish something by indicating its ground. God made matter. But how, why, and out of what? Theism does not provide an answer to these questions. Matter for theism is a purely *inexplicable* existence; this means that it is the *limit, the end* of theology on which it founders in life as well as in thought. How can I then extract out of theology itself its negation and end without discarding it? How can I expect any explanatory principle or information from theology when its wisdom falters? How can I extract the affirmation of matter from a negation of matter and world which constitutes the essence of theology? How can I, despite the God of theology, produce the proposition "*matter exists*" out of the proposition "*matter does not exist*?" How else but through mere fiction? Material objects can be derived from

God only if *God himself is determined as a material being*. Only thus can God become the *real* cause of the world and not merely be an imagined and fictitious cause. He who is not ashamed to make shoes, should also not be ashamed to be and be called a cobbler. Hans Sachs was indeed both a cobbler and a poet. But the shoes were the work of his hands whereas the poems were that of his head. As the effect, so the cause. But matter is *not* God; it is rather the finite, the non-divine, that is, that which negates God – the unconditional adherents and worshipers of matter are atheists. Hence, pantheism unites atheism with theism, the *negation* of God with God; *God* is a *material* or, in Spinoza's language, an *extended* being.

§ 15 Materialism

Pantheism is *theological atheism or theological materialism*; it is the *negation of theology* while itself confined to the *standpoint of theology*, for it turns matter, the negation of God, into a predicate or an *attribute of the Divine Being*. But he who turns matter into an attribute of God, declares matter to be a *divine being*. The realisation of God must in principle *presuppose godliness*, that is, the *truth and essentiality of the real*. The *deification of the real, of that which exists* materially – materialism, empiricism, realism, and humanism – or the *negation* of theology, is the *essence* of the modern era. Pantheism is therefore nothing more than *the essence of the modern era* elevated into the *divine essence*, into a *religio-philosophical principle*.

Empiricism or realism – meaning thereby the so-called sciences of the real, but in particular the natural science – negates theology, albeit not theoretically but only practically, namely, *through the actual deed* in so far as the realist makes the negation of God, or at least that which is *not* God, into the *essential* business of his life and the *essential* object of his activity. However, he who devotes his mind and heart exclusively to that which is material and sensuous *actually* denies the trans-sensuous its

reality; for only that which constitutes an object of the real and concrete activity is real, at least for man. "What I don't know doesn't affect me." To say that it is not possible to know anything of the supersensuous is only an excuse. One ceases to know anything about God and divine things only when one does not *want* to know anything about them. How much did one know about God, about the devils or angels as long as these supersensuous beings were still objects of a *real* faith? To be *interested* in something is to have the *talent* for it. The medieval mystics and scholastics had no talent and aptitude for natural science only because they had no interest in nature. Where the sense for something is not lacking, there also the senses and organs do not lack. If the heart is open to something, the mind will not be closed to it. Thus, the reason why mankind in the modern era lost the organs for the supersensuous world and its secrets is because it also lost the sense for them together with the belief in them; because its essential tendency was anti-Christian and anti-theological; that is, anthropological, cosmic, realistic, and materialistic. [In the context of the present work, the differences between materialism, empiricism, realism, and humanism are, of course, irrelevant.] Spinoza hit the nail on the head with his paradoxical proposition: God is an extended, that is, material being. He found, at least for his time, the true philosophical expression for the materialistic tendency of the modern era; he legitimated and sanctioned it: God himself is a materialist. Spinoza's philosophy was religion; he himself was an amazing man. Unlike so many others, Spinoza's materialism did not stand in contradiction to the notion of a non-material and anti-materialistic God who also quite consistently imposes on man the duty to give himself up only to *anti-materialistic, heavenly tendencies and concerns*, for God is nothing other than the archetypal and ideal image of man; *what* God is and *how* he is, is what man *ought* to be or *wants* to be, or at least hopes to be in the future. But only where theory does not belie practice, and practice theory, is there

character, truth, and religion. Spinoza is the Moses of modern free-thinkers and materialists.

