

Thomas Nemeth *Editor*

Vladimir Solov'ëv's Justification of the Moral Good

Moral Philosophy

Translated by Thomas Nemeth

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Dedicated To My Father, the Historian

Sergej Mihajlovich Solov'ëv

And To My Grandfather

Reverend Mikhail Vasil'evich Solov'ëv

With a Sense of Living Gratitude

For Our Eternal Connection

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Translator's Introduction

Preface to the Second Edition

Preface to the First Edition (*A Preliminary Conception of the Moral Meaning of Life*)

The General Question of the Meaning of Life

- I. The two-fold denial of the meaning of life.—Theoretical pessimism.—The inner inconsistency of those who argue about the advantages of non-existence but in fact prefer existence.—Their attachment to life is a testament to its actual meaning, even though they do not see it.—Practical pessimism, which ultimately is expressed in suicide.—Suicides also passively testify to the meaning of life, since their despair arises from the fact that they do not find in life the fulfillment of their arbitrary and contradictory demands. The fulfillment of these, however, would be possible only if life were meaningless. Consequently, the non-fulfillment of the demands speaks of the presence in life of a meaning, which these people do not want to know, owing to their own irrationality. (Examples: Romeo, Cleopatra).
- II. The view that life has a meaning, albeit an exclusively aesthetic one, expressed in what is strong, majestic and beautiful without regard for the moral good.—The indisputable refutation of this view by the fact of death, which transforms all natural strength and majesty into nothingness and all natural beauty into extreme ugliness. (Clarification: The biblical words about Alexander the Great). Nietzsche's pitiful attacks on Christianity.—Genuine strength, majesty and beauty are inseparable from the absolute Good.
- III. The view that recognizes the meaning of life lies in the moral good but asserts that this good, as given from above, is realized in immutable forms of life (family, fatherland, church), demands from us submissive acceptance without argument. The view which forgets that the historical forms of the good in life have

¹ E] The following "Table of Contents," minus, of course, the "Translator's Introduction," first appeared in the 2nd edition of the *Justification of the Moral Good* from 1899.

no external unity and finality is inadequate. These forms, therefore, demand from us not formal submission but their essential identification and intrinsic assistance for their continuing growth.

- IV. The opposite error (moral amorphism) asserts that the good exists only in the subjective mental states of each individual person and in the good relations between people that arise from those states. Owing to their artificial and compulsory actions, all collectively organized forms of society lead only to evil.—However, the social organization created by the historical life of humanity is the necessary continuation of the physical organization created by the universal life. All that is real is complex; nothing exists outside this or that form of the collective organization, and the principle of moral amorphism, consistently pursued, logically demands a rejection of all that is real in favor of emptiness or non-existence.
- V. The two extreme moral errors, viz., the doctrine of unconditional obedience before the historical forms of social life and the doctrine of their unconditional rejection (moral amorphism), coincide in that they take the good not in its essence, but regard as unconditionally proper or unconditionally improper what by its nature is conditional (explanatory examples).—The human being in his/her reason and conscience as the unconditional inner form for the Good, as the unconditional content.—The general intrinsic attributes of the good as such: its purity, or self-legality (autonomy), insofar as it is not conditioned by anything (external); its plenitude, or all-unity, insofar as it conditions everything; its force, or reality, insofar as it is realized through everything.—The task of moral philosophy and the predominant task of the system offered here.

Introduction (*Moral Philosophy as Science*)

- I. The formal universality of the idea of the good at the lower stages of moral awareness independently of the material content of this idea (examples and clarifications).—The growth of moral awareness, gradually introducing content into the formal idea of the good that is more in accordance with it and that is internally better connected with it, naturally becomes the science of morality, or moral philosophy.
- II. Moral philosophy does not entirely depend upon positive religion.—St. Paul's testimony on the moral law "written in the hearts" of pagans.—The disputes between the many religions and denominations presuppose a general moral basis (clarifications and examples) and, consequently, the moral norms to which the disputing parties appeal cannot depend on their religious and denominational differences.
- III. The independence of moral philosophy from theoretical philosophy (i.e., from epistemology and metaphysics).—In moral philosophy, we study our inner attitude towards our own actions (and what is logically connected with it), i.e., something *indisputably* accessible to our cognition, since we ourselves produce it. We leave aside the contentious question of the theoretical validity of

the existence of the other which, in terms of morality, has nothing to do with us.—The philosophical critique of cognition can go no further than *doubt* the objective existence of what is cognized. Such a theoretical doubt is insufficient to undermine the subject's morally practical confidence that certain states and actions are obligatory and are of intrinsic worth.—Moreover, theoretical philosophy resolves its skepticism towards this confidence in one positive way or another.—Finally, even if we could be firmly confident that the external world did not exist, this would not eliminate the internal distinction between good and evil. For if it is impermissible to bear malice towards a living person, then it is all the more so towards an empty phantom. If it is shameful to submit slavishly to the inclinations of real sensuality, then it is even more shameful to do so with regard to imaginary ones.

- IV. Moral philosophy is independent of a positive solution to the metaphysical problem of "free will," since morality is possible even under determinism, which asserts the necessity of human actions.—In philosophy, we should distinguish purely *mechanical* necessity, which is intrinsically incompatible with any moral action, from *psychological* necessity and *ethical*, or rationally ideal, necessity.—The indisputable difference between mechanical movement and a mental reaction, which is necessarily aroused by motives, i.e., by ideas united with feelings and desires.—We can distinguish, in terms of the quality of the motivation that prevails in life, a good spiritual nature from an evil one. As we know from experience, to the extent that a good nature, when motivated, can be strengthened and developed and an evil nature, when motivated, can be improved and transformed, we are already given certain conditions for ethical tasks and doctrines based on psychological necessity.
- V. The universal rational idea of the moral good in the human being, acting through an awareness of the unconditional duty to conform to it, can be the motivating power that overcomes various psychological prompts. A human being can do good apart from any relation to what is pleasant or unpleasant for the sake of the essence of the moral good as such, or of the unconditionally excellent.—The concept of moral necessity, or, what comes to the same thing, rational freedom.—Just as psychological necessity (through mental stimulations) is higher than mechanical necessity and a liberation from it, so moral necessity (through the overpowering idea of the moral good), while still being a necessity, is higher than the psychological necessity of mental affects and the freedom from this lower motivation.—In order for the unconditional idea of the moral good to be able to serve as the sufficient reason of human actions, the subject must combine sufficient moral sensitivity to the good with sufficient knowledge of it (clarifications and biblical examples).—Indication of the metaphysical possibility of an arbitrary preference for unconditional evil over the unconditional moral good.—Moral philosophy, as full knowledge of the moral good, is presupposed in the fundamental formulation and resolution of the metaphysical question (that concerning freedom of choice between good and evil) and does not depend in its specifics on the resolution of this question.

Part One. The Moral Good in Human Nature

Chapter 1. The Original Data of Morality.

- I. The feeling of shame (originally of sexual modesty) as the natural root of human morality. The actual shamelessness of all animals and the shamelessness of certain savage peoples: the latter has to do with differences in external relations, and not the feeling itself.—Darwin's erroneous reference to phallism.
- II. The most profound sense of shame: The one who is ashamed separates oneself in the mental act of shame from that of which he or she is ashamed. A person who is ashamed of the fundamental processes of his or her animal nature thereby proves that he or she is not merely a natural phenomenon or process, but has an independent significance higher than the animal (Confirmation and clarification from the Bible).—The feeling of shame is inexplicable from an external utilitarian viewpoint.
- III. The second moral given of human nature—pity or the feeling of sympathy, which expresses the ethical relation of a person not to one's lower nature (as in shame), but to similar living creatures. Pity cannot be the result of the human process, since it exists also in animals—Pity is the individual psychic root of proper social relations.
- IV. The third moral given in human nature, viz., the feeling of respect, or *piety*, which expresses the proper relation of a person to the higher principle and which forms the individual-psychic root of religion.—Darwin's reference to the rudiments of religious feeling in tame animals.
- V. The feelings of shame, pity and respect basically exhaust the entire field of possible human moral relations, viz., to that which is lower, to what is equal to us and to what is higher.—These normal relations are determined here to be *domination* over material sensuality, a *solidarity* with living creatures and an intrinsic *submission* to the superhuman principle.—The other determinations of moral life (all the virtues) can be shown to be variations of these three foundations, or the result of an interaction between them and the intellectual side of the human being.—Example.
- VI. *Conscience* as a variation of shame in a clear and generalized form. The supposed conscience of animals.
- VII. Human reason deduces the universal and necessary principles and rules of moral life from the factual bases of morality.

Chapter 2. The Ascetic Principle in Morality.

- I. The moral self-affirmation of a person as a super-material creature, which is semi-conscious and shown to be unstable in the simple feeling of shame, is elevated by the activity of reason into the principle of asceticism.—The object of this negative attitude in asceticism is not material nature in general, which as such cannot be recognized as evil from any point of view (proof from the essence of the principal pessimistic theories: Vedanta, Sankhya, Buddhism, Egyptian gnostics, Manicheism).

- II. The opposition of the spiritual principle to material nature is immediately expressed in shame and developed in asceticism. This opposition is evoked not by nature alone, but by the embrace of its lower life, which tries to make the rational human being a passive instrument or a useless appendage of a blind physical process. Understanding the fact of shame, reason logically deduces from it the necessary, universal and morally obligatory norm: Our human elemental life must be subordinate to our spiritual life.
- III. The moral conception of the spirit and of the flesh.—The flesh as animality or irrationality, excited and emerging from its essential determination, serves matter or the hidden (potential) foundation of spiritual life.—The real significance of the struggle between the spirit and the flesh.
- IV. The three principal moments in the spirit's struggle with the flesh are: (1) an intrinsic distinction of the spirit from the flesh, made by the former; (2) the spirit's actual defense of its independence; (3) the explicit predominance of the spirit over the flesh, or the elimination of the evil carnal principle. The practical significance of the second moment, which causes specific and obligatory moral demands, above all the demand for self-control.
- V. Preliminary ascetic tasks: the acquisition of the ability to control breathing and sleep by the rational will.
- VI. Ascetic demands concerning the functions of nutrition and reproduction.—Misunderstandings in the question of sexual relations.—The Christian view of the matter.
- VII. The various spheres in the struggle of the spirit with the flesh.—The three moments of the psychological grip of the evil principle: thought, imagination, possession.—The corresponding ascetic principles in order that an evil mental state not pass into passion and vice: "the dashing of the Babylonian babies against a stone"; distracting reflection; the restoring moral action.
- VIII. Asceticism, or abstinence raised to a principle, is an indubitable element of the moral good.—When this morally good element is taken by itself to be the whole and the unconditional good, asceticism appears as evil with its prototype being the devil who does not eat, drink, sleep and is celibate.—Since the evil or pitiless ascetic, as imitator of the devil, gets no moral credit, this means the very principle of asceticism has moral value, or expresses the moral good, only conditionally, namely on the condition that it combines with the principle of altruism, which is rooted in pity.

Chapter 3. Pity and Altruism.

- I. The positive significance of altruism.—Just as shame distinguishes the human being from the rest of nature and sets us apart from other animals, so pity intrinsically connects us with all of life.
- II. Only pity, or compassion, and not sharing pleasures or engaging in revelry with others can serve as the intrinsic foundation of the moral attitude towards other creatures (regardless of any metaphysical theory).—Positive participation in another's pleasure means the approval of this pleasure, which,

- however, can be bad. Consequently, participation in it happens to be good or bad depending on the object. By itself, it is not, in any case, the *basis* of moral relations (which can also be immoral).—Elimination of certain objections.
- III. Pity as an inducement to altruistic actions and as a possible basis of altruistic principles.
- IV. Schopenhauer's view of the irrational, or mysterious, character of compassion, which supposedly is an immediate and perfect identification of one individual with another different one. The refutation of this view.—The fundamental manifestation of compassion, viz., the maternal instinct of animals, is clearly the tightest real connection between one who pities and the one who is pitied.—In general, the connection given in experience and natural reason between all creatures as parts of one whole sufficiently explains its psychological expression in pity, which therefore is fully consistent with the obvious sense of the universe and agrees with reason, or rationality.—The false conception of pity as an immediate and complete identification of two creatures.—Clarifications.
- V. The unlimited universal pity described by St. Isaac the Syrian.
- VI. Pity by itself is still not a sufficient foundation for *all* of morality as Schopenhauer erroneously claimed.—Heartfelt kindness to living creatures is compatible with immorality in other respects.—Just as there are evil ascetics, so there happen to be intemperate and dissolute souls who, while not directly and intentionally doing evil, harm not only themselves, but also others through their shameful behavior.
- VII. The true essence of pity is not a simple identification of oneself with another, but the recognition of the other's own (proper) significance.—The right to life and the greatest possible sense of well-being.—This idea of pity, taken as universal and as independent of the subjective mental states connected with it (i.e., taken logically and not psychologically), is connected with *moral truth* and *justice*. It is true that other creatures are similar to me, and it is right that I treat them as I do myself.—Altruism as corresponding to moral truth, or to what is, and egoism as presupposing an untruth, or what is not, since the individual self does not in fact have the exclusive and central significance that it ascribes to itself in egoism.—Although the extension of personal egoism to the family, the nation, the state and religion expresses the historical achievements of morality, it does not eliminate the fundamental lie of egoism, which is refuted by the unconditional truth of the altruistic principle.
- VIII. The two rules, namely that of justice (harm no one) and that of mercy (help everyone), that arise from the principle of altruism.—The erroneous separation and opposition of justice and mercy, which in fact are only different sides or aspects of the manifestation of one and the same ethical motive.—The moral principle in the form of justice requires not a material, or qualitative, equality of all individual and collective subjects, but only that with all the necessary and desirable differences something that is unconditional and the same for all is retained, namely the significance of each as an end in oneself, never only as a means for another's ends.

Chapter 4. The Religious Principle in Morality.

- I. The peculiarity of moral determinations of a religious character.—Their root lies in the normal relation of children to parents, which is based on an inequality that cannot be reduced to justice or deduced from pity. The infant immediately recognizes the *superiority* of his or her parents and his or her *dependence* on them, feels *respect* for them and the necessity of *obedience*.—Clarifications.
- II. The original germ of religion is neither fetishism (proof) nor naturalistic mythology (proof), but *pietas erga parentes*—first towards the mother, then towards the father.
- III. The religious attitude of children towards the parents, as their immediate providence, naturally becomes more complex and spiritualized, passing into veneration of the dead parents who are raised above all the surroundings and possess mysterious powers; in life, the *father* is only a candidate for a god and for the time being only a mediator and priest of the real god—of a dead *grandfather* or ancestor.—The character and significance of a religion of ancestors (illustrations from the beliefs of ancient peoples).
- IV. Despite all the differences of religious conceptions and ways of worshipping God—from the primitive cult of our tribal ancestors up to Christian worship, in spirit and in truth, of the one universal Heavenly Father—the moral essence of religion remains one and the same. Insofar as both the savage cannibal and the perfect saint are religious, they agree in their filial relation towards the higher and in their resolution to carry out not their own will, but that of the Father.—Such a natural religion is an inseparable part of the law written in our hearts and without which meaningful fulfillment of other moral demands would be impossible.
- V. Pseudo-godlessness, or impiety.—Examples.—Cases of actual impiety, i.e., of a non-recognition of anything higher than oneself speak as little against the moral principle of piety and its obligatory character as the factual existence of shameless and pitiless people undermines the obligations of abstinence and philanthropy.—Regardless of the presence or absence in us of any positive beliefs, we *must*, as *rational* creatures, recognize that mundane life and our own life has meaning, by virtue of which everything depends on a higher rational principle towards which we must adopt a filial attitude, subordinating all of our actions to the “will of the Father,” which speaks to us through reason and conscience.
- VI. In the sphere of piety, as in morality in general, higher demands do not cancel lower ones, but presuppose and include them.—(Examples).—Our real dependence on the one Father of the universe is not immediate, insofar as our existence is immediately determined by heredity, i.e., by our ancestors and the surrounding environment they created.—Since the higher will has determined our existence through our ancestors, in bowing before its actions we cannot be indifferent to its instruments.—(Clarifications).—Morally obligatory veneration of providential people.

Chapter 5. On Virtues.

- I. The three general moments of morality: *virtue* (in the strict sense—as a good natural quality), *norm*, or the rule, of morally good actions and the moral *good* as its consequence.—The unbreakable logical bond between the three moments, allowing us to see the entire content of morality under the first term—as a virtue (in the broad sense).
- II. Virtue as the proper relation of a person towards everything.—A proper attitude is not a relation of equality.—(Clarification). No one stands unconditionally higher, and no one stands unconditionally lower than all others. Finally, none of us is one of a kind, but each is aware of being *average* and *one of many* average persons. Thus, from this follows with logical necessity the triplcity of moral norms, that there are three fundamental virtues in the proper sense, which always and in everything are such, expressing at bottom a definite and defining quality in the proper way. All the other so-called virtues are only qualities of the will and forms of action having in themselves no moral determination or constant correlation with the known sphere of what ought to be and therefore may sometimes be virtues, sometimes states of indifference and also sometimes vices.—(Clarifications and examples).
- III. Moral evaluation is determined by one of the three normative attitudes to the object, and not by the psychological quality of the volitional and emotional states.—Analysis from the point of view of the so-called “cardinal” (fundamental), or “philosophical virtues,” and particularly of justice. It is understood as *rectitudo*, as *aequitas*, as *justitia*, as *legalitas*.—In the first sense, i.e., *what in general is right*, it leaves the boundaries of ethics; in the second, *impartiality*; in the third, “injure no one,” justice coincides with the general principle of altruism (given the inseparability of the rules “injure no one” and “help everyone”); in the fourth sense, the unconditional submission to existing laws, justice is not in itself a virtue but can become or not become such depending on the situation (classical examples: Socrates, Antigone).
- IV. The so-called “theological virtues” have moral worth not in themselves unconditionally, but only depending on other factors.—Faith is a virtue only on three conditions: (1) the reality of its object, (2) the object’s worth, and (3) that the relation of the faith to this real and worthy object be proper.—Clarifications.—Such faith coincides with true piety.—The same applies to hope.—The positive commandment of love depends on a negative one: neither love the world nor everything in the world (the requirement to abstain, or the principle of asceticism).—Love of God coincides with true piety, and love of one’s neighbor with pity.—Therefore, love is not a virtue, but the ultimate expression of all the fundamental demands of morality in the three necessary relations: to the higher, to the lower and to an equal being.
- V. Generosity and unselfishness as modifications of ascetic virtue. Liberality as a special manifestation of altruism.—The moral significance of patience and of “tolerance” differs depending on the objects and the situations.
- VI. Truthfulness.—Since words are reason’s instruments to express moral truth, the abuse (through lying and deceit) of these formal and universal instruments for

material and egoistic ends, being shameful for the liar and harmful to the one deceived, violates two fundamental moral demands: respect for human dignity in oneself and justice for others.—According to the concept of moral truth, the reality of a single external fact should not be arbitrarily separated from the moral sense of the entire given situation.—The difference between material falsehood and moral mendacity.—Detailed analysis of the question of the permissibility of saving a human life through verbally deceiving a murderer.