§ 16 The basis of Materialism

Pantheism is the *negation of theoretical*, and *empiricism* the negation of *practical*, theology. Pantheism negates the *principle*, whereas empiricism negates the *consequences of* theology.

Pantheism makes God into a present, real, and material being; empiricism – to which rationalism also belongs – makes God into an absent, remote, unreal, and negative being. Empiricism does not deny God existence, but denies him all positive determinations, because their content is supposed to be only finite and empirical; the infinite cannot, therefore, be an object for man. But the more determinations I deny to a being, the more do I cut it off[from myself, and the less power and influence do I concede to it over me, the freer do I make myself of it. The more qualities I possess, the more I am for others, and the greater is the extent of my influence and effects. And the *more one is*, the more one is *known* to others. Hence, each negation of an attribute of God is a partial atheism, a sphere of godlessness. To the extent to which I take away an attribute of God, to the same extent do I take away his being. If, for example, sympathy and mercy are not attributes of God, then I am alone with myself in my suffering; God *is not there* as my comforter. If God is the negation of all that is finite, then, in consequence, the finite is the negation of God. Only if God thinks of me – so concludes the religious man – have I reason and cause to think of him; only in his being-for-me lies the ground of my being-for-him. In truth, therefore, the theological being is no longer anything to empiricism, at least nothing real; but empiricism does not transpose this non-being into the object, but only *into itself*, into its *knowledge*. It does not deny God being, a being that is a dead or indifferent being, but it denies him the being which proves itself

as being; namely, as effective and tangible being that cuts into life. It affirms God, but *negates all the consequences* which *necessarily* follow from this affirmation. It rejects and abandons theology, although not out of theoretical grounds, but out of *aversion and disinclination* for the objects of theology; that is, out of a vague feeling for its unreality. Theology is nothing, thinks the empiricist; but he adds to this, “*for me,*” that is, his judgment is a subjective, a *pathological* one; for he does not have the freedom, nor the desire and the calling, to drag the objects of theology before the forum of reason. This is the calling of philosophy. The concern of modern philosophy was therefore none other than to elevate *the pathological judgment of empiricism – theology is nothing – to a theoretical and objective* judgment, to transform the indirect, unconscious, and negative negation of theology into a direct, positive, and conscious negation. How ridiculous it is, therefore, to want to suppress the “atheism” of philosophy without at the same time suppressing the atheism of empiricism! How ridiculous it is to persecute the theoretical negation of Christianity and to ignore the actual refutations of Christianity with which the modern era is replete! How ridiculous it is to hold that with the *awareness* of the symptom of evil, the cause of evil is also eliminated! How ridiculous indeed! And yet, how rich is history in such mockeries! They repeat themselves in all critical periods. And no wonder! We are always accommodating to whatever has happened in the past and acknowledge the necessity of all the changes and revolutions that have occurred, but we resist with all the means at our disposal to take the same attitude to the *present* situation. Out of shortsightedness and complacency, we except the present from the rule.

§ 17 Idealism

The elevation of matter into a divine being is directly and at the same time the elevation of *reason* into a *divine being*. What the theist negates of God by means of the imagination and out of his *emotional need* and his

yearning for unlimited bliss, the pantheist affirms of God out of *his rational need*. Matter is an essential object for reason. If there was no matter, reason would have no *stimulus and no material* for thought and, hence, no content. *One cannot give up matter without giving up reason; one cannot acknowledge matter without acknowledging reason.* Materialists are rationalists. But pantheism affirms reason as a divine being only *indirectly*; namely, only by turning God from a being mediated through the imagination – and this is what he is in theism as a personal being – into an object of reason, or a rational being. The direct apotheosis of reason is *idealism*. Pantheism *necessarily* leads to idealism. Idealism is related to pantheism in the same way as pantheism is related to theism.