- VII. The concept of moral truth, or of what should be, unites in a higher synthesis the three fundamental demands of morality, insofar as one and the same moral truth by its essence demands different attitudes: the ascetic to our lower nature, the altruistic to our neighbors, and the religious to the higher principle.—The conflict between the unconditional intrinsic necessity, or obligatory character, of the moral truth and its contingent, conventional character as a sufficient motive of human actions.—Hence, the desire to replace the concept of the moral good, of the unconditionally proper, with the concept of benefit, or the unconditionally desirable.

Chapter 6. Pseudo Principles of Practical Philosophy. (*A Critique of Abstract Eudaemonism in Its Various Forms.*)

- I. If someone does not desire the (moral) good and does not think it desirable, it is not a good for that person. If it is thought to be desirable but does not act on the will to motivate it, that (moral) good is not for that will a real good. If it acts on the will of a given person but does not provide the strength to realize what should be in the entire world, it is not a sufficient good. As a result of this empirical discrepancy, the real good is distinct from the moral good, and in this distinction the real good is understood to be a sense of *well-being* (eudaemonia).—The eudaemonic principle has an apparent advantage over the purely moral in that a sense of well-being is, by its very conception, something everyone desires. The sense of well-being is best defined as pleasure, and eudaemonism as hedonism.
- II. The untenability of hedonism: The universality in the concept of pleasure is seen to be so only from formal logic, or abstractly, and does not express any definite and real unity. Therefore, it does not give any general principle or rule of action.—A person can find genuine pleasure in what certainly will lead to one's demise, i.e., to the most undesirable.—The transition from pure hedonism to extreme pessimism (Hegesias of Cyrene—the "Death-persuader").
- III. Analysis of pleasure.—What are properly desired (as the good) are certain represented realities, and not the pleasant sensations evoked by them.—(Proofs).—The desirability of certain objects or their value as goods is determined not by subsequent subjective states of pleasure, but by the known or unknown objective interrelations of these objects with our corporeal or psychic nature.—Pleasure as an *attribute* of the good.—From this point of view, a higher sense of well-being lies in the possession of the goods that as a whole or in the final analysis yield the maximum pleasure and the minimum of pain. Here the chief

- practical value belongs not to pleasure as such but to careful consideration of the consequences of this or that behavior; *prudent* eudaemonism.
- IV. If we determine the ultimate goal to be the factual sense of well-being, then our entire concern is its factual attainment and its firm securing. However, neither the one nor the other can be guaranteed by any prudent considerations (Proofs).—The untenability of ideal (mental and aesthetic) pleasures from the eudaemonistic point of view.—Pleasures are not abiding qualities that can be added, but only transient subjective states that pass and cease to be pleasures. Therefore, any advantage of prudent eudaemonism over a mindless life in the fast lane is only apparent.
 - V. Self-sufficient eudaemonism, the principle of which is inner freedom from the desires and the attachments that make people happy.—By its purely negative character, such freedom can only be a condition for obtaining a higher good, but not that very good itself.
 - VI. Utilitarianism claims the highest practical principle is to serve the common good, or to benefit humanity. It coincides with the concept of benefit correctly understood.—Insofar as they coincide with those of altruistic morality, utilitarianism is not mistaken in its practical demands. It is mistaken in its desire to establish these demands on egoism, the original meaning of which supposedly contradicts our given experience (the self-sacrifice of an individual for the sake of the species among animals and savage peoples; “struggle for the lives of others”).
 - VII. The logical error in the connection that utilitarianism wants to establish between use in the sense of personal benefit and use understood as a universal sense of well-being.—The general untenability of utilitarianism and of any eudaemonism.—A sense of well-being remains only a vague and unrealized *demand* over which the demand of the moral good, as that which should be, has all the advantages.—Transition to Part Two.

Part Two. The Moral Good from God.

Chapter 7. The Unity of Moral Foundations.

- I. Conscience and shame.
- II. The feeling of shame with its original and fundamental connection to the sexual sphere transcends the bounds of material life and, as an expression of formal disapproval, accompanies any violation of a moral norm in any related sphere.
- III. For an individual animal, the infinity of life is given only *in genitalibus*, and this animal senses and behaves as a limited fact, as a passive means or instrument of a generic process understood as a bad infinity. Here, in the midst of a natural life, a person is aware of the lack in this generic infinity in which the animal finds what is higher than it.—The fact that people first and foremost are ashamed of the very essence of natural life, or of the fundamental manifestation of our natural being, directly shows that we are super-animal and super-natural beings. In sexual shame, we become a person in the full sense.

- IV. The eternal life of the species by way of the eternal death of individuals is shameful and unsatisfactory for humans who sense the need and obligation not to be an instrument, but the possession of eternal life.—The true genius.
- V. The path of animal birth or of the perpetuation of death, perceived at first as shameful, then turns out to be pitiless and profane. As the path of supplanting or replacing one generation with another, it is pitiless, and it is profane since those who are most proximally replaced are our fathers.
- VI. Childbearing as good and as evil. Resolution of the antinomy: Insofar as the evil of childbearing can be abolished by childbearing itself, it becomes a moral good (clarification).
- VII. The positive significance of the pathos of human love as indicative of the secret *integrity* of the human individual and of the obvious task of recovering that significance.—The uselessness of the pathos of love for procreation.
- VIII. The fundamental, intrinsic connection between shame and pity as a hidden reaction of human *integrity* against: (1) the individual division by sex, and (2) a further division of humanity arising from the first into many conflicting egoistic individuals (shame as individual chastity and pity as social chastity).
- IX. The same connection regarding: (3) piety as religious chastity, counteracting the separation of the human being from the absolute focus of life.
- X. The unique essence of morality is human *integrity* rooted in our nature as the abiding *norm* and which is realized in life (personal and historic) as doing the proper thing through a struggle with the centrifugal and dismembering forces of being.—The principle preserving norms in shame.—Modifications of the original (genital) shame: conscience as, for the most part, shame between humans and the fear of God as religious shame.
- XI. In the three attained directions of human integrity, the moral good coincides with benefit.—However, since genuine benefit is determined by the moral good, the ethics of pure duty cannot contradict eudaemonism in general, which must enter into it.—The human moral good does not give complete satisfaction and a sense of well-being, only because it never happens to be complete and never fully achieved.—Clarifications.
- XII. For its real autonomy, the moral good must be perfect, and such a good necessarily is also a real good.—With a false understanding of the moral good and of the real good, the empirical cases of a discrepancy and equally of a coincidence of virtue with a sense of well-being have no moral interest.—Examples.
- XIII. Critical remarks on the inadequacy of Kant's ethics.
- XIV. The baseless nature of Kant's religious postulates. The reality of the super-human Moral Good, proved by the moral growth of humanity.

Chapter 8. The Unconditional Principle of Morality.

- I. Morality and reality.—In feeling shame, we actually distinguish ourselves from our material nature; in feeling pity, we actually manifest our essential connection and similarity with other living creatures.

- II. In a religious feeling, the Deity is experienced as the reality of the perfect Moral Good (=Real Good), unconditionally and entirely realized in itself.—The general foundation of religion is the living sensation of the real presence of the Deity, of the one, which embraces everything within itself.—Clarifications.
- III. The reality of the Deity is not deduced from religious experience, but its immediate content, viz., that which is experienced.—The analysis of this content as the given relation of the human being to the Deity with respect to: (1) their difference (“the dust of the Earth”² in us), (2) their ideal connection (“the image of God” in us) and (3) their real connection (“the likeness of God” in us).—The complete religious attitude as logically composed from three moral categories: (1) *imperfections* in us, (2) *perfections* in God and (3) the *process of perfecting* as our task in life.
- IV. Psychological confirmation: “the joy in the Holy Spirit”³ as the highest expression of religion.—The religious attitude seen with respect to formal morality.—The obligation “to be perfect,” its ideal extension and practical significance: “to become perfect.”
- V. The three sorts of perfection: (1) the unconditionally existing (*actus purus*) in God; (2) the potential perfection in the mind; (3) the actually becoming perfect in the universal historical process.—Proofs of the rational necessity of the process: Just as a mollusk or a sponge cannot manifest human thought and will and a biological process is necessary for the creation of a more perfect organism, so also the realization of a higher thought and will (the Kingdom of God) cannot be revealed among the half-savages, and the process of historical perfecting of the forms of life is required.
- VI. The necessity of the universal process that follows from the unconditional principle of the moral good.—The world as a system of preliminary material conditions for realizing the kingdom of ends.—Human moral freedom as the final condition for this realization.
- VII. The demands of religious morality: “Have God within you” and “Relate to everything as God would.”—The relation of God to evil.—The complete formulation of the categorical imperative as the expression of the unconditional principle of morality.
- VIII. The higher stages of morality do not deny and do not eliminate the lower ones, but presuppose them and rely on their historical realization.—The pedagogical aspect of the matter.
- IX. By virtue of the unconditional moral principle, natural altruism becomes deeper, elevated and enlarged.—The determining strength of this principle with respect to the collective historical organization, designated to serve the Moral Good: Our highest obligation is not to serve without question these organizations (which surely can diverge from their purpose), but to assist

² E] Cf. Genesis 2: 7.

³ E] Cf. Romans 14: 17.

them in their service to the moral good when they are faithful to it and to show them their true obligations when they diverge.

- X. When the connection between the human being and the Deity is raised to the level of absolute consciousness, the protective feeling of chastity (shame, conscience, fear of God) reveals its ultimate sense as protecting not the relative but unconditional human dignity—his ideal perfection as that which should be realized.—Here, ascetic morality finds its positive eschatological motive, viz., the reconstruction of our corporeality as the pre-designated dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 9. The Reality of the Moral Order.

- I. Since the reality of the spiritual and of the material are inseparable, the ongoing process of universal perfecting, which moral philosophy examines and which concerns the divine in our humanity, is necessarily also a matter of the divine in the material.—The series of concrete levels of existence, which are the most firmly determined and characteristic from the moral point of view, realized in the universal process are the five “Kingdoms”: mineral, or inorganic, vegetable, animal, naturally human, and spiritually human, or kingdom of God.—Descriptive definition of each.—The external interrelations: Inorganic substances nourish plant life, animals exist at the expense of the vegetable kingdom, people at the expense of the animal kingdom and the kingdom of God consists of people (Clarifications).—The general essence of the ascending order: Just as a living organism consists of a chemical substance that has ceased to be *merely* a substance and just as natural humanity consists of animals that have ceased to be *merely* animals, so the kingdom of God consists of people who have ceased to be *merely* people but who have entered into a new, higher plane of existence, where their purely human tasks have become the means and instruments for another definitive purpose.
- II. A stone exists; a plant exists and lives; an animal, in addition, is also aware of actual states and correlations; the natural human being exists, lives, is aware of its actual life and also gradually grasps the universal meaning of life expressed in terms of ideas; the sons of God are called to realize this meaning or the perfect moral order in everything to the end.—Clarifications.—The development of the human kingdom in antiquity.—The real limit is the living human-god (the apotheosis of the Caesars).—Just as in the animal kingdom the appearance of the anthropomorphic ape anticipates the actual human being, so in natural humanity the appearance of the deified Caesar anticipates the true divine human being.
- III. The divine human as the first and chief manifestation of the Kingdom of God.—Reasons to believe in the historical manifestation of Christ (as the Divine human being) from the point of view of the evolution of the world rationally understood.

- IV. The positive unity of the world process from its three sides: (1) The lower kingdoms enter into the moral order as the necessary conditions of its realization; (2) each of the lower kingdoms exhibits an attraction for the one higher than it; (3) each higher kingdom physically (and psychologically) absorbs what is lower within itself.—The collection of the universe.—The task of the natural human being and of humanity is to collect the universe conceptually; the task of the Divine human being and of divine humanity is actually to collect the universe.
- V. The positive connection between the spiritual and the natural human being, between grace and the natural good.—Historical confirmation of the fundamental Christian truth.
- VI. Christ is the perfect individual.—Why he appeared first in the middle of history and not simply at the end of it.
- VII. The perfect moral order presupposes the moral freedom of each person, and real freedom for the finite spirit is acquired only by experience, hence the need for history after Christ.—The final meaning of this history.—The real moral task inevitably brings us to the set of conditions that determine the current historical existence of society, or of the collective human being.

Part Three. The Moral Good through Human History

Chapter 10. The Individual and Society

- I. The breach between the individual and society as such is merely a morbid illusion of consciousness.—Clarification.
- II. Owing to reason and the human will, the human individual as such can realize unlimited possibilities. That is, the individual is a unique form with infinite content.—The chimera of the self-sufficient individual and the chimera of an impersonal society.—Social life is a part of the very definition of the individual as a rationally knowing and morally active force, which is possible only in the form of social existence.—Proofs.—Society is the objectively realized content of the rational, moral individual. It is not one's external limit, but one's essential completion, the indivisible whole of social life, already partially realized in the past (social tradition), partially realized in the present (social services) and finally an anticipation of its future perfect realization (the social ideal).—Corresponding to these abiding moments of personal-social life, there are three main stages in historical development: (1) the gens (in the past), the nation-state (at present), the universal (in the future).—(The clear distinction of these aspects and stages of life are actually and historically manifested only as successively predominant, and not the exclusive presence of one or the other).
- III. Society is a supplemented or expanded individual, and the individual is a compressed or concentrated society.—The historical task of morality lies not in creating but in being aware of the solidarity between the individual and society, in transforming it from an involuntary to a voluntary solidarity so that each of us understands, accepts and carries out the common concern as being one's own.

- IV. Genuine morality is the proper interaction between the single individual and one's given environment (those lower than, equal to and higher than oneself).—The human being is from the start an individual social being, and all of history is only a gradual deepening, elevating and enlarging of our two-sided personal social life. Of these two inseparable and correlative terms, the individual is the mobile, dynamic one, whereas society is the sluggishly protective and static principle in history. There can be no fundamental antagonism between the individual and society, but only a conflict on personal initiative between new and previous stages of individual-social development.
- V. The gens (in the broad sense) as a rudimentary embodiment of all of morality (religious, altruistic and ascetic) or the realization of personal human dignity in the most intimate and fundamental sphere of society.—Clarifications and confirmations.
- VI. The moral content of gentile life is eternal, and the historical process severs the form of gentile life.—The general course of this disintegration.—Transition from the gens through the tribe to the nation and the state.—Significance of the word "fatherland."
- VII. With the creation of a new social whole, broader than the gens, namely the fatherland, the gens is transformed into the family.—Clarifications.—The importance of the individual principle with the transition from the gentile way of life to that of the state.
- VIII. Every social group has only relative and conditional rights over the human being.—The social organization, even though a relatively higher one (e.g., the state), has no rights over the eternal moral content that is contained even in the relatively lower forms of life (e.g., the gentile).—Detailed clarification from Sophocles' *Antigone*.

Chapter 11. The Principal Eras in the Historical Development of Individual and Social Consciousness.

- I. Moral progress (from its religious and altruistic side), corresponding to social progress. Explanatory notes.
- II. Cultural achievements as a condition of progress and for ascetic morality, which is not the concern of the single individual, as such, but can be manifested by a person only as an individual, social being.—Historical clarifications and confirmations.—Conditions for the rise of a renunciation of consciousness.
- III. The recognition by the human individual of one's purely negative, or formal, infinitude without any definite content—a religion of awakening: "I am higher than all of this; all of this is *empty*." The Buddhist creed of "three jewels": "I have faith in Buddha; I have faith in his doctrine; I have faith in the community." That is, everything is an illusion, except for three things worthy of recognition: the spiritually awakened person, the words of awakening and a fraternity of the awakened.—Buddhism as the first surviving stage

- of human universalism, rising over the nation's political order with its pagan religion and societal structure.—The moral essence of Buddhist doctrine: respect for awakened ancestors, the commandment to be without will-power and the commandment of universal kindness.
- IV. Critique of Buddhism: Its internal contradictions.
 - V. Definitive evaluation of Buddhist doctrine as a religious and moral nihilism (in the strict sense), which fundamentally denies every object and every motive for respect, for pity and for spiritual struggle.
 - VI. The logical transition from Indian nihilism to Greek idealism.—The Greeks no less than the Hindus sensed the emptiness of sensuous existence: pessimism in Greek poetry and philosophy.—However, from sensuous emptiness the Greeks passed to the intelligible completeness of ideas.—The characteristics of idealism (historical clarifications and examples).
 - VII. The impossibility of consistently setting the two worlds against each other.—The three relative and analogous untruths (anomalies) of the phenomenal world: psychological (the subordination of reason to the passions), social (the subordination of the sage to the mob) and physical (the subordination of the living organic form to the inorganic forces of substance in death).—Idealism attempts to combat the first two anomalies but is blind and dumb to the third.—Our entire world as an indivisible whole (not only the mental and political, but also the physical) is in need of salvation, and the savior cannot be an Indian ascetic nor an Hellenic philosopher, but the Hebrew Messiah—not someone who rejects life in the name of non-existence or in the name of renounced ideas, but a healer and reviver of life for all eternity.
 - VIII. A comparative evaluation of Buddhism, Platonism and Christianity; negative universalism, one-sided or partial universalism and positive, whole or perfect universalism.—The unsound nature of the Platonic worldview with respect to morality.—Preparatory significance of Buddhism and Platonism and their sterility as complete doctrines.—The character of Christianity as an absolute *event*, as an absolute *promise* and as an absolute *task*.

Chapter 12. Abstract Subjectivism in Morality.

- I. The erroneous view that in principle denies morality is an objective task or a concern of the collective human being.—A formulation of the problem.
- II. The inadequacy of morality as merely a subjective feeling.—Historical confirmation.
- III. The inadequacy of morality as merely a personal preaching.—Historical confirmations.
- IV. The demand for organized morality.—Explanation of principles.—The level of the subordination of the individual to society should correspond to the level of the subordination of society itself to the moral good, without which the social setting has no rights on the individual person.

Chapter 13. The Moral Norm of Social Life.

- I. The lie of social realism, according to which social institutions and interests have a supreme and decisive significance in themselves.—A person is not just a social animal.—The concept of social life, as such, in terms of its content is poorer than the concept of a person, but in terms of its scope it is broader.—A description of the social life of ants.
- II. The unconditional significance of the individual for human social life.—No person under any conditions or for any reason can be considered as *merely* a means or an instrument, neither for the good of another individual, nor for the good of a certain group of individuals, nor for the so-called “common good.”—Clarifications.—The relation of religion, family, and property to the unconditional moral norm.
- III. The equality of human rights is falsely understood as a privilege: of one (in eastern despotism), or of a few (classical aristocracy), or of the many (democracy).—The three chief anomalies of ancient society: the rejection of human dignity toward external enemies, to slaves and to criminals.—The conscious progress of social morality in the ancient world.—The unconditional affirmation of human dignity in Christianity.
- IV. The present task: to get all social institutions to conform to the unconditional norm of social morality in the struggle with collective evil.

Chapter 14. The National Question from the Moral Point of View.

Collective evil as a triple immoral relation: between various nations, between society and criminals, between the various social classes.

- I. Nationalism and cosmopolitanism.—The moral bankruptcy of nationalism.
- II. The absence of strictly national divisions in antiquity.—Oriental despotism and Western politics do not coincide with nations.—Historical references.
- III. The Jews have never been *only* a nation.—Christianity is not a negative cosmopolitanism, but a positive universalism that is above and includes all nations. It also demands neither the absence of nationality nor individuality.—Explanation and historical references.
- IV. The universalism of the new European nations. Historical survey: Italy, Spain, England, France, Germany, Poland, Russia, Holland, Sweden.
- V. Conclusion of our historical survey: A nation’s meaning and inspiration as a particular being lies simply in its connection and agreement with what is universal.—The moral bankruptcy of cosmopolitanism.—The positive obligation with respect to the national issue: Love (in the ethical sense) all other nations as you do your own.—Explanation.

Chapter 15. The Penal Question from the Moral Point of View.

Formulation of the Problem.

- I. The morally proper opposition to crime demands moral assistance from both parties: the obligation to defend the offended and to reason with the offender.—Both of the predominant doctrines are false and reject this or that side of the matter.
- II. The idea of punishment as *retribution*.—Its roots lie in the custom of the vendetta during the era of the gentile way of life.—The transformation of this custom in the criminal justice system with the transition of the obligation to avenge from the gens to the state.
- III. The factual origin of the criminal justice system is erroneously taken as the foundation for its norms.—The absurd arguments in favor of the savage concept of punishment as revenge or retribution.
- IV. The immoral tendency to preserve cruel punishments.—The generally recognized absurdity of retribution makes this tendency rely on the principle of deterrence.—The essential immorality of this principle.—The inescapable inconsistency of its supporters.
- V. The chaotic state of contemporary justice.—The doctrine of non-resistance to evil as applied to the penal problem.—A detailed analysis and refutation of this doctrine.
- VI. The moral principle allows neither punishment as a form of deterring retribution nor an indifferent (or unhindered) attitude towards crime. It demands a real opposition to crime, defining such opposition as the just means of actively loving one's neighbor which legally and forcibly limits certain external manifestations of an evil will not only for the sake of society's security and that of its peaceful members, but certainly also in the interest of the criminal himself.—The normal administration of justice in the sphere of criminality must realize or at least intend the equal realization of three rights: the right of the offender to a defense, the right of society to security and the right of the offended to protection and recompense.—Temporarily depriving the criminal of freedom as the necessary and preliminary condition for fulfilling this task. The consequences of punishment for the criminal must lie in a natural intrinsic connection with his actual state.—The necessity of a corresponding transformation of criminal courts: "conditional sentences" as the first step towards such a transformation.
- VII. The possibility of criminal reform.—The right and obligation of society to take care of this.—The necessary transformation of penitentiary institutions.

Chapter 16. The Economic Question from the Moral Point of View.

- I. The development of crime and of the hatred of nationalities in connection with an abnormal economic situation.—The simple essence of the economic problem.—Its fundamentally incorrect solution by orthodox economists and socialists.

- II. The false and immoral isolation of economic relations as if they were independent of the moral conditions of human activity in general.—How the free play of chemical processes can occur in a dead and decaying organism. However, in a living organism these processes are connected and determined by biological ends. Similarly, the free play of economic factors and laws is possible only in a dead and decaying society, while in a living society with a future the economic elements are connected and determined by moral goals. Humanity is not now nor was it ever in such a lowly state that the need to procure the material means of life was not complicated by a moral issue.—Clarifications.
- III. Also in its economic life, a society should be organized by a realization of the moral good. The peculiarity and the autonomy of the economic sphere lies not in that it has unavoidable laws, but in that it, by the essence of its relations, presents a special and original field for the application of the one moral law.—The ambiguous beginning and the hostile end of socialism.—The principle of the Saint-Simonists: the restoration of the rights of matter.—The true and important sense of this principle: Matter has a right to its spiritualization by humans.—This sense soon gave way to another: Matter has a right to reign over humans.—The gradual degeneration of socialism in economic materialism, the essence of which is intrinsically identical with the essence of plutocracy.—Explanation.
- IV. The true solution to the economic question lies in the our moral relation to material nature (the Earth), which is dependent on our moral attitude towards others and to God.—The commandment to work: to cultivate material nature with effort for oneself and family, for all of humanity and for nature's own sake.—The inadequacy of the “natural harmony” of our personal interests.—Refutation of Bastiat's position.
- V. The obligation of society to recognize and to protect everyone's right to a dignified human existence.—The immorality of certain working conditions.—Examples, confirmations and clarifications.
- VI. The principal conditions under which human relations in the sphere of material work become moral: (1) Material wealth should not be considered the independent goal of human economic activity; (2) production should not be accomplished at the expense of the human dignity of the producers, and not one of them should become merely an instrument in the production process; (3) our obligations to the Earth (material nature in general) should be recognized.—Explanations.—The rights of the Earth.—Evaluation of our triple relation to material nature: (1) submission to it; (2) struggle with it and its exploitation; (3) tending to it both for our own and for its sake—Without a love for nature for its own sake it is impossible to realize the moral organization of material life.—The connection of a moral attitude towards external nature with the attitude towards one's own body.
- VII. The insufficiency of studying the productive and material causes of work.—The complete definition of work from the moral point of view: Work is human interaction in the material world which, conforming to moral norms, should provide to all and to each of us the necessary means to a dignified existence and lead to all-round perfection. Its ultimate purpose should be the transformation and spiritualization of material nature.

- VIII. Analysis of the concept of property.—Relativity of its foundations.
- IX. The right of everyone to an adequate income and savings.—The normal origin of capital.—The right and the obligation of society to limit the abuses of the owners of private property.—The socialist aspiration for a baseless expansion of this social right and obligation.—The moral sense of bequeathed, or inherited (family), property.—The particular importance of family inheritance with regard to land: the demand not to limit it, but to leave it to each family if possible.—Refutation of objections.
- X. Exchange and fraud.—Commerce as a social service that cannot have personal profit as its sole or even principal goal.—Right and obligation of society forcibly to limit abuses in this sphere.—The transition to the issue of the relation of the moral to the legal.

Chapter 17. Morality and Law.

- I. The recognition of a relative element in morality is contained in the very essence of the unconditional moral principle as a commandment or demand for an as yet unattained perfection.—The comparative predominance of this relative aspect forms the legal sphere of relations and the comparative predominance of the unconditional aspect—the properly moral sphere.
- II. The sham contradiction between law and morality.—Examples and clarifications.
- III. The various states of moral as well as of legal consciousness.—Immutable juridical norms, or natural law.—Conservatism in law.—Progress in law, or the unswerving attraction of legal positions to legal norms, is consistent, though not identical, with moral demands.
- IV. Close connection between morality and legal right, its vital importance for both sides.—Its verbal and etymological confirmation.
- V. The differences between morality and legal right: (1) The unlimited character of the purely moral and the limited character of legal demand. In this respect, a right is the lowest limit, or the *definite minimum* of morality; (2) legal right demands chiefly the objective *realization* of this minimal moral good, or of the real elimination of a certain amount of evil; (3) in this realization a legal right allows *compulsion*.
- VI. General definition: A right is a compulsory demand to realize a definite minimal moral good, or order, which prohibits certain manifestations of evil.—The basis of this in morality: Moral interest demands personal freedom as a condition for human dignity and moral improvement. However, the human being cannot exist, and consequently cannot have the chance to be free and improve, except in society. Thus, the moral interest requires that external manifestations of personal freedom conform to the conditions of the existence of society, i.e., not to the ideal perfection of some, but to the real security of all.—This security is not guaranteed by an unconditional law, by moral law alone, since it does not exist for immoral people, but is protected by a compulsory juridical law that applies to them also.

- VII. Positive legal right as a historically moving definition of a necessary and compulsory balance between two moral interests: personal freedom and the common good.—The moral demand for everyone *to be free to be immoral*; this freedom is protected by a positive legal right.—Clarifications.—The immutable limit to the compulsory activity of any collective organization.
- VIII. The character of the juridical evaluation of crime.
- IX. By the very definition of a legal right, the interest of the common good can in every case only limit personal freedom, but cannot in any case eliminate it.—Therefore, capital punishment and a life deprived of freedom is impermissible.

Chapter 18. The Meaning of War.

- I. The problem of war consists of three problems: a general moral one, an historical one and one concerning personal morality.—The indisputable resolution of the first lies in the point that war is an anomaly, an evil.
- II. War as a relative evil.—Clarifications.—Transition to the problem of the historical meaning of war.
- III. Wars between gentes naturally give rise to treaties and rights as a guarantee of the peace.—The formation of the state.—The organization of war in the state as an important step towards the realization of peace.—“Universal monarchies.”—Their comparative characteristics.—Pax Romana.—The wars that fill ancient history extended the sphere of peace.—Military progress in the ancient world at the same time yielded great moral and social progress, enormously reducing the number of human victims of war.
- IV. Christianity has, in principle, abolished war; but since this principle has not been internally assimilated wars remain inevitable and, under certain conditions, can be the lesser evil, i.e., a relative good.—The Middle Ages.—Three general facts in modern history are of great importance with regard to the problem of war: (1) the segregation of the majority of nationalities into independent political units or “complete bodies”; (2) the development of international relations of various types; (3) the real dissemination of European cultural unity around the entire globe.—Clarifications.—The coming world war.
- V. The general historical meaning of all wars: the struggle of Europe with Asia—first local and symbolic (the Trojan War), in the end its full real scope.—The end of external wars reveals the great truth that external peace is still not in itself the true good, but becomes a good only in connection with the inner (moral) regeneration of humanity.
- VI. The attitude of subjective morality towards war.—The false identification of war and military service with the murder of an individual.—War as a conflict between collective organisms (states) and their collective organs (armies) is not the concern of single individuals, who passively participate in it. A possible murder on their part is merely accidental. A refusal to perform the military service demanded by the state is of necessity a greater moral evil and, therefore, is impermissible.—The moral obligation of the individual to participate in the defense of one’s fatherland.—The basis of this in the absolute moral

principle.—Explanatory examples.—The indubitable dangers of militarism say nothing against the necessity of armaments.—A biblical illustration.

- VII. Our positive obligation to defend or protect our fatherland but also to help perfect it is inseparable from the general improvement of humanity.—In order to approach a good and lasting peace, one must work against the evil root of war, i.e., against the hostility and the hate that separate humanity.—Historically, war has directly served as an external and indirect means to unite humanity internally. Reason forbids the rejection of this instrument so long as it is necessary. Conscience, however, obliges us to try to make it unnecessary and to make the natural organization of humanity, presently divided into hostile parts, an actually unified moral or spiritual organization.

Chapter 19. The Moral Organization of Humanity on the Whole.

- I. The differences between the natural and the moral solidarity of humanity, posed by Christianity as a historical task, for the conscious and willful improvement of all in the one Moral Good.—The present subject of improvement is the *individual human being together with and inseparable from the collective person*.—The three abiding embodiments of the self-improving subject, or the three natural groups that really embody personal life: family, fatherland and humanity that, in historical order, correspond to the stages: gentile, the political nation and the universal spirit; the last can be realized on condition of the spiritualization of the first two.—The actual elements and forms of life as conditional data for the solution of an absolute task.—The given natural connection between three generations (grandparents, parents, children) must be transformed into an unconditionally moral one through the spiritualization of the family religion, marriage and education.
- II. Veneration of forefathers.—Its eternal sense is preserved in the brute facts.—The Christian transformation of the chief features of the ancient cult.
- III. Marriage.—It also unites human beings with God through the present just as the religion of our forefathers does through the past.—In true marriage, the natural sexual is not destroyed, but transubstantiated.—The natural elements of the sexual relationship serve as the necessary data for the moral task of this transubstantiation.—These elements are: (1) carnal desire, (2) being in love, (3) procreation.—Marriage remains the satisfaction of sexual needs, but this need itself is no longer a matter of the satisfaction of the animal organism, but of the recovery of the image of God in us.—Marriage as a form of asceticism, as a feat and as martyrdom.—External procreation, unnecessary and impossible in a perfect marriage—as a necessary consequence of the still unattained state of perfection yet as the necessary path for its future perfection.
- IV. The purpose of education in a spiritually organized family lies in connecting the temporary life of a new generation with the eternal good common to all generations and restoring their essential unity.
- V. True education must be at the same time and inseparably both *traditional and progressive*. Passing to a new generation the entire spiritual heritage of the past, it must at the same time develop in it the desire and ability to use this

- heritage as a living driving force for a new approach to the highest goal.—The pernicious consequences of separating these two aspects.—The moral foundation of education is to inspire our descendants with a keen interest in the *future of their ancestors*.—Clarifications.—Moral progress can consist only in the further and best fulfillment of the obligations that follow from tradition.—The highest principle of pedagogy is the indissoluble link, even by death, between generations which support each other in the progressive fulfillment of the one common cause—the preparation for the obvious Kingdom of God and the resurrection of all.
- VI. The normal *family* is an immediate restoration of human moral integrity in one fundamental respect, namely, a continuity over generations (the order of temporal succession). This integrity must be restored in the broader order of coexistence, above all within the *nation* or fatherland.—In accordance with the essence of the moral organization, the concept of the nation absorbs neither the family nor the individual but fills their lives with content in a definite national form conditioned by language.—This form must be a particular one, but it must not be exclusive. The variety of our numerous languages does not require the languages to be disconnected and alienated.—The Babylonian principle of dividing humanity through the unity of confusion and the Zionist principle of assembly through a unanimity in separation.—The true universal tongue is through communication and making intelligible the many separate languages, which, although distinct from each other, do not separate us.
- VII. The unity of humanity.—All the reasons why we talk of the unity of a nation hold with even greater force when talking of humanity.—The unity of our origin; the unity of language does not eliminate our numerous languages; the unity of world history outside of which there is no national history.—Proofs and clarifications.—The indivisibility of the moral good.—The evil of exclusive patriotism.—Humanity as the sole *concern* of moral organization.—Transition to the issue of the universal *forms* of the moral order.
- VIII. The universal church as the organization of piety.—Clarifications.—The essence of the Church is the unity and holiness of the Deity insofar as it abides and works in a positive manner through humanity (or, in other words, the church is a creation assembled in God).—The *unity* and *holiness* of the church lies in both its *catholicity*, or universality, and its consistency in the form of *apostolic* succession.—Catholicity eliminates all separations and disconnections, while retaining all differences and diversity.
- IX. Positive participation in the absolute content of life through the universal church, *freeing* everyone and making all of us *equal*, forms us into a perfect *brotherhood*, which assumes a perfect *patronymic*.
- X. The religious principle of the *patronymic* is that spiritual life *does not arise from itself*. Hence, a messengership, or *apostolate*, as the opposite of imposition.—Christ, “the messenger from the Father” and who does his will, not his own, as the absolute prototype of the *apostolate*.—Its continuation in the church: “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”—Since the filial relationship is the prototype of piety, the only begotten Son of God—the Son par excellence—as the embodiment of piety is the way, the truth and the life of his church, as the organization of piety in the world.—The path of

- piety is the hierarchical path from above (the sense of ordination and consecration).—The truth of the Church fundamentally and in essence is neither scientific nor philosophical, nor even theological, but contains the *dogmas of piety*; the general meaning of the seven ecumenical councils.—The life of piety; the meaning of the seven sacraments.
- XI. The issue of the relation of the church to the state, or the issue of the *Christian state*.—An important indication in the New Testament (the story of the centurion Cornelius).
- XII. The moral necessity of the state.—Explanations with respect to Christianity.
- XIII. The state as collectively organized piety.—Vladimir Monomakh and Dante.—Clarification.
- XIV. Analysis of the general objection to the definition of the normal state.
- XV. Analysis of legal misunderstandings.
- XVI. Over and above the general conservative task of any state is the preservation of the bases of social life, without which humanity could not exist.—The *Christian state* has a more progressive task, namely, the improvement of the conditions of this existence, contributing to the free development of all human faculties, which must become the carriers of the coming Kingdom of God.—Clarifications.
- XVII. The normal relation between the church and the state.—From the Christian (divine-human) point of view, both independent human activity as well as complete devotion to the deity are equally necessary. The combination of these two is possible only through a clear distinction between the two spheres of life (the religious and the political) and between the two immediate motivations (piety and pity) that correspond to the difference between the immediate objects of action for the sake of the single final goal.—The pernicious consequences of the separation and of the mutual usurpations of church and state.—The Christian rule of social progress is for the state to constrain as little as possible our inner moral world, leaving that to the free spiritual activity of the church. At the same time, the state is to provide as accurately and broadly as possible the external conditions for a dignified existence and for our continued improvement.
- XVIII. The special moral task of economic life is the collectively organized abstention from evil carnality without bounds, the goal being the transformation of material nature—both individual and general—into the free form of the human spirit.—The exclusion of existing economic life from this task and the historical explanation of this fact.
- XIX. The moral meaning of the conservation of energy.—Expediency of collectively organized abstention depends upon the successes of collectively organized piety and pity.—The unity of the three tasks.
- XX. The personal representatives of the moral organization of humanity.—The three highest vocations: the high priest, the king and the prophet.—Their distinct characteristics and mutual dependence.