As the object, so the subject. According to Descartes, the being of physical things, the body or *substance*, is the object of reason alone and not of the senses. But precisely because of this, the being of the perceiving subject, that is, of man, is not the senses, but reason. It is only to being that being is given as object. For Plato, the objects of opinion are only transient things; but for that matter opinion itself is transient and changing knowledge – mere opinion. The being of music is the highest being to the musician and, consequently, the sense of hearing, the highest organ; he would sooner lose his eyes than his ears. The natural scientist, on the contrary, would sooner part with his ears than with his eyes because his objective being is light. To elevate sound to godliness is to deify the ear. Hence, if I, like the pantheist, say the deity or, what amounts to the same thing, the absolute being or absolute truth *is an object for and of reason alone*, then I declare God to be a rational thing or a rational being, and in so doing I indirectly express only the absolute truth and reality of reason. Hence, it is necessary for reason to turn *to itself* with a view to *reverse this inverted* self-recognition, to declare itself directly to be the absolute truth and to become, without the intervention of any intermediary object, its own object as the absolute truth. The pantheist says the same thing as the

idealist, except that the former expresses objectively and realistically what the latter expresses only subjectively or idealistically. The pantheist has *his idealism in the object*. Nothing exists apart from substance, apart from God, and all things are only determinations of God. The idealist has his *pantheism in the ego*. Nothing exists apart from the ego, and all things are what they are only as objects of the ego. But all the same, idealism is the truth of pantheism; for God or substance is only the object of reason, of the ego, or of the thinking being. If I believe in and conceive of no God at all, then I have no God. He *exists for me only through me*, and only “through reason does he exist” for reason. The *a priori*, or “the *initial being* is therefore not the being that is *thought*,” but the *thinking being; not the object, but the subject*. With the same necessity with which natural science turned from the light back to the eye, philosophy turned from the objects of thought back to the thinking ego. What is light – as the shining and illuminating being, as the object of optics – without the eye? Nothing. And thus far goes natural science. But what – asks philosophy further – is the eye without consciousness? Equally nothing: It is identical whether I *see without consciousness* or I *do not see*. Only the consciousness of seeing is the reality of seeing or actual seeing. But why do you believe that something exists apart from you? Because you see, hear and feel something. This something is therefore a *real something, a real object*, only in so far as it is *an object of consciousness*, and hence, consciousness is the absolute reality or actuality – the measure of all existence. All that exists, exists only in so far as it exists for consciousness, that is, in so far as it is *conscious*; for only consciousness is *being*. Thus does the essence of theology realise itself in idealism; namely, the essence of God in the ego and in consciousness. Nothing can exist, and nothing can be thought of, without God; this means, in the context of idealism, that all that exists, be it an actual or a possible object exists only as the object of consciousness. To be is to be an object; that is, being presupposes consciousness. Things, the world in general, are the work and the product

of God as an absolute being. *This absolute being* is, however, an ego, a *conscious and thinking* being, which means that the world is, as Descartes admirably puts it from the standpoint of theism, an *Ens rationis divinae*, a thought-thing, a phantom of God. But in theism and theology, this thought-thing itself is again only a vague idea. If we therefore realise this idea, if we, so to say, translate into practice what in theism is only theory, then we have the world as a product of the ego (Fichte) or – at least as it appears to us and as we perceive it – as a work or product of our perception and understanding (Kant). “Nature is derived from the laws of the possibility of experience in general. . . . The understanding does not obtain its laws (*a priori*) from nature, but rather prescribes them to it.” The Kantian idealism, in which things conform to the intellect and not the intellect to things, is therefore nothing other than the realisation of the theological conception of the divine intellect which is not determined by things, but, on the contrary, determines them. How absurd it is, therefore, to acknowledge idealism in heaven – that is, the idealism of the imagination, as a divine truth – but reject the idealism on earth – that is, the idealism of reason – as a human error! Should you deny idealism, then you must also deny God! God alone is the originator of idealism. If you do not like the consequences, then you also should not like the principle! Idealism is nothing but *rational* or rationalised theism. But the Kantian idealism is still a limited idealism – idealism situated on *the standpoint of empiricism*. According to what has been discussed above, God is for empiricism only a being in the imagination, or in theory – in the ordinary, bad sense – but not in practice and truth; a thing in itself, but no longer a thing for empiricism, for as far as empiricism is concerned, only real and empirical things are things for it. Since matter is the only material for its thinking, it is left without any *material to construct* God. God exists, but he is for us a *tabula rasa*, an empty being, a mere thought. God, as we imagine and think of him, is our own ego, our own reason, and our own being; but *this* God is only an *appearance of us and for us, and not God in*