Conclusion. The Definitive Determination of the Moral Meaning of Life and the Transition to Theoretical Philosophy.

Translator's Introduction

1. A Brief Genesis of the *Justification* Vladimir Solov'ëv's magnum opus in ethics, *Opravdanie dobra* [*Justification of the Moral Good*], remains even today the single most comprehensive and systematic ethical treatise in the Russian language. It is also, arguably, the most accessible of Solov'ëv's philosophical writings to a contemporary Western audience and the most accessible of Tsarist-era Russian-language philosophy compositions. It will also strike the reader as singularly audacious in its resolve to handle—and resolve—a veritable wealth of issues within the confines of a single volume. Solov'ëv himself surely recognized the vast territory he wished to explore in this work, inserting a detailed “Table of Contents” for the second edition from 1899, making the job of following his train of thought somewhat easier. Originally begun in 1894, it marked Solov'ëv's public return to his original, professional interests and concerns after more than a decade devoted to writing on church- and nationality-related issues. Solov'ëv did not set out initially to write an entirely new work on ethics. At the start, he intended simply to prepare a second edition of his published doctoral dissertation, the *Critique of Abstract Principles* from 1880.⁴ It is not entirely clear why Solov'ëv took up this project and with it a return to philosophy. As late as November 1887, he wrote to Pavel Pirling, a Russian Jesuit priest: “There is no reason to believe in a great future in Russia for purely human culture (social institutions, sciences, philosophy, arts and letters).”⁵ With such an attitude, it may be hard to imagine a person taking up a subject he thought to have no future and one that he had literally abandoned years earlier. Yet, on the other hand, reflecting on his endeavors as a public intellectual during the 1880s, Solov'ëv confided a decade later that while his basic convictions had not changed he increasingly doubted “the practicality and usefulness of the plans given to me in my so-called ‘best years’.”⁶ Taken at face value, he also felt that the highly visible role he had sought for himself, assisting in the reform from within of both church

⁴ For a detailed discussion of Solov'ëv's early writings up to 1881, see Nemeth 2014.

⁵ *Pis'ma*, vol. 3: 158. Father Pirling (1840–1922), from a Russified German family, was born in Russia and received his early education in St. Petersburg.

⁶ Solov'ëv 1899b: v. In this connection, it is interesting that Solov'ëv took up the task of re-translating Plato's dialogues into Russian at this time. Earlier in the 1880s, he had dismissed a suggestion from his friend, the poet Afanasij Fet (1820–1892), to do so. Fet translated into Russian

and state, leading to a true Christian “Kingdom of God on Earth,” was ineffective, and his efforts were met and stymied with hostile criticism on many fronts. Neither the Orthodox Church nor the powerful Russian bureaucracy was particularly interested in this outsider's opinions, formulations and proposals.

It was at this temporal juncture when his disillusion with his self-appointed role as a missionary for a universal Christian theocracy was greatest that Solov'ëv, to his apparent surprise and pleasure, found in Moscow, upon returning from elsewhere in Europe, an “entire philosophical plantation.” In his undated letter, but presumably from 1888, to an old friend Dmitrij Certelev (1852–1911), Solov'ëv relates that the chief “example” of this is Nikolaj Grot (1852–1899), who in 1886 had assumed the professorship in Moscow and had a “burning desire to establish a philosophical journal.” The plans also called for establishing a “Philosophical Library” that would initially three times a year publish translations of classic philosophical works, both ancient and modern.⁷ Clearly, Solov'ëv was excited about these projects, which he, at least at first, thought were generally in accordance with his own philosophical and religious direction. It was in connection with this “Philosophical Library” that Solov'ëv revisited his own youthful, but up to then unpublished, translation of Kant's *Prolegomena*, which appeared at last in 1889.⁸

The hitherto dormant spark of philosophical inquiry was further rekindled in Solov'ëv by the opportunity to contribute significantly to a massive undertaking, the *Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary*, that started in 1890. Based on the rather meager information available to us, Solov'ëv, who at this time had no steady income, living on honoraria, royalties and the munificence of friends, apparently had hopes for a highly placed role, possibly even chief editor of the *Dictionary*. Although such a fanciful dream was quickly dashed, he was, nonetheless, named the editor of the publication's philosophical section, which surely also contributed to his renewed interest in philosophy.

However, the excitement and joy with which Solov'ëv met the new Moscow philosophers was quickly tempered. His initial enthusiasm sprang from a belief, as he expressed it in the same letter to Certelev, that Grot and the other Moscow philosophers were oriented on the true path away “from negative empiricism and towards positive spiritualism.” Yet already in the following year, 1889, it became clear to Solov'ëv, even if not to his friends, that, although they all shared his commitment to idealism and to Christianity, they did not favor his general ecumenical attitude and in particular his favorable outlook towards Roman Catholicism. Grot and another old childhood friend Sergej Trubeckoj were far more receptive to the inherent individualism of Protestant Christianity, albeit still well within the established

Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* (1880) and *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (1886).

⁷ *Pis'ma*, vol. 2: 255–256.

⁸ In his Preface to the translation, Grot wrote, “Kant's classic work is presented to the Russian public in a masterful translation in terms of its precision and literary merit by Vladimir S. Solov'ëv. He made this already at the beginning of the 1870s and has corrected and supplemented it. We have no better translation of Kant's works and probably never will.” Kant 1889: vii.

framework of Russian Orthodoxy, than he was. Additionally, it did not take long before a sharp philosophical divergence soon emerged between Solov'ëv and Lev Lopatin, another of the Moscow philosophers and actually another childhood friend, all the more apparent owing to their similar interests and the latter's own intellectual debt to the former.

Grot assumed the directorship of the still relatively nascent Moscow Psychological Society—its name bearing the term “Psychological” rather than “Philosophical” as a concession to gain approval from governmental officials, for whom anything “philosophical” was still associated with political radicalism—in 1888.⁹ Soon afterwards in April of the following year, Lopatin spoke to the Society on “free will and causality.” Lopatin's position was further developed in his 1891 doctoral dissertation, published as the second volume of his *Positive Tasks of Philosophy*. Solov'ëv sharply differed with his friend's position and at first thought to address these differences in print. He even prepared a paper that he presented for publication not to the Psychological Society's professional organ, *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii* [*Problems of Philosophy and Psychology*], as one might expect, but to *Vestnik Evropy* [*Herald of Europe*], one of the most prominent literary “thick journals” of the time and with whose editor Solov'ëv was then on good terms. Not surprisingly, the editor thought the proposal unsuitable owing to its narrow focus, and Solov'ëv graciously refrained from pursuing the matter further. This episode and Solov'ëv's general relationship to the Moscow philosophers also certainly contributed to the revival of his philosophical spirit. And although the article on free will was eventually published, albeit only posthumously in 1921, the general thrust of Solov'ëv's position found its way into the *Justification of the Moral Good*. Solov'ëv criticized Lopatin there, though without mentioning his name, for not understanding that not all forms of determinism are the same, that a, in today's terminology, soft determinism is perfectly compatible with the admission of a free will.

It is unclear exactly when the idea of writing a treatise specifically devoted to ethics occurred to Solov'ëv, but it certainly may have been in conjunction with a proposal to publish a German translation of his dissertation, the *Critique of Abstract Principles*, from 1880. To this end, he considered preparing a second edition of the work. Yet, despite his new-found philosophical vigor, Solov'ëv initially had neither the desire nor saw the need as yet to make substantial changes in the text, writing simply “I have decided on a second edition but only with the most necessary changes.”¹⁰ In a subsequent letter, this one clearly dated 12 September 1892, again to the same friend F. B. Gec (1853–1931), a Jewish writer and historian, Solov'ëv remarked that he had already completed a second edition of his *Critique* and that,

⁹ An earlier effort to found a philosophical organization had met with little success. In a letter to a friend, A. A. Kireev (1833–1910), presumably from 1883, Solov'ëv wrote, “I cannot participate in establishing a philosophical society, since I do not expect the likelihood of its success. However, if I am mistaken, if it does come about, as it should, I, of course, will not refuse to participate in its activities.” *Pis'ma*, vol. 2: 112. The Society itself was founded in 1885.

¹⁰ *Pis'ma*, vol. 2: 179. The editor of this published volume of letters, E. Radlov, dates this letter to the end of August 1892. Nevertheless, many instances of Radlov's dating of these letters have been seriously challenged.

although it represented an improvement over the 1880 edition, he was not able to execute the “radical” alterations he had wanted.¹¹

We do know that in mid-1892 and through at least much of 1893 Solov'ëv was consumed with writing his entries for the *Encyclopedic Dictionary*. We find him writing in mid-May 1892 to Konstantin K. Arsen'ev (1837–1919), the *Dictionary's* chief editor, that he will concentrate on philosophers and philosophical schools, i.e., the history of philosophy, with but short pieces on abstract and general philosophical terms.¹² In the months ahead, Solov'ëv penned a series of letters to Arsen'ev on matters related to his contributions and those of others, but there is no hint of further work on a second edition of the *Critique*. In an undated letter, attributed by his nephew to the summer of 1892, Solov'ëv wrote to Certelev, “I suffer from too much urgent work and too little time.”¹³

In addition to his involvement during this period with the *Dictionary*, Solov'ëv did manage to complete a number of short pieces as well as his highly speculative—and audacious—*The Meaning of Love*. However, in the summer of 1894, he became seriously ill, and while recuperating the work before us, the *Justification of the Moral Good*, was developing. For rest and relaxation—and a significantly cheaper cost-of-living compared to St. Petersburg—Solov'ëv departed for Finland in September 1894. And it was there, his nephew Sergey tells us, that much of the ethical treatise before us was written.

In a not unusual, if not typical, Russian fashion of the time, most of the individual chapters comprising the *Justification* appeared first as journal articles over a few years beginning in late 1894. They were then assembled together to form a single volume in 1897. Solov'ëv made changes and added some additional material for this volume that he had not previously published. A second edition then followed 2 years later with further alterations and new, additional material largely in response to criticisms. However, the present title of the book did not come to him until shortly before the first edition's publication. At first, he simply entitled it “Moral Philosophy.” On another occasion, in a letter dated 30 September 1894, he referred to it as his “Foundations of Moral Philosophy,” and yet on still another, this time in 1895, he referred to it as his “Ethics.”¹⁴ As further evidence of his evolving thought and his re-engagement with philosophy, we find Solov'ëv in another letter to Gec, this time from 21 February 1895, writing that instead of preparing a second edition of his *Critique of Abstract Principles* he planned to publish “three more mature and thorough books: first, a ‘Moral Philosophy’, then a ‘Theory of Cognition

¹¹ *Pis'ma*, vol. 2: 180. What happened to this “second edition” of the *Critique* is quite unclear. It certainly never saw the light of day as such. Furthermore, if we accept Radlov's dating of the previous letter as correct, Solov'ëv had a quick and abrupt change of mind with regard to this “second edition,” for here a scant few weeks later he now writes of radically altering the text, which he had earlier rejected. Additionally, he would have had to have made whatever changes he did make very quickly.

¹² *Pis'ma*, vol. 2: 77.

¹³ *Pis'ma*, vol. 4: 164. Cf. Solovyov 2000: 390.

¹⁴ *Pis'ma*, vol. 4: 132 and 66 respectively.

and Metaphysics', and finally an 'Aesthetics'.¹⁵ Solov'ëv managed to start his work on epistemology, publishing three relatively short pieces in 1897–99—thus while revising the first edition of his *Justification*—in the journal *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii*. Regrettably, he never finished that projected work on epistemology, and a completed book-length treatise on aesthetics always eluded him both at this time as well as it had earlier. Consequently, his possibly altered position on aesthetics in keeping with his new position in ethics and epistemology can only be surmised. He published a short work, "A First Step toward a Positive Aesthetic," in early 1894 but oddly wrote to his publisher Stasjulevich on 27 October 1893 that he had already at this early date "prepared for publication a book 'The Foundation of Aesthetics'."¹⁶ In any case, Solov'ëv died in early August 1900 at the age of 47 from various ailments.

2. A Sketch of the Structure and Argument of the *Justification* Solov'ëv's *Justification of the Moral Good* represents his major philosophical work from the last period of his life. However, it is unusual by today's standards in that it is by no means a secular work, a work relying solely on rational argument. The reader, in progressing through the chapters of this large work, will notice that many, but certainly not all, of Solov'ëv's positions are adopted without reservation from his understanding of Christianity without "philosophical" argument. On the other hand, he attempts to defend rationally certain other positions, both here and in his other works, that traditional Christianity views as a matter of faith and, as such, extra-philosophical. Another feature here, one which certainly anyone acquainted with Solov'ëv's other philosophical writings will recognize, is his predilection for, if not obsession with, triadic schemes, one that he never attempts to justify or even to thematize explicitly. This scheme is evident in the *Justification's* division into three parts: The Moral Good in Human Nature (Chaps. 1–6), The Moral Good from God (Chaps. 7–9), and The Moral Good through Human History (Chaps. 10–19). We also see that he finds three and only three innate moral feelings in us, each of which can be seen from three sides. The list of threes could be extended considerably. Before dismissing or even condemning Solov'ëv's thought for this apparent obsession, however, we should recognize that Kant too often thought in terms of triadic schemes with his three, and only three, "Critiques," the first being, in turn, divided into three parts: the "Aesthetic," the "Analytic" and the "Dialectic." Such are only examples; many more are readily apparent. Yet, few dismiss his "Critical Philosophy" on that account.

¹⁵ *Pis'ma*, vol. 2: 182–183.

¹⁶ For an English translation of "A First Step," see Soloviev 2003b: 135–143, and for Solov'ëv's letter see *Pis'ma*, vol. 1: 114. Given the early date of this presumed work, relative to his still emerging viewpoint in the *Justification* and that of the as yet unwritten "Theoretical Philosophy," we can seriously doubt whether this work on aesthetics, if it truly existed in the form that we would call a "book," was philosophically consistent with them or whether it too would have needed major revisions. Mochul'skij writes that this work was not found after Solov'ëv's death. He concludes, "We can assume it was not written and that the author [Solov'ëv] intended simply to rework and systematize his already earlier published articles on issues in aesthetics." Mochul'skij 1936: 236–7.

Unfortunately, there is still not yet a single full-length commentary on the *Justification* comparable to, say, those on Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* or Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Such a commentary would ideally situate Solov'ëv's arguments and stances within the Russian philosophical milieu of the late nineteenth century. We do know, however, that many of the discussions in the *Justification* represent his intended contributions or replies to issues raised by friends and ideological opponents, even if the targets of his criticisms are not often made explicit. One of these themes lies at the center of Solov'ëv's book, viz., the meaning of life. This general issue became a focus of attention among a number of scholars and literary figures, apart from Solov'ëv and at roughly the same time, in *fin de siècle* Russia. For example, N. I. Kareev (1850–1931), a historian and an old friend of Solov'ëv's, penned a treatise on ethics in 1895 that, not unlike the *Justification*, opened with a discussion of the “meaning of life.” Written, however, from a secular point of view, Kareev concluded that there was no general, theoretical answer, that we must seek the meaning and purpose of life within ourselves. There is no rational proof why I, this individual human being, should live or even what I should seek. Bound by our own limited existence and experience, we psychologically cannot transcend these limits to find something, a meaning and purpose, that lies outside our lives.¹⁷

Responding to Kareev in a public lecture of April 1896, the St. Petersburg neo-Kantian A. I. Vvedenskij (1856–1925) held that analytically to speak of the meaning of something is to say that it is intended and useful for realizing some end or goal. Vvedenskij, true to his Kantian roots, admitted that we cannot know whether life has such a goal. Certainly, none can be scientifically verified. However, belief in the obligatory nature of moral duty, which is rational and follows from the very notion of moral duty, entails belief in immortality and thereby along with it a belief that life has meaning.¹⁸

Others within the Russian intellectual community also weighed in on this issue. Solov'ëv's own extended statement first came in late 1896. The subtitle of the “Preface” to the first edition of the *Justification* runs “A Preliminary Conception of the Moral Meaning of Life,” and the subtitle of the book's “Conclusion” is, in part, “The Definitive Determination of the Moral Meaning of Life.” Solov'ëv believed he had elaborated in the pages between the “Preface” and the “Conclusion” not merely what the meaning of life is—and a moral meaning at that—but the means of realizing this meaning both for the human individual and for human society. In short, then, the *Justification* was to be not just a theoretical treatise, but a manual outlining, albeit only in broad strokes, how to achieve the meaning of life, which lies in connecting our individual and social being with the “perfect Moral Good”—one of Solov'ëv's various locutions for the Deity. This meaning becomes ever stronger or deeper as that connection becomes increasingly “perfect.” Unlike other philosophical works, both then and now, on ethics, Solov'ëv viewed the *Justification* as both a philosophical statement and a practical manual, a “guidebook,” so to speak, as he refers to it in the “Preface” to the book's second edition, for those

¹⁷ Kareev 1895.

¹⁸ Vvedenskij 1924.

of good will who care to go where it leads. For those who do not—and Solov'ëv is well aware that there are some—moral philosophy as such cannot convince them otherwise. However, the rational faith that is ultimately grounded in inner experience contains assertions that require philosophical justification. Solov'ëv hoped to turn to this project upon completion of his ethics. Unfortunately, he died leaving us with only a glimpse of his new “Theoretical Philosophy.”¹⁹

In Part One of the *Justification*, Solov'ëv argues that human beings have a “natural” awareness, or consciousness, of the moral good independently of religious experience. Contrasting his position with that of Darwin, Solov'ëv held that this awareness is based on three feelings that are part of human nature: pity, shame and reverence/respect. In doing so, he separates himself from Schopenhauer and his own earlier stand in the 1880 *Critique* that recognized pity, or sympathy, as the sole foundation of morality. Accepting the “data” provided by our human nature, then, we see that, on the one hand, practically speaking, i.e., from the moral point of view or what we could call the “practical attitude,” there is no issue of a Cartesian doubt with regard to others. Of course, we naturally and indubitably feel we have obligations to others, and therefore others exist. While a theoretical doubt might be entertained, there certainly is none in the practical attitude. There is likewise no doubt in Solov'ëv's mind, contrary to certain ethicists even today, that we have moral obligations even to ourselves²⁰ and that we can be “sinful” in thought as well as in deed, that we can feel shame merely for thinking of committing some action.

Solov'ëv extends the moral sphere even to nature and in doing so anticipates much of today's talk of environmental ethics. We stand in a moral relationship to all living things and, indeed, to the Earth itself. In Chap. 16, he states that there are three conditions for material work to be moral, the third of which is not to misuse, exhaust or destroy the land, i.e., that on which we, understood both individually and collectively, depend for our existence. Just as we are morally obligated to care for our own corporeal bodies, our material being, so too by extension must we care for that without which we could not fulfill that obligation, viz., the material world.

Solov'ëv's measured naturalism, seeing moral feelings as part of our human nature, allows him to assert that he avoided a one-sided dependence of ethics on revealed religion.²¹ It also enabled him to reject the charge that he should begin his philosophical investigations with a study of truth and the cognitive process in

¹⁹ See SS, vol. 9: 89–166. The three articles that he did publish prior to his death appeared between 1897 and 1899.

²⁰ Cf. Baier 1969: 218. For Baier, “it does not make sense to say that one has an obligation to oneself.” To Solov'ëv, his own position most likely contrasted again with Schopenhauer's, for which “the moral significance of an action can lie only in its reference to others.” Schopenhauer 1965: 142.

²¹ Although acknowledging Solov'ëv's own assertion concerning the independence of ethics, Trubeckoj wrote that “the most elementary acquaintance with the ethical theory of the *Justification of the Moral Good* will show it depends entirely on speculation and religious assumptions. Moreover, it depends directly on a series of Christian doctrinal theses.” Trubeckoj 1995: 46. Trubeckoj's two-volume work originally appeared in 1913.

general.²² Solov'ëv held that the object of ethics is of our own creation, namely, our actions and thoughts, which certainly are known to us, and therefore there is no need in advance of an ethical study to inquire how we know the external world and the limits of that presumed knowledge. Even if epistemology were to firmly establish that we cannot know the world surrounding us, that justified true belief of externality is unattainable, the distinction between good and evil would remain untouched as well as our obligations to ourselves. Since we do have moral obligations to ourselves, and unquestionably I know that I exist, even the solipsist has to ponder over ethical issues.

From the three moral feelings mentioned above, Solov'ëv believes three moral attitudes have appeared in the history of humanity: asceticism, altruism and religiosity. Each has its proper role in morality as a whole, but none of them can claim exclusivity. The expression an "evil ascetic" is no oxymoron, and even a deeply held religious attitude, held alone, does not preclude the performance of evil towards others—witness the Spanish Inquisition—or towards the animal kingdom as well as nature. In short, abstract religiosity is no sign of genuine morality. Implicit here is an argument that recurs throughout Solov'ëv's philosophical writings, including the *Justification*, that principles must take into account experience and real world facts.

Having exhausted the intrinsic ethical content from the three moral feelings and seen that they are all conditional, reason asks what makes them moral. Courses of action consistent with what would seem to be virtuous activity can and often conflict with each other. Is there a fundamental moral principle, one that has the attributes of universality and necessity, one that each of us has and is intelligible to all? Is there, in short, a highest good? These questions lead Solov'ëv into the subject matter of Chaps. 6–8.

Chapter 6 is devoted to a critical study of hedonism, eudaemonism and utilitarianism. The object of human actions most often mentioned is what is desired. Naturally, this object changes in the course of even a single individual's lifetime experience, indeed even in the course of a single day. No one could seriously hold that the fulfillment of desires should alone serve as the moral ideal. Thus, the next candidate for the good is a personal sense of well-being. This too fails to serve as the basis of a universal moral principle. Such a sense is inherently vague, would lead to conflicts with others and, in any case, would ask us to decide on actions that provide conceivably only relatively fleeting satisfaction. Utilitarianism proposes to obviate these difficulties by making the goal of moral action the common good, or the well-being, of humanity in general. It too, however, suffers from ambiguity: How are we to understand "well-being"? To associate it with "enduring satisfaction" only leads to disappointment. My sense of personal happiness that presumably is identified with such satisfaction may well not be considered even by myself as enduring, let alone by others. In the end, Solov'ëv finds wanting all ethical theories that posit the

²² Boris Chicherin, a quite distinguished statesman, historian and philosopher of the older generation, had raised this criticism already against Solov'ëv's procedure in the *Critique*. See Nemeth 2014: 203. Chicherin again raised this issue in his lengthy review-essay of the *Justification*. See Chicherin 1897: 590.

good to consist of some object or temporary feeling. All of this is ground already well-trodden by many, including Hegel, but its omission could and would be seen by critics as a flaw in Solov'ëv's general argument.

Chapter 7 contains the late Solov'ëv's most detailed critique of Kant's ethical philosophy. Despite his high esteem for Kant's endeavors in ethics, for establishing ethics as a science and, in particular, for his recognition that the supreme ethical principle must be universal and necessary, Solov'ëv charges Kant with abstract subjectivism. What is the force compelling us to act morally? Kant's answer is our own free will acting out of a pure sense of duty manifested in terms of conscience. Solov'ëv's charge against this is one long familiar to philosophy students: If a moral agent can consistently hold the universality of the principle behind his heinous action, then for Kant that principle is morally good regardless of the ensuing consequences of the action. This, to Solov'ëv, again demonstrates, if yet another is needed, the error in constructing an ethics without factual knowledge of the circumstances and without knowledge of human nature.

Thus, having rejected both utilitarianism and Kantian formalism Solov'ëv returns in Chapter 8 to his approach in the first chapter and seeks to develop it further. Although each of us has an inherent idea of morality and, concomitantly, a notion of what our duty is, this alone is insufficient to accomplish the moral good. The feelings of shame and pity prove that we have within us a spiritual principle. The former already shows that we are more than mere animals, and pity demonstrates, in a practical sense, that we are not alone, that we sense a solidarity with other creatures. In much the same way, the third feeling of respect, or reverence, shows that we implicitly and naturally acknowledge there is something greater than ourselves. Solov'ëv understands this object to be, to use his own terminology, the "eternally existent," i.e., God. Just as we can say others are the "content," i.e., the object, of the feeling of pity, so too is God the "content" of this third feeling. And just as in pity we sense a certain solidarity or connection with others, so too in reverence do we sense a connection with God, a dependence on the Deity. With no reservation, hesitation or, indeed, rational argument, Solov'ëv identifies the ultimate object of reverence with the supreme Moral Good. With no reservation, hesitation or rational argument, Solov'ëv identifies this supreme Moral Good with the "eternally existent." It must be said here that Solov'ëv simply could not fathom Kant's moral "postulation" of the existence of God. The reality and the presence of God are just as obvious as that of human beings other than myself.

Solov'ëv asserts that the third feeling, the religious feeling, involves three elements: (1) a negative attitude towards the present; (2) a positive aspiration towards the higher ideal; and (3) an aspiration to change oneself and all else so as to approach this higher ideal. From this compound third feeling, Solov'ëv believes, follows his version of the categorical imperative: Become perfect. Such an imperative implies a life-long task, not just a momentary one. It, together with the other feelings, means we, i.e., all of humanity, should strive for a higher perfection, i.e., to be one with God. This goal is to be accomplished not from outside our traditional human institutions, viz., the Church and the state, but from within them and through them, making them, in turn, increasingly perfect.

The perfection felt within the religious attitude that ensues with the associated feeling takes three forms: (1) the perfection of God; (2) the potential perfection of human consciousness; and (3) the actual perfection that is being historically realized.²³ Solov'ëv takes this continuing process in the third form as necessarily historical. Such recognition allows him to be more acceptive of Darwinian evolution than many devout Christians even today. Through evolution, a process Solov'ëv explicitly takes to be a fact, nature gradually developed more and more complex forms until one evolved that would realize the desire for perfection, viz., the human being. Nonetheless, human consciousness at the level of the barbarian or savage is yet unable to realize the Kingdom of God. It is not a matter of physiology, but of historical experience and, in particular, of the most perfect social organization. This is being gradually produced in human history. The proper relation of the whole to each of us and each of us to the whole is, by definition, the Kingdom of God and as such includes not just the moral good (*dobro*), but also satisfaction, or the real good (*blago*). Human beings are fundamentally social beings, as the ancient Greeks already recognized, and the unconditional moral good cannot be realized by a Robinson Crusoe, an isolated human individual.

In the third part of the *Justification*, Solov'ëv develops his social philosophy and his philosophy of history, displaying his deep debt to both a Christian outlook and his knowledge of classical literature. He holds in Chap. 10 that there are, not surprisingly, three fundamental stages or "moments," to use the Hegelian expression, of human social life. In the first, the human closed community is tied by blood and marriage. In the gens, to use the term employed by Lewis Morgan to whose work²⁴ Solov'ëv specifically refers, we find human dignity realized in the most fundamental social sphere with respect to what is higher in the form of ancestor veneration. With the next stage, viz., life in the nation-state, we find human interactions increase not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. Whereas in the gens, morality largely concerned the family that surrounded the individual, in the nation-state morality, with its attendant obligations, concerns, in particular, an abstraction, viz., the state. Loyalty to the state takes a moral form, patriotism, which for all practical purposes is absent in the earlier phases of human sociality.

In addition to presenting what he takes to be the moral deficiencies of early human social groupings, Solov'ëv also outlines in Chap. 11 the deficiencies in several moral outlooks prior to the appearance of Christianity. Yet it is only with Christianity, with the attitude embodied within and permeating it, that morality is shown to be, to use his expression, a "universal task." Some earlier religions had taught that the path to the moral good lies in asceticism, others in transcendence, while some (e.g., Tolstoy) preach an abstract subjectivism and still others (e.g., Nietzsche) make a cult of power and beauty. All of these are one-sided. These moral teachings or

²³ We can surmise, then, that just as much of the *Justification* is an elaboration of this third form, his intended epistemology, or "Theoretical Philosophy," was to be an elaboration of the second form.

²⁴ See Morgan 1877. Ironically, while Solov'ëv utilized Morgan's work for his own religious-eschatological purposes Frederick Engels used it in support of his "historical materialism."

“philosophies” contend that the human individual as a separate entity can strive and at least in principle achieve moral perfection in disregard of society, a view Solov’ev argues against in Chap. 12. Although they may recognize the individual as an element in society, they believe that if everyone individually would seek and attain moral perfection, society would become perfect as well. Solov’ev does not doubt the “logic” of such a position, but, as odd as this may sound, its practicality. We cannot really expect everyone individually through their own efforts to embrace the pursuit of the moral good. Society and its institutions can and must cooperate in this. Christianity calls for society to become organized morality. Certainly, social divisions exist today and have existed in the past. However, unlike revolutionaries who call for their utopian elimination, an oxymoronic “classless society,” which would effectively mean the destruction of society, Christianity calls for these divisions to be situated in their proper moral relation to each other.

Three forms of enmity retard human social progress in pursuit of the Kingdom of God: the antagonism between nations, the criminal element and society’s reaction to it and, finally, the antagonism between social classes. Solov’ev devotes a separate chapter to each of these “forms.” That, in Chap. 14, Solov’ev seeks to distance himself from simple nationalism should go without saying. However, he does not turn a blind eye towards its existence and seeks to find in nationalism a positive value that could and should be preserved. In the final analysis, though, we must realize that the moral good is one and indivisible and that, therefore, we should love all other nationalities as we do our own. To do otherwise is truly anti-Christian, i.e., immoral.

In addressing the issue of how society should deal with criminals, Solov’ev, in Chap. 15, undoubtedly had Leo Tolstoy again principally in mind. Unlike Tolstoy, the former was not totally opposed to punishment for criminal acts. He did, however, take exception to retribution as the theoretical basis for punishment, calling it an intrinsic absurdity, and he certainly opposed the death penalty. However, Solov’ev also faulted looking at punishment as a means of deterring future criminal acts. Certainly, punishment could be considered moral if it were to prove useful in preventing crime, but, on the other hand, it can prove useful in this respect only if punishment is meted out immorally, i.e., if the criminal is treated not as a human being, but as a mere means to an end. Solov’ev in this instance agrees with Kant that humans should always be taken as ends in themselves. This is not to say, however, that society has no right to be protected from crime, just as the criminal has a moral right to reformation and instruction. For the good of all concerned, it makes sense that the criminal be incarcerated for a time just as we restrain someone from the misuse of some asset. However, the period of incarceration, for example, must be individually determined upon taking into account the circumstances of the crime and the criminal’s change of heart.

Chapter 16 is dedicated to economics, particularly economic inequalities within society. The failure of socialism is that it shares the outlook of its supposed enemy: it looks on the human being as an economic agent alone, a *homo economicus*, not as a moral being. Its proponents are jealous of the material wealth of the capitalist. However, Solov’ev is also highly critical of economics as a social science dedicated to the search for economic laws. Unlike natural ones, economic laws are merely

statistical. Should someone wish to sell an item at a lower price than warranted in terms of the demand, there is nothing preventing such a possible transaction. Sadly, Solov'ev fails to take into account that few would doubt such a possibility while still maintaining that, as a percentage, those who opt to flout the law of supply and demand are insignificant. Solov'ev shows no sympathy for the view that society would benefit best if individuals' efforts to maximize their own gains were left unregulated in the marketplace, i.e., the so-called invisible hand of Adam Smith.²⁵ For Solov'ev, the moral good must be intended; it cannot arise spontaneously out of the basest motive, i.e. self-interest. A society governed by egoism and personal material gain would represent the lowest, not the highest stage of human existence. The real interest of society is to encourage moral behavior, not acquiesce to its individual members' ephemeral material desires.

Finally, as for war, Solov'ev likens it in Chap. 18 to an illness. Certainly, the symptoms can be treated for a time without remedying the illness itself, and there surely are instances when it is best to do nothing, letting the illness run its course. War, in general, like an illness is undesirable and as such must be avoided when possible. However, from the standpoint of world history, state-sponsored military conquests have ushered in eras of peace, and without the state there can be no cultural progress. Wars between gentes and clans led to the creation of the state, which then sought to eliminate any remaining internal strife. We must also not forget that the European exploration and colonization of large parts of the world, accomplished not by preaching but by war, spread civilization throughout the world albeit at a cost particularly at the outset. Although Christianity recognizes war as an evil, it also recognizes its historical necessity. The true way to eliminate war is to eliminate the basis of war, the hatreds that aggravate tensions, and the way to do this is for all nations to become Christian, truly Christian not just in overt religious practices, but by adhering in thought and deed to the moral principles of Christianity.

Clearly, much of Solov'ev's presentation is idealistic and saturated with religious premises. Moreover, even apart from its triadic scheme there is much in Solov'ev's presentation that to us today is forced, arbitrary and woefully outdated but that he evidently considered obvious, natural and elemental. His characterization of love, marriage and sex, coming from a life-long bachelor, while in some respects quaint, would today in many quarters meet with a smile, if not laughter and possibly even ridicule. His view of the family and the respective roles of each member in it, which he apparently took to be virtually sacrosanct, appears today decidedly outdated. His literal reading of a tenet in the Nicene Creed and 1 Corinthians 15: 13 concerning the resurrection, the physical resurrection, of the dead surely must seem bizarre if not simply ridiculous, particularly in light of the not uncommon practice today of cremation and scattering of the ashes. The most egregious error, however, was his belief that the European—Christian European—powers of his day would not consider warring again against each other. Solov'ev's confidence was to prove tragically misplaced at the expense of so many lives less than two decades after his own death.

²⁵ Smith's name, however, is never mentioned.

On the other hand, there are a number of refreshing recognitions in Solov'ëv's audacious treatise. Few people would defend Kant's condemnation of lying to prevent a murder, and most people still find it reprehensible—and in doing so make a moral judgment—for an able-bodied, rationally endowed person to squander his or her natural endowments in idle pursuits or, worse yet, drug-induced escapes from worldly problems. Not without reason has sheer laziness always been morally condemned. As for Mill's utilitarianism, the famous objection to it posed by a critic of the immorality of saving a drowning man in order then to kill him still resonates today. Mill's reply that we should look upon the rescue of the drowning man as merely the first step of a much larger act only begs the question at what point do we reckon the act as concluded. Solov'ëv, most likely alluding to this objection, recognized this ambiguity in Mill's response.²⁶

Solov'ëv's specific statements concerning how to handle nationalistic antagonism, criminal punishment, economic disparity and war are likely to appear highly idealistic, even though well intentioned. Solov'ëv particularly took exception to Tolstoy's belief that punishment cannot yield reform. Few, if any, among us today can seriously countenance letting all crime go unpunished, and Solov'ëv's proposal that the punishment must fit the crime on an individual basis is certainly the aim today in most developed countries. Moreover, Solov'ëv's remarks on the possibility of a "Christian soldier" appear thoughtful, even if their relevance to the issue of the possibility of a just war may seem dubious. Solov'ëv simply overlooked, perhaps could not fathom, the possibility of a major conflagration between supposedly Christian nations.

For all its shortcomings, and indeed there are many, Solov'ëv's approach to philosophy, by taking into account, at least in principle, the observations and the results of the social sciences, e.g., history and anthropology, is heartening. Just as philosophical reflection in the philosophy of mind can only be served by taking into account recent work in cognitive science, so too must other philosophical subdivisions recognize the conclusions and ongoing investigations of both the natural and the social sciences. Whether and how Solov'ëv would have accommodated scientific advancements that challenged his highly structured triadic schemes must ultimately remain speculative. Would he have rejected their veracity, believing Christian tenets override empirically derived conclusions? Or would he have imaginatively altered those schemes to fit new discoveries? His youthful denigration of science eased somewhat in his later works. We see here in the *Justification* that Solov'ëv is not at all dismissive of evolutionary theory. Rather, in essence he asks Darwin to go back and re-examine whether the subjective aspect of morality has not been omitted. We should also bear in mind Solov'ëv's explicit criticism of Hegel elsewhere in not allowing for the possibility of future discoveries in natural science and new historical events. "True science," Solov'ëv wrote, "assumes an indefinitely broad empirical basis."²⁷ Although he may be—and was—charged with a highly prejudicial usage of his own sources, Solov'ëv's approach in principle is laudable.

²⁶ See Mill 1874: 26–27f.

²⁷ SS, vol. 10: 319.

3. Notes on this Translation The critical translation presented here is based mainly on the second edition of the Russian text from 1899. However, I have indicated within the work itself the pagination of the text from the second edition of Solov'ëv's "collected works" from 1911–1914 edited by his nephew Sergej and E. L. Radlov. The *Justification* appeared in this edition as Vol. 8 and clearly bears the date 1914. According to these editors, the text is that of the 1899 volume. This is largely, but not entirely, the case. Some, indeed many, omissions, corrections and changes, even though frequently minor, can be found between the two texts. In addition, a first edition "collected works" appeared, starting early in the twentieth century also with the title "Collected Works" under the initial editorship of Solov'ëv's brother Mikhail, who died in 1903 from pneumonia. The translators/editors of the German-language version of the *Justification* mention that in the first edition "collected works" none of the errors in the 1899 volume is corrected. Additionally, in the 1914 text all the errors in the previous version were taken over and at least 215 new ones introduced!²⁸ Of course, clear typographical mistakes in the original Russian texts resulting in misspelled words are not noted in this translation.

Since none of the editions mentioned is error free, the selection of which edition to utilize as the principal text becomes arbitrary. The actual 1899 volume is difficult to find, whereas the second edition set of "collected works" is widely available in either hard copy or microfiche versions in large university libraries, hence the page references in this translation to it. Owing to differences in sentence structure between the Russian and the English languages, the accuracy of these references can be only as correct as the respective grammatical structures allow. The Russian text of the *Justification* has been reprinted many times since the end of the Soviet regime, and although many mistakes have been corrected, these alterations have not been systematically noted in the respective editions. The 1899 volume itself contains a separate list of "Necessary Corrections," presumably prepared by Solov'ëv himself but which we cannot be certain includes all the modifications he would have ideally made, particularly in light of the other numerous changes he made between the successive editions in his lifetime. This is most apparent in such a small matter as whether to capitalize each instance of his numerous and various locutions for God, the Church and the Moral Good.²⁹ The various texts too are, surprisingly, inconsistent. The practice followed in this translation is to render these words or expressions as they appear in the 1914 edition, even though the general practice in English is to capitalize all references to God. However, to follow the English practice without reservation would be to put an unnecessary and possibly misleading interpretation on the text.

I have generally tried to employ gender-neutral terminology whenever possible except in those cases where we even today would tend to use such terminology. No attempt, however, was made to do the same with regard to pronouns referring

²⁸ Solowjew 1976: 708.

²⁹ Solov'ëv's puzzling practice of capitalization was already noted by Masaryk in the early 20th century. See Masaryk 1919: 229.

to the Deity, since it is difficult to imagine that a nineteenth century figure, such as Solov'ëv, would have conceived not using masculine pronouns.

Biblical quotations and references occur frequently throughout the text. In all cases, these are to the King James Version of the Bible, not because it is the best one available—which it clearly is not—but to do otherwise, could be conceived as an attempt to put a particular interpretation onto the text. For example, to utilize a particular religious denomination's officially approved translation could, conceivably, be construed as an attempt to impose that denomination's reading onto the *Justification*. Since all such references are provided in terms of chapter and verse, the reader can easily substitute whichever version he or she prefers.

A quick perusal of the *Justification* will also reveal frequent quotations and references to classical literature. Solov'ëv was educated at a time when study of Greek and Latin was part of the standard curriculum and that included reading and often memorizing passages in the original languages. Writing principally for the educated Russian, he surely accepted such quotations as the best way to drive home his own points.

The major innovation of the present edition of the *Justification* over previous ones, including those in Russian but with the qualified exception of the German translation, is the inclusion of the alternate readings offered by earlier versions of the chapters that Solov'ëv had previously published. As mentioned above, much of the text appeared first as journal articles; these were then compiled and published as a single volume in 1897. Full bibliographic information for each of these chapters is given in the Bibliography. For the second edition, Solov'ëv revised the entire text and included still additional material. In the footnotes designated by the letter "C"—meaning "text-critical note"—and a square bracket the reader will find the main text of the 1899 version followed by an additional square bracket with the alternative text with a bold typeface **A**, referring to the corresponding words in the respective journal-article version and **B** referring to the 1897 first edition of the *Justification*. In many instances, the reader will find **AB**, meaning that the alternative reading appeared in both the journal-article version and the first edition of 1897. Words in italics within the text-critical notes are those of the translator, and not those of Solov'ëv. However, no attempt has been made to show differences in punctuation between the various editions and differences in Solov'ëv's quite liberal usage of italics, which varied from one edition to another without any easily discernable reason. However, the placement of italics in the main text follows that of the 1899 version. The procedure employed to generate the critical apparatus was to translate each passage separately and then compare the passages. The result was that on some occasions when Solov'ëv used two different but synonymous words in his Russian text they are rendered here by a single English word. Such cases are not mentioned in the critical notes, nor have I attempted artificially to find two different English words for the two different but synonymous Russian words. As it is, the reader will find many of the variations between the editions to be superfluous. In many, if not most, cases, just why Solov'ëv made a particular change when the two synonyms seem to convey the same meaning must remain a matter of conjecture with little, if any, supporting evidence. For the reasons just mentioned, the reader

should keep in mind throughout that just as two translations of one work can appear strikingly different, this "critical translation" is just a possible one. Another individual could conceivably render many of the critical notes differently, and indeed offer a numerically different set.

In addition to the numbered notes designated by "C" throughout the translation, those with the letter "F" followed by a square bracket are Solov'ëv's own footnotes to his text. The letter "E" followed by a square bracket designates an editorial note by this translator/editor.

The initial and most crucial terminological challenge presented by translating Solov'ëv's work here is rendering the Russian word "*dobro*" in the title itself. The easiest solution, and the one invariably adopted hitherto, is to employ the English word "good." However, the English word, like the Russian, is ambiguous. The Russian language has another word—"blago"—that is interchangeable in many contexts with "*dobro*." The latter tends to be used more often in moral contexts to designate the good, whereas "*blago*" is used more often to designate the notion of a material good or corporeal well-being. Indeed, we find this distinction in Solov'ëv's own text, beginning in Chap. 6, where he speaks of utilitarianism, and again in Chap. 10, where he clearly defines "*blago*" as worldly satisfaction, a real good, in contrast to the moral good, "*dobro*." Solov'ëv's ideas were emerging, changing and maturing as he wrote the chapters comprising the *Justification*. The first chapters fail to show this distinction, where he occasionally uses the two terms interchangeably. Nevertheless, once the distinction is drawn, he does not speak of "*blago*" in a strictly moral context. Keenly aware of the possible confusion between the two Russian words, Solov'ëv returns to his distinction in the detailed "Table of Contents," outlining Chaps. 5 and 6, that he prepared for the 1899 edition of this book.

Readers of Solov'ëv's other works will be familiar with his notion of "*vseedinstvo*," which occurs, though rarely, here. This translator has followed an earlier practice by rendering it as "all-unity," the Russian expression being Solov'ëv's likely rendering for his own use of Schelling's term *Alleinheit*. Finally, the expression "*bo-gochelovechestvo*" is translated here as "divine humanity." Others over the years have produced different, awkward renderings. In this text, "divine humanity" appears particularly appropriate in that Solov'ëv specifically contrasts it with the idea of "bestial humanity"—"*zverochelovechestvo*"—in Chap. 8. I am indebted to Boris Jakim for first introducing the former expression in his translation of Solov'ëv's *Lectures on Divine Humanity* (see Solovyov 1995).

No responsible translator/editor could forego the use of previous translations. Throughout this project, I have freely consulted the version prepared and published almost a century ago by Natalie Duddington and recently re-published. Her work can serve as a model of rendering Russian popular philosophy into readable English prose. The French translation was also used, albeit sparingly owing to its frequent similarity in style to Duddington's English. The German edition proved extremely helpful in completing and checking the text-critical notes, which were compiled largely, but not entirely, quite independently of the German edition. This English-language translation includes many more variations between the Russian-language versions than found in the German text.

Again, as with my work on the early Solov'ëv, I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the New York Public Library for its incredible collection, which it makes available to anyone regardless of individual circumstance, and to the Rutgers University Library. To the anonymous reviewers of this translation while in manuscript, I am indebted for pointing out serious omissions. I hope I have taken their recommendations adequately into account. However, if I have not, the fault is entirely mine. I would also like to thank Kristi Groberg of North Dakota State University for her encouragement and indeed for supporting the idea, for better or worse, of preparing a new translation of Solov'ëv's *Opravdanie dobra*. Thanks also go to Evert van der Zweerde of Radboud University in Nijmegen. The two of us, I suspect, have traveled along parallel roads, along the way catching perhaps only glimpses of each other, in our respective but hopefully mutually supportive approaches to Russian philosophy. Special thanks also go to the staff of Springer, particularly Elvire Verbraak, Anita Rachmat and Cristina dos Santos, all of whom communicated regularly and precisely. To my wife Anne, who patiently endured my countless monologues, I owe so much more than words could ever convey. She helped in the preparation of this translation, particularly in availing herself of my need for a skilled proofreader with a European classical educational background.

Preface to the Second Edition³⁰

The object of this book for all who resolve to follow it is *to show the good as truth*, i.e., as the one correct path that is true to itself and is to be followed on all occasions in life and to the end. I mean the Moral Good *in its essence*. It and only it justifies itself and justifies our trust in it. Not for nothing do we stand before the open grave, when all else has *obviously* failed and appeal to this essential Moral Good: “Blessed art thou, Lord: teach me Thy *justifications*.”³¹

In our personal life, in the national and social life of a people and in the overall historical life of humanity, the Moral Good justifies itself, i.e., by its own good and correct means. True to the Moral Good and having understood these means in the past, moral philosophy presents them to the present for the future.

If in planning a journey you pick up a guidebook, you seek in it only correct, complete and sensible directions for the path you have chosen. This book will not persuade you to go to Italy or Switzerland if you have decided to go to Siberia, nor will it provide you with the means to sail across the ocean if you only have enough money to go to the Black Sea.

Moral philosophy is no more than a systematic guide to the correct path along the journeys of life both for people and for nations. The author’s responsibility is merely to provide accurate, complete and coherent directions. However, no exposition of moral norms, i.e., of the conditions for attaining the true goal in life, will make any sense to those who have consciously set not this goal, but a quite different one for themselves. For us to point out the necessary stations on the path to betterment when one has deliberately selected the worse, would be not only pointless but also annoying and even insulting. It would serve as a reminder of the bad [4] choice, particularly in those cases when, within the depths of the soul, the choice was involuntary and instinctively felt to be both irrevocable and wrong at the same time.

I have no desire to preach virtue and expose vice. I consider that to be not only an idle but also an immoral occupation for a simple mortal, because it assumes an

³⁰ E] This “Preface to the Second Edition” originally appeared in the second edition of the work from 1899.

³¹ E] Psalms 119: 12. The translation here is from Solov’ev’s Russian. The King James version reads: “Blessed are thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.”

unjust and haughty claim to be better than others. What is important for us is not particular deviations from the right path, however powerful they may be, but only the general, decisive and resolute choice between two moral roads when the *choice* is made with complete and clear deliberateness. Does every person make such a choice? Undoubtedly, it is not made by people who die in infancy. But in terms of a distinct self-consciousness, is the majority of adults really that different from them? Still, we should say that if a conscious choice was made, we on the outside cannot tell. The fundamental distinction between the two paths has no empirical *determinacy* and no practical *determinability*. I must have seen many strange and remarkable things, but I have never encountered two things in nature: a person who is genuinely and completely righteous and one who is a genuinely complete villain. And all the pseudo-mystical verbiage associated with some external and practically applicable divisions of humanity into white and black, regenerate and unregenerate, redeemed and condemned, only remind me of the sincere declaration of the miller:

Forty years have I already lived
And up to now I have not seen
Either in a dream or in waking
Copper spurs on water pails³²

At the same time, I recall long ago hearing university lectures on invertebrate zoology and on embryology³³ from which I acquired, among other things, a definite idea of two well-known truths. At the level of the primitive, lower organic world only a learned biologist can distinguish—but sometimes only so-so—vegetable forms from those of animals, and also that at the early stages of fetal development only a learned embryologist can distinguish—but once again only so-so—the human embryo from the embryo of some other, even [5]completely, bad creature. Is it not the same in history and in the moral world? At the start of each, the two paths in life are so essentially close and are outwardly indistinguishable!

Why, however, when speaking of the moral world, do we refer to a choice between only *two* paths? It is because despite the great abundance of forms and manifestations of life only one path leads to life itself, to its fulfillment and the perpetuation that we desire. All others, which at first are so very similar to it, lead in the opposite direction, fatally moving away from it and merging together, turning finally onto the sole path of immortalized death.

Between these two paths, both based on principle, some want to find yet another path—neither good nor evil, but natural or animal. The highest practical principle of this path is expressed best of all by a German aphorism, though known neither to Kant nor to Hegel: *Jedes Thierchen hat sein Phäsierchen*.³⁴ This formula expresses an indisputable truth and demands only supplementation by another just as indisputable truth: *Allen Thieren fatal ist zu krepieren*.³⁵ And with such a necessary

³² E] Pushkin 2002: 492

³³ E] Solov'ëv attended lectures on zoology in the 1869/70 academic year at the University of Moscow.

³⁴ E] German: to each his own.

³⁵ E] German: all animals are destined to croak.

supplementation, this pseudo-third path, that of animality in principle, reduces to the second path of death.³⁶ In any case, the human being cannot escape this dilemma, the decisive choice between the two paths, that of good and the other of evil. Let us suppose, however, we decide to choose the third path, the animal path, which is neither good nor evil, but only natural. For animals it is surely natural, precisely because animals decide nothing and themselves do not choose one path over some other. Rather, they passively follow the sole path they were provided by a power alien to them. However, when people *actively* decide to follow the path of moral *passivity*, they obviously lie; they create an untruth and lawlessness and evidently enter not onto the path of animality, but onto the path (one of the two human paths) which, if not at first then at the end, turns out to be the path of eternal evil and death. It is easy now to see that this is *worse* than the path of animality. Although devoid of genuine understanding, our younger brothers [6]undoubtedly possess emotional feeling. Although they cannot really condemn and be ashamed of their nature and its bad, mortal path, they manifestly are burdened by this; they manifestly long for something better that they do not know but can feel. This truth, once expressed with great force by the Apostle Paul (Romans 7: 19–23) and then repeated, although with less force, by Schopenhauer, can be confirmed by observation. You never see on a human face the expression of profound, desperate melancholy that sometimes without any apparent reason looks at us through some zoological physiognomy. That is, it is impossible for the human being to stop with self-satisfied animality, because animals are not at all self-satisfied. The conscientious person cannot be an animal. Willy-nilly, we must choose between two paths: Either we become higher and better than our given material foundation, or we become lower and worse than the animal. That which in us is human, properly speaking, and inalienable consists not in *what* it becomes, but in the fact that it *becomes*. What do people get from slandering their younger siblings and from falsely labeling as animal and natural the path of devilish self-confidence in the wrong—a path that we ourselves have chosen and that is contrary to life and to nature?

In this book, I wanted most of all to explain how the one path of the Moral Good, remaining true to itself and consequently justifying itself, becomes more definite and complete as the vital historical and natural surroundings become more complicated. The chief claim of this moral philosophy is to establish the inner and all-round connection between the true religion and sensible politics in the unconditional moral principle. This claim is completely harmless, since the true religion cannot impose itself on anyone, and politics is permitted to be senseless—of course at its own risk. At the same time, moral philosophy decisively refuses to serve as any kind of guide for particular individuals by setting down external and unconditionally definite rules of conduct. If you the reader seem to find somewhere in this book something resembling [7]“moralizing,” I assure you that either you have not understood the passage or I did not express myself clearly.

³⁶ F] The pseudo-superhuman path, which was vividly illuminated by the madness of the unhappy Nietzsche, amounts to the same thing. For more on this, see the preface to the first edition.

However, I have striven for clarity of expression. While preparing this second edition, I re-read the entire book five times in the course of 9 months, each time making new explanatory insertions, both large and small. Although my exposition suffers from many defects even after this, I hope they do not lay me open to the threat, “Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully.”³⁷

While I was writing this book I sometimes experienced moral benefit from it. Perhaps this will assure the reader that my work will also not be entirely useless for him or her too. That would be sufficient justification for this “justification of the moral good.”

Moscow
8 December 1898

Vladimir Solov'ëv

³⁷ E] Jeremiah 48: 10

Preface to the First Edition

A Preliminary Conception of the Moral Meaning of Life³⁸

Does life in general have any meaning? If it does, is this meaning of a moral character, and is it rooted in the moral sphere? Moreover, if we answer affirmatively, what is this meaning, and how should we designate it in order that this designation be correct and complete? Although there is no agreement on them today, we cannot possibly avoid these questions. Some³⁹ deny that life has any meaning. Others think that the meaning of life has nothing to do with morality and that it does not depend on our proper or good relations to God, people and the world as a whole. Finally, recognizing⁴⁰ the significance of moral norms in life, a third group, arguing among themselves, provides different designations, a fact that demands analysis and resolution.

In any case, such an analysis cannot possibly be considered superfluous. Given the present level of human intellectual maturity, those few⁴¹ who have found a firm and definitive solution to the problem of life *for themselves* must justify it *to others*. A mind that has overcome its own doubts does not render the heart indifferent to⁴² the delusions of others.

³⁸ E] This “Preface” originally appeared separately under the title “The Moral Meaning of Life” in 1896. Although included in the 2nd edition of the complete work from 1899 and referred to therein as the “Preface to the First Edition,” Solov’ev, as we can see from the notes below, made a number of changes to it over the first-edition version without expressly indicating here that he had done so. In the first edition from 1897, this “Preface” spans pages ix-xxxii.

³⁹ C] Some] Some minds **A**

⁴⁰ C] recognizing] resolutely recognizing **AB**

⁴¹ C] few] rare people **A**

⁴² C] does not render the heart indifferent to] is not the reason the heart lacks pity for **A**] is not the reason the heart is indifferent to **B**

I

Among those who deny that life has a meaning, some are quite serious. They crown their denial⁴³ by committing suicide. And then there are those who are not serious, who deny that life has meaning but do so only through rhetorical arguments and entire pseudo-philosophical systems. Certainly, I am an enemy neither of argument nor of systems. What I have in mind, however, are those [9]who take their arguments and systems as an *independent* concern that leads neither to a particular sort of behavior nor to a commitment to the practical realization of anything. We cannot take these people and their intellectual exercises seriously. Truths,⁴⁴ such as that the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles, remain true quite independently of who enunciates it and the kind of life that that person leads. However, a pessimistic outlook on life is not a mathematical truth. Any such outlook necessarily includes a personal, subjective attitude towards life. When a theoretical pessimist asserts it to be a genuine objective truth that life is evil⁴⁵ and painful, one thereby expresses the conviction that life is that way *for everyone*.⁴⁶ However, if it is so for everyone, then it is that way for this person too. Why, then, does he or she continue to live and treat the evil of life as if it were good? In reply to this question, such people appeal to the instinct that forces us to live in spite of their rational conviction that life is not worthwhile. This appeal, though, is pointless, for an instinct is not an external force that mechanically compels us to do something: An instinct manifests itself in living creatures, prompting them to seek certain states that seem to be desirable or pleasant.⁴⁷ Let us assume that, thanks to an instinct, a pessimist finds pleasure in life. Does not this fact serve to undermine the very basis of the pseudo-conviction that life is evil and painful? Nevertheless, the pessimist still objects, declaring that these pleasures are deceptive.⁴⁸ From his point of view, what do these words mean? If we recognize a positive meaning in life, then we can certainly consider many things to be a deception,⁴⁹ particularly with respect to this positive meaning. For they are mere trifles, which distract us from what is primary and important. The apostle Paul could say that in comparison to the Kingdom of God, which is attained through earthly deeds, all carnal affections⁵⁰ and pleasures are for him rubbish and manure.⁵¹ For the pessimist, however, who does not believe in the

⁴³ C] They crown their denial] They resolve to deny it in fact **A**

⁴⁴ C] Truths] Certainly, truths **A**] Without doubt, truths **B**

⁴⁵ C] is evil] is a meaningless evil **A**

⁴⁶ E] "Is it that only I and Schopenhauer are wise enough to understand the senselessness and evil of life?" Tolstoy 2012: 39.

⁴⁷ C] seem to be desirable or pleasant.] present themselves to be desirable or to afford satisfaction. **A**

⁴⁸ C] deceptive] illusory **AB**

⁴⁹ C] a deception,] an illusion, **AB**

⁵⁰ C] affections] interests **AB**

⁵¹ E] See Philippians 3: 8

Kingdom of God and does not ascribe any positive meaning to earthly deeds, what measuring stick⁵² is to be used to distinguish deception from the non-deceptive?⁵³

From this point of view, everything amounts to states⁵⁴ of experienced pleasure or pain. This is why as soon as a pleasure is actually *experienced*, it cannot be taken as a deception.⁵⁵ To justify pessimism on such a vulgar basis, one would have to count, in a childish⁵⁶ manner, the number of pleasures and sufferings experienced in life and compare this with the conclusion formed earlier that the first is less than [10]the second and that, consequently, life is not worth living. Such an accounting of happiness in life would make sense to some degree but only if delights and griefs could be arithmetically *tallied* and compared or if the difference in the tallies could itself be actually sensed. However, since sensations in reality exist only as concrete⁵⁷ states, it is no more rational to reckon them in abstract figures than it is to shoot at a stone fortress with a cardboard gun. If the only firm incentive to live were thought to lie in the occurrence of a greater number of pleasurable sensations than painful ones, then for the vast majority of people such a numerical preponderance would be a fact. People live, because they find it worthwhile to live. Undoubtedly within this group, there are theoretical pessimists, who argue the advantages of non-existence. In fact, however, they prefer any kind of existence. Their arithmetic of despair is only a mental game, which they themselves reject, in fact finding⁵⁸ in life more pleasure than pain and recognizing that it is worthwhile to live to the end.⁵⁹ Comparing their talk with their actions, we cannot help but conclude that life has meaning and that these pessimists passively surrender to it. Their mind,⁶⁰ however, is incapable of grasping this meaning.

The pessimists in the other group are the serious ones: They commit suicide. In their own way, they also, albeit without realizing it, prove that life has meaning. I am thinking of those who consciously commit suicide, those who have self-control and end their lives out of disappointment or despair. They assumed that life has a meaning for the sake of which it is worthwhile to live, but they then became convinced that what they took to be the meaning of life was unfounded. At the same time, unwilling to submit (as the theoretical pessimists do) passively and unconsciously to another, unfamiliar meaning of life,⁶¹ they take their own life. This certainly shows

⁵² C] measuring stick] criterion **A**

⁵³ C] deception from the non-deceptive?] illusion from the non-illusory? **AB**

⁵⁴ C] states] facts **AB**

⁵⁵ C] a deception.] an illusion. **AB**

⁵⁶ C] childish] amusing **A**

⁵⁷ C] only as concrete] only as single, concrete **AB**

⁵⁸ C] in fact finding] finding for themselves **A**

⁵⁹ C] *Footnote added here in AB*: Hartmann's sophistic attempt to combine pessimism with a moral obligation to live can be left aside without comment, since hardly anyone would take it seriously.

⁶⁰ C] mind.] consciousness **AB**

⁶¹ C] live, but they then ... meaning of life,] live. However, not finding or not recognizing it and unwilling to submit, as the theoretical pessimists do, to this unfamiliar or unrecognized meaning and not satisfied with a merely verbal denial, **A**] live. However, not finding or not recognizing it

that they have a stronger will than the former have. However, what lesson can we draw from this about the meaning of life? Although these people failed to find it, where did they look for it? We have here two types of passionate people. In those of the first type, passion is purely personal and egoistic (e.g., Romeo and Werther),⁶² whereas those of the other type connect their personal passion with this or that historical interest, which they, however, separate from the meaning of life in general. Concerning this meaning, on which the meaning of their own individual existence depends, they, like those of the first type, do not want [11]to know (Cleopatra, Cato of Utica).^{63, 64} Romeo killed himself, because he could not possess Juliet. For him, the meaning of life was to possess this woman. However, if this actually is the meaning of life, what distinguishes it from absurdity? For, besides Romeo, forty thousand other gentlemen could find the meaning of their own lives lies in possessing the same Juliet, so that this pseudo-meaning of life would contradict itself forty thousand times. Although the details in each case differ, we find essentially the same thing in every suicide: My life is not going, *in my opinion*, as it should. Consequently, life has no meaning and is not worth living. That there is a discrepancy between the arbitrary demands of a passionate person and reality is taken to be an expression of some hostile fate, something gloomy and absurd. Unwilling to submit to this blind force, such a person commits suicide. It is the same with people of the second type.⁶⁵ Conquered by the world power of Rome, the Egyptian queen chose not to participate in the triumph of the victor and killed herself with a poisonous snake. The Roman Horace called her a great woman for doing this, and no one can deny the majesty⁶⁶ of such a demise. However, if Cleopatra expected her victory to be something that should have happened and saw in the Roman victory only the absurd triumph of a wicked power, then she accepted the wickedness of her own point of view as a sufficient reason for rejecting the universal truth.⁶⁷

It is clear that the meaning of life cannot coincide with the arbitrary and alterable demands of countless individuals in the human race. If it did, that meaning would be absurd. That is, there would be no meaning at all. It follows from this that the

and unwilling to submit in fact unwillingly and unconsciously, as the theoretical pessimists do, to this fatal meaning of life, which they verbally reject, **B**

⁶² E] The reference to Romeo is, of course, to Shakespeare's character in the play *Romeo and Juliet*. The reference to Werther is to Goethe's character in the novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, from 1774, a hugely popular work from the "Sturm und Drang" period in German literature.

⁶³ E] The reference to Cato of Utica is to the Roman politician, an opponent of Julius Caesar and a Stoic who committed suicide in the face of Caesar's military triumph.

⁶⁴ C] We have here ... Cato of Utica.) *Absent in AB*

⁶⁵ C] It is the same ... the second type.] It would be unfair to accuse him of cowardice. **AB**

⁶⁶ C] majesty] grandeur **AB**

⁶⁷ C] then she accepted ... the universal truth.] then certainly it was a profound mistake for which there is the excuse that behind the Egyptian queen there was something really great: historical traditions and the national feelings of the whole country, ancient and glorious. And what is behind the majority of cases of suicide other than blind passion and a despondent attitude towards life? Moreover, if the suicides, like her, are not guilty of cowardice, they are even guiltier than she was of failing to understand what is and what should be. **AB**

disappointed and despondent suicide was disappointed and despondent not over the meaning of life, but, on the contrary, in the hope that life is meaningless. That is, this person had hoped life would continue as he or she had wanted it to continue, that it would always and in everything be merely a direct satisfaction of one's blind passions and arbitrary whims. That is, he or she had hoped that life would be an absurdity. It is *in this* that the person was disappointed and found life to be not worth living. However, if he or she was disappointed in the meaninglessness of the world, a meaning was thereby recognized in it. The essentials in this matter do not change just because this person finds such a tacitly recognized meaning to be unbearable, or instead of understanding merely blames someone and designates the truth to be a "hostile fate." [12] The meaning of life is merely confirmed by the fatal inconsistency of those who deny it. This denial forces some (the theoretical pessimists) to live in an *undignified* manner, i.e., in a state of contradiction with their preaching. For others (the practical pessimists or suicides), the denial of a meaning in life coincides with an actual rejection of their own existence. Clearly, life has meaning, since those who deny it inevitably deny themselves—some by their undignified existence, others by their violent death.

II

"There is meaning to be found in life, precisely in its aesthetic aspect, in what is strong, majestic and beautiful. To surrender oneself⁶⁸ to this aspect of life, to preserve and fortify it within and outside oneself, to make it predominant and develop it further until the creation of superhuman greatness and a new purest beauty is achieved is the task and meaning of our existence."⁶⁹ Such a view, associated with the name of the talented and unfortunate Nietzsche, has now become the philosophical rage, replacing the recently reigning pessimism.⁷⁰ Unlike the latter, it has no need of any external refutation; it can be adequately disproved on its own grounds. Let us assume that the meaning of life lies in strength and beauty. Yet, however much we surrender⁷¹ ourselves to the cult of aesthetics, we will find no protection in it. We will not find the slightest indication of any possible defense against the general and inevitable fact that intrinsically destroys the supposedly divine character of strength and beauty and their supposed independence and indubitability. I have in mind⁷² the fact that the end of all earthly strength is impotence and the end of all earthly beauty is ugliness.

⁶⁸ C] To surrender oneself] To devote oneself **AB**

⁶⁹ E] Despite the quotation marks, this is not a direct quotation from any of Nietzsche's works. Rather, it is Solov'ëv's captious summary of what he takes to be Nietzsche's position.

⁷⁰ E] recently reigning pessimism] A reference to what Solov'ëv considered the philosophical pessimism of Schopenhauer and von Hartmann

⁷¹ C] surrender] devote **AB**

⁷² C] indubitability. I have in mind] indubitability – **AB**

When we speak of strength, majesty and beauty, one and the same image occurs to everyone, from the Russian provincial school teacher (cf. Gogol's *The Inspector General*) to Nietzsche himself, as the utter historical embodiment of these aesthetic qualities taken together. This example will suffice:

And it happened, after that Alexander son of Philip, the Macedonian, who came out of the land of Chetthim, had smitten Darius king of the Persians and Medes, that he reigned in his stead, the first over Greece, And made many wars, and won many strong holds, and slew the kings of the earth,[13]And went through to the ends of the earth, and took spoils of many nations, insomuch that the earth was quiet before him; whereupon he was exalted and his heart was lifted up. And he gathered a mighty strong host and ruled over countries, and nations, and kings, who became tributaries unto him. And after these things he fell sick, and perceived that he should die. (I Maccabees)⁷³

Is strength that is powerless in the face of death really strength? Is a decomposing corpse really beautiful? The ancient picture of strength and beauty has died and decayed, just like an⁷⁴ impotent and deformed creature, and the modern worshipper of strength and beauty was been transformed while still alive into a mental corpse.⁷⁵ Why was the former not saved by his beauty and strength and the latter by the cult of beauty and strength? Who will worship a deity that does not save its embodiments and its worshippers?

In his last works, the unhappy Nietzsche sought to emphasize his opinions in the form of a fierce polemic against Christianity. In so doing, he revealed a low level of understanding reminiscent more of the eighteenth century⁷⁶ French freethinkers than of contemporary German scholars. Ascribing Christianity exclusively to the lower social class, he failed to notice even the simple fact that from the very beginning the Gospel was taken not as⁷⁷ a sermon expressing dubious indignation, but as joyful news about⁷⁸ true *salvation*. He failed to notice that the entire force of the new religion lay in⁷⁹ the fact that it was founded by “the firstborn from the dead,”⁸⁰ who, as they firmly believed,⁸¹ arose and secured eternal life for his followers. What does this have to do with slaves and pariahs? What do social classes mean when it is a matter of death and resurrection? Do not “masters” die? Were not the Roman aristocrat and dictator Sulla, the Syrian King Antiochus and the Hebrew Herod eaten alive by worms?⁸² The religion of salvation cannot be the religion of

⁷³ E] I Maccabees 1: 1–5

⁷⁴ C] died and decayed, just like an] died, like an **AB**

⁷⁵ E] A reference again to Nietzsche after his mental collapse.

⁷⁶ C] eighteenth century] past century **AB**

⁷⁷ C] from the very beginning the Gospel was taken not as] the Gospel was not **AB**

⁷⁸ C] as joyful news about] of **AB**

⁷⁹ C] lay in] lay and lies in **AB**

⁸⁰ E] Colossians 1: 18

⁸¹ C] as they firmly believed] *Absent in AB*

⁸² E] Regarding Herod, see Acts 12: 23; regarding Antiochus, see 2 Maccabees 9: 9; regarding Sulla, see Plutarch 1916: 439.

slaves and “Chandals” alone.⁸³ It is the religion of all, since all are in need of salvation. Before preaching with such ferocity⁸⁴ against slavery, one ought to abolish the chief leveler—death.

In his polemic against Christianity, Nietzsche strikingly “lacks depth,” and his pretension to be the “antichrist” would be a comedy of a high degree⁸⁵ if it had not ended so tragically.⁸⁶

[14]The cult of natural⁸⁷ strength and beauty does not stand in direct opposition to Christianity. Nor is it eliminated by the latter, but by itself, by its obvious untenability. Christianity does not reject strength and beauty. It merely will not rest content⁸⁸ with the strength of a dying patient and the beauty of a decaying corpse. Christianity has never suggested enmity or contempt for strength, greatness and beauty *as such*. Just like the first of them, all Christian souls rejoiced in the fact that the infinite source of all that is truly powerful and beautiful had been revealed to them, saving them from subjugation to the pseudo power and the pseudo greatness of the infirmed and ugly elements of the world: “My soul doth magnify the Lord. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.... For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.... He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the might from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.”⁸⁹ Obviously, the contempt here is only for a pseudo, false strength and wealth. It is also clear that for the meek who must ascend after the dethroning of the powerful, humility is not an unconditional ideal or definitive goal, but only the necessary and correct path to the heights inaccessible to the proud.

Strength and beauty are divine, only not in themselves. Powerful⁹⁰ and beautiful is the Deity whose strength does not abate and beauty does not die. For in Him both strength and beauty are inseparable from the good.

No one worships impotence and ugliness. However, some recognize the strength and beauty that are conditioned by the good, that perpetually abides and that *actually* liberates their bearers and worshippers from the power of death and decay,⁹¹ while others glorify strength and beauty, taken in the abstract and illusory. If the former view expects its final victory only in the future, the latter is none the better

⁸³ E] Chandals are lower-caste Hindus, considered untouchables.

⁸⁴ C] with such ferocity] while foaming at the mouth **AB**

⁸⁵ C] of a high degree] of the highest degree **AB**

⁸⁶ F] As is well known, this unfortunate writer, after passing through a mania of greatness, fell into complete feeble-mindedness.

⁸⁷ C] natural] *Absent in A*

⁸⁸ C] rest content] resign itself **A**

⁸⁹ E] Luke 1: 46–53

⁹⁰ C] themselves. Powerful] themselves, because in themselves they do not at all exist, but powerful **A**

⁹¹ C] and that *actually* liberates ... death and decay.] *Absent in AB*

for it. The latter is already defeated—it⁹² is always defeated. It dies with every death and is interned in all the graveyards.

III

The pessimism of hypocritical philosophers and honest suicides inevitably leads us to the fact⁹³ that life has a meaning. The cult of strength and beauty inevitably shows⁹⁴ us that this meaning [15] does not lie in strength and beauty, taken abstractly, but can belong to them only on condition of good triumphing. Thus, the meaning of life consists in its good, but this reveals the possibility of making new errors, viz., in determining just what is the proper good of life.

At first, it appears as though there is a simple and exact way to avoid all error here: If life has a good meaning, then it already has been and is being revealed to us and is not waiting for us to determine it. We need only resign ourselves to it, accept it with love and subordinate our existence, our individuality,⁹⁵ to it in order to comprehend it. The universal meaning of life, or the inner connection of separate individuals to the great whole, cannot be invented by us; it was given from time immemorial. The foundations and strongholds of life have been given from time immemorial. By its living, personal relationship, the family connects our present with the past and the future. Our fatherland enlarges and fills our soul with the content of the national soul with its glorious traditions and hopes. Finally, the Church decisively delivers us from all limitations, connecting our personal and our national life with that which is eternal and unconditional. So, what are we to make of this? Live in the life of the whole, widen in all respects the limits of your small *self*, “take to heart” the concerns of others and the concerns of all, be a good family member, a zealous patriot, a devoted child of the Church, and you will know in practice the good meaning of life, and there will be no need to seek it and contrive to determine it. The rudiments of truth lie in this view, but only the *rudiments*. It is impossible to stop here. The matter is not as simple as it seems.

If, from time immemorial, life with its good meaning had immediately taken one invariably abiding form, there certainly would be nothing to talk about. There would be no problems for the mind, but only one question for the will: whether to

⁹² C] is already defeated – it] *Absent in AB*

⁹³ C] leads us to the fact] teaches us **A**

⁹⁴ C] shows] teaches **A**

⁹⁵ E] individuality] This is the first occurrence of the term “individuality” in the text. In his corresponding entry for the 1890–1906 *Brockhaus-Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary*, Solov’ëv defines “individual,” *lichnost’*, in these terms: “a single, independent being, having reason, a will, and an original character with the unity of self-consciousness. Reason and the will are forms with the possibility of an infinite content. For we can more and more understand the truth and aspire to realize more and more the perfect good [*blago*]. Consequently, the human individual has, in principle, unconditional worth, on which are based the individual’s inalienable rights.” Solov’ëv 1997: 245. The term “*lichnost’*” will also play a prominent role in Chapter 10.

accept or reject *unconditionally* that which is given unconditionally. As I understand it, this was precisely the position of one of the spiritual light-bringers in the first act of creation.⁹⁶ However, our human position is unlike this in that we play a less fatal and more complex role.⁹⁷ We know that the historical forms of the Moral Good given to us do not present a form of *unity* that we have either to accept everything or to reject everything. Moreover, we know that these formations and foundations of life did not fall from the sky ready-made all at once, [16] that they developed in time and on this Earth. Knowing that they did *become* what they are, we have no rational basis to claim that they have finished their *development* in all respects and that what is given to us at this moment is the ultimate conclusion. If it has not concluded, it is for no one but us to work⁹⁸ on the continuation of this business. Before us, the higher forms of life, which we now view as a sacred legacy of the ages, came to be not through their own efforts, but through people, their thoughts and deeds, in their intellectual and practical work. In the absence of a unity and with the variability of the historical form of the eternal good, the choice has to be made between many different things. That is, you cannot manage without intellectual inquiry. Surely, it is clear that God Himself ordained that people would have no external support, no pillow to soothe their minds and conscience: Let them be perpetually vigilant and stand in the world on their own legs. “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”⁹⁹ Piety forbids¹⁰⁰ us from despising in ourselves and in others what God Himself respects and for the sake of which He remembers and calls on us, namely, the inner invaluable and indispensable dignity of human reason and conscience. Alas, those who are guilty of such contempt and seek to replace the inner standard of truth with an external one suffer natural retribution in the fatal wreckage of their attempts. It is precisely these practical, clear and consistent minds among them who are not satisfied with vague expressions who, with striking speed, descend along a direct path from the certain to the doubtful,¹⁰¹ from the doubtful to the false, and from the false to the absurd. “God,” they tell us, “expresses His will to us externally through the authority of the Church. The only true Church is ours; its voice is the voice of God; the true representative of our Church is the clergy. That is, their voice is the voice of God. The true representative of the clergy, for each individual, is his confessor. Consequently, all questions of faith and conscience for everyone should, in the last resort, be resolved by one’s confessor.” Everything seems clear and simple. The¹⁰² only thing that has to be done is to arrange matters so that all confessors say the same thing or that there be just one confessor, who is omnipresent and immortal. For the discord between many

⁹⁶ E] See Isaiah 14: 12–15.

⁹⁷ C] we play a less fatal and more complex role.] it is less fatal with a more complex interest. **AB**

⁹⁸ C] it is for no one but us to work] no one but us must work **AB**

⁹⁹ E] Psalm 8: 4

¹⁰⁰ C] Piety forbids] Piety itself forbids **AB**

¹⁰¹ C] from the certain to the doubtful,] from the indisputably certain to the disputable, **A**

¹⁰² C] simple. The] simple. It is a pity that no one has taken the single necessary precautionary step: The **A**

changing confessors can lead to the obviously profane view that the voice of God contradicts itself.

[17] In fact, if *this* individual¹⁰³ or collective bearer of external authority derives his importance solely from his official position, then all people in the same position have the same authority, and this authority is nullified by their opposition to one other. Moreover, if one or some of them obtain their authority over me based on my confidence in them, this means that I myself am the source and creator of the highest authority over myself. It also means that I humble myself solely before my own will and accept it as the meaning of life. That we seek an *external* support for reason and conscience at any cost and conceive the unconditional meaning of life as something imposed on us externally leads inevitably to this. Any person who wants to accept the meaning of life on external authority ends up taking the absurdity of one's own arbitrary choices as that meaning. Between a person and the meaning of life, there should be no external and formal relation. External authority is¹⁰⁴ necessary as a transitory stage, but it is impossible to perpetuate it, that is, to recognize it as a permanent and final norm. The human *self* can be expanded only by an inner cordial reciprocity with what is greater than it and not merely by a formal submission to it, which in essence really changes nothing.¹⁰⁵

IV

Although it is greater than and prior to any individual person, the morally good meaning of life cannot be accepted as a finished thing on the basis of trust in some external authority.¹⁰⁶ It must be understood and assimilated by the individuals themselves, in their faith, reason and experience. It is the necessary condition of moral worthiness.¹⁰⁷ When this necessary subjective *condition* of the good and of a meaningful life is taken as its¹⁰⁸ goal and essence, a new moral error emerges, namely, a rejection of all historical and collective manifestations and forms of the good, of everything except the inner moral actions and states of the individual person. This moral *amorphism*, or *subjectivism*,¹⁰⁹ is in direct contradiction to the teaching of the protective everyday humility that we just spoke of. There, we affirmed that life and reality in the form in which they are given are smarter and better than the human being, [18] that the historical forms making up this life are in themselves wise and good and that we human beings need only to humble ourselves respectfully before

¹⁰³ C] In fact, if *this* individual] If *this* personal **A**

¹⁰⁴ C] is] can be **B**

¹⁰⁵ C] Between a person ... changes nothing.] *Absent in A*

¹⁰⁶ C] on the basis of trust in some external authority.] *Absent in AB*

¹⁰⁷ C] , in their faith, reason and experience. It is the necessary condition of moral worthiness] *Absent in AB*

¹⁰⁸ C] its] the **A**

¹⁰⁹ C] , or *subjectivism*,] *Absent in AB*

them and to seek in them the unconditional rule and authority for our personal existence. Moral amorphism,¹¹⁰ on the contrary, reduces everything to us alone, to our self-consciousness and autonomy. The only life for us is our mental life, and the good meaning of life consists only in the inner states of individuals and in the actions and relations that directly and immediately arise from them. This inner meaning and inner good are naturally inherent in everyone, but they are suppressed, distorted and transformed into absurdities and evil, thanks to different historical forms and institutions: the state, the church and culture in general. If everyone's eyes were open to the current situation, it would be easy to persuade them to reject these disastrous distortions of human nature that find their ultimate expression in such compulsory institutions as the law-court, the army, etc. This entire situation is supported by ill-intentioned deceit and the violence of a minority, but it depends chiefly on the misunderstanding and the self-delusion of the majority of the people, who use various artificial means for blunting their reason and conscience, such as wine, tobacco, etc. However, people are beginning to understand the error of their views and actions, and when they resolutely renounce them and change their behavior, all evil forms of human relations will fall by themselves. All evil will disappear as soon as people abandon their opposition to it by force, and the good meaning of life will be manifested and realized among¹¹¹ the formless mass of the "itinerant" righteous.

In rejecting different institutions, moral amorphism forgets one rather important institution, viz. death, and this consignment to oblivion is what gives the doctrine a chance to exist. For if the preachers of moral amorphism remembered death, they would have to affirm either one of two things: either that with the abolition of law courts, armies and so forth, people would stop dying, or that the good meaning of life, which is incompatible with political kingdoms, is quite compatible with the kingdom of death. This dilemma is unavoidable for the doctrine of amorphism, but both solutions are equally absurd. It is clear that this teaching, which silently overlooks¹¹² death, bears it within itself. It passes itself off as the restoration of authentic Christianity. However, it is quite [19]obvious, both psychologically and historically, that the teaching of the Gospels did not forget death. Above all, this teaching rests¹¹³ on the resurrection of one¹¹⁴ as an accomplished fact and upon the future resurrection of all as a sure promise. This universal resurrection is the creation of a perfect form for all that exists, the ultimate expression and realization of the good meaning of the universe¹¹⁵ and therefore of the end and goal of history. Recognizing the good meaning of life but, at the same time, rejecting all of its objective forms, moral

¹¹⁰ E] moral amorphism] Some scholars have taken this to mean Tolstoyism. See Mochul'skij 1936: 227 and Solowjew 1976: 725.

¹¹¹ C] among] in A] as B

¹¹² C] It is clear that this teaching, which silently overlooks] Having pointed to the oblivion of death, I imprecisely stated that it would be more accurate to say that this teaching, which does not speak of A

¹¹³ C] did not forget death. Above all, this teaching rests] above all rests AB

¹¹⁴ E] that is, of Jesus

¹¹⁵ C], the ultimate expression and realization of the good meaning of the universe] *Absent in A*

amorphism must regard as senseless the entire history of the world and of humanity, which consists entirely in the creation and improvement of the forms of life. Does it make sense to reject one form of life for the sake of another, albeit better or more perfect? What does it mean to reject forms in general? Yet, the anti-historical view must logically come to such a rejection. If we absolutely repudiate the forms of life, viz., the social, political, and religious forms produced by human history, then on what do¹¹⁶ we base the recognition of organic forms, produced by the history of nature, the world-process of which the historical process is the direct and inseparable continuation? Why is it that my animal body is something more real, rational and holy than the body of my nation? It is said that the body of a nation, just like its soul, does not exist, that the social, collective organism is only a metaphor used to express the simple sum of separate people. However, we need to proceed further than such an exclusively mechanical point of view. In reality, there is also no individual organism and no individual soul.¹¹⁷ There exist only different combinations of elementary material units, devoid of any qualitative content.¹¹⁸ Along¹¹⁹ with rejecting form in principle, it is logically necessary to deny the understanding and recognition of not only historical and organic life, but also all of existence, since only pure nothingness is fully formless and unconditional.

V

I have pointed out two extreme moral errors that contradict each other: the doctrine of the self-denial of the human individual before the historical forms of life, taken as an external authority, i.e., the doctrine of passive obedience or everyday [20]quietism,¹²⁰ and the doctrine of the self-affirmation of the human individual against all historical forms and authorities, i.e., the doctrine of formlessness and anarchy. Despite their opposition to each other, these two extreme positions both agree they share a common essence that reveals to us the source of moral errors in general and that saves us from the need to investigate specific varieties of the moral lie, of which there can be an indefinite number.

The two opposing views agree in that neither takes the good *in its essence*, as the good itself is. Both connect the good with acts and relations that can be either good or evil depending on what inspired them and the goal they serve. In other words, something good, but which can become evil, is substituted for the Good, and the

¹¹⁶ C] do] will **A**

¹¹⁷ C] However, we need to proceed ... no individual soul.] However, this is in effect only from an exclusively mechanical point of view in which there is no individual organism and no individual soul at all. **A**] However, this can only be conceived from an exclusively mechanical point of view in which there is neither an individual organism nor an individual soul **B**

¹¹⁸ C] , devoid of any qualitative content] *Absent in* **AB**

¹¹⁹ C] Along] By the way, along **A**

¹²⁰ C] i.e., the doctrine of passive obedience or everyday quietism,] *Absent in* **AB**

conditional is taken as unconditional. So, for example, it is a good thing, a moral obligation, to submit to national and family traditions and establishments¹²¹ to the extent that these very traditions and establishments¹²² express the good or give a definite form to my *proper* relation to God, people and the world. However, if this condition is forgotten, if the conditional obligation is taken as unconditional or if the “nation’s interest”¹²³ is substituted for God’s Truth, then the good can change into evil and into a source of evil. It is easy to come here to the monstrous position recently expressed by a certain French minister that “it is better to execute 20 innocent people than to encroach (*porter atteinte*) on the authority of any national institution.”¹²⁴ Let us take another example. Instead of paying proper respect¹²⁵ to a council of bishops or to another ecclesiastic authority as an actual organ of the collective organization of piety, from which I do not separate myself,¹²⁶ I unconditionally submit to it without looking into the essentials of the matter. Instead, I start out *beforehand* with a recognition of this council, *taken separately*,¹²⁷ as an incontestable authority by itself. Consequently, I view it externally. Here, it turns out that the council to which I have submitted is a “Robber Council of Ephesus,”¹²⁸ or something of that sort. Owing to my unwarranted submission to the formal expression of His supposed will, which even God would find objectionable,¹²⁹ I myself suddenly¹³⁰ become an intractable heretic. Once again, evil has emerged from the good. Let’s take a third example. Without relying on the purity of my conscience and on the strength of my reason, I entrust both my conscience and my reason to a person [21]vested with divine authority, thereby relinquishing my own reasoning and willing. How could things be better?¹³¹ However, this evil confessor, being a wolf in sheep’s clothing, instills pernicious thoughts and evil principles in me. Once again, the conditional good of humility, accepted unconditionally, is transformed into evil.

¹²¹ C] and establishments] *Absent in AB*

¹²² C] and establishments] *Absent in AB*

¹²³ C] the “nation’s interest”] folk tradition **AB**

¹²⁴ C] It is easy ... national institution.”] *Absent in AB E*] In a letter from January 1898 to Eugène Tavernier, Solov’ev attributes this statement to the French foreign minister Gabriel Hanotaux. See *Pis’ma*, vol. 4: 202.

¹²⁵ C] paying proper respect] properly submitting **AB**

¹²⁶ C] collective organization of piety, from which I do not separate myself,] universal church of God, **A**] universal church of God, from which I do not separate myself, **B**

¹²⁷ C], *taken separately*,] *Absent in AB*

¹²⁸ E] This is a reference to the church assembly held in 449 A.D. that without papal approval upheld the position of Eutyches, archimandrite in Constantinople, that Christ had a single, divine nature (“Monophysitism”). Pope Leo I immediately rebuked the Ephesus assembly as a “Robber Council” and convened a new council at Chalcedon, which formally condemned the Robber Council and promulgated a statement called the “Faith of Chalcedon,” which described Christ as having two natures, one divine and one human. See also Solov’ev’s article for the *Brockhaus-Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary* “Monofizitstvo” in Solov’ev 1997: 293–297.

¹²⁹ C] to the formal expression ... would find objectionable,] *Absent in A*

¹³⁰ C] suddenly] *Absent in A*

¹³¹ C] How could things be better?] It would seem laudable. **A**

In this way, there arises the error of confusing the Good itself with the various forms of its manifestations. However, the opposite error, which, by a simple rejection of the historical forms of its manifestation, limits the essence of the good, leads to the same thing. In the former, the forms and institutions are taken as the absolute good, which does not correspond to truth but instead leads to evil. In the latter, the forms and institutions are unconditionally rejected. Consequently, they are recognized as unconditionally evil in themselves, which again does not correspond to the truth and cannot therefore lead to anything good. Some claim, for example,¹³² that the will of God is revealed to us *only* through the priest, while others claim that this never, ever happens, that the highest will *cannot* speak to us through the priest, but is revealed exclusively and entirely in our own consciousness. Is it not obvious, however, that in both cases the will *itself* of God would disappear, being replaced in the first case by the priest and in the second by the self-affirming *I*?¹³³ Yet, it would seem that it is easy to understand that once the will of God is accepted, its expression *must not*¹³⁴ be tied or limited to us or be exhausted either by us or by the priest. It should also be easy to understand that the will of God can be both in us and in him but that it is expressed to us unconditionally and certainly only if we conform to it, with the good and proper attitude to everything, including—and above all—to the priest by virtue of what he represents. In the same way, some say that the practical good of life for us lies entirely in the nation and in the state, whereas others claim that the nation and the state are a lie and an evil. In such cases, it is quite obvious that the former substitute for the unconditional good itself its relative embodiment in the nation and the state, whereas the latter make the unconditional good conditional by their rejection of historical organization.¹³⁵ For them, only these rejections are unconditional, and they have already conditioned the good. But is it really hard to understand that for us the genuine good in this field can depend only on our *just and good relation to the nation and to the state*, on an awareness of what [22] we owe them, on a realization of everything that was and is in them and of everything that they lack before they can become in the full sense mediating embodiments of the good that lives in humanity? We can take a correct attitude to the church, to the nation and to the state, and with this attitude we can improve both ourselves and each of them. We can know and love them in their true sense, in God's way. Why, then