himself. Kant is the embodiment of an idealism that is still shackled by theism. It often happens that in actual practice we have long ago freed ourselves from a particular thing, a doctrine, or an idea, but we are far from being free from it in the mind. It has ceased to have any truth for *our actual being* – perhaps it never had – but it still continues to be a theoretical truth; that is, a limit on our mind. The mind is always the last to become free, because it takes things more thoroughly. Theoretical freedom is, at least in many things, the last freedom. How many are republicans in their heart and in their attitude, but in their minds cannot reach beyond monarchy; their republican heart founders on the objections and difficulties raised by the intellect. This is also the case with Kant's theism. Kant has realised and at the same time negated theology within the sphere of morality, and the divine being within the sphere of the will. For Kant, the will is the true, original, absolute, and self-initiating being. In other words, Kant actually bestows on the will what are the predicates of the divinity; the only significance his theism can have, therefore, is that of a theoretical limit. Fichte is a Kant who has been liberated from the limit of theism – the “Messiah of speculative reason.” Fichte's is the Kantian idealism, *but an idealism nonetheless*. Only from the standpoint of empiricism can, according to Fichte, there be a God distinguished from and existing apart from us. But in truth, from the standpoint of idealism the thing in itself, God – for God is, properly speaking, the thing in itself – is only the ego *in itself*, that is, the ego that is distinct from the individual and empirical ego. Outside the ego, there is no God: “Our religion is reason.” But the Fichtean idealism is only the negation and realisation of abstract and formal theism, of monotheism, and not of religious, material, content-replete theism, not of trinitarianism, whose realisation is the “*absolute*,” or Hegelian idealism. Or in other words, Fichte has realised the God of pantheism only *in so far as* he is a *thinking* being, but not in so far as he is an extended and material being. Fichte embodies theistic, whereas Hegel embodies pantheistic, idealism.

§ 18 Modern Philosophy

Modern philosophy has realised and superseded the Divine Being which is severed and distinguished from sensuousness, the world, and man, but *only in thought, only in reason*, and indeed in a reason that is *equally severed and distinguished from sensuousness, the world, and man*. That is to say, modern philosophy has proved only *the divinity of the intellect*, it recognised only the abstract *intellect* as the *divine and absolute being*. Descartes' definition of himself as mind – “my being consists solely of the fact that I think” – is modern philosophy's definition of itself. The will in both the Kantian and the Fichtean idealism is itself a *pure being of the intellect*, and sense perception, which Schelling, in opposition to Fichte, connected with the intellect, is mere fantasy; it is not the truth and hence does not come into consideration.

Modern philosophy proceeded from theology; it is itself nothing else but theology dissolved and transformed into philosophy. The abstract and transcendent being of God could therefore be realised and superseded *only in an abstract and transcendent way*. In order to transform God into reason, reason itself had to assume the quality of an abstract, divine being. The senses, says Descartes, do not yield true reality, nor being, nor certainty; only the intellect separated from all sensuousness delivers the truth. Where does this dichotomy between the intellect and the senses come from? It comes only from theology. God is not a sensuous being; rather, he is the negation of all sensuous determinations and is known only through abstraction from the senses. But he is God; that is, the *truest, the most real, the most certain* being. Whence should the truth enter into the senses, the born atheists? God is the being in which existence cannot be separated from essence and concept; God is the being that cannot be thought of in any other way except as existing. Descartes transforms this objective being into a subjective one and the ontological proof into a psychological one; he transforms the proposition, “because God is

thinkable, therefore he exists,” into the proposition, “I think, therefore I am.” Just as in God, being cannot be separated from being thought, so in me – as I am essentially mind – being cannot be separated from thought; and just as this inseparability is constitutive of the essence in the former, so also is it in the latter. A being – no matter whether in itself or for me – that *exists only to the extent that it is thought of*, and only to the extent that it forms the object of abstraction from all sensuousness, necessarily realises and subjectifies itself in a being that *exists only to the extent that it thinks* and whose essence is abstract thought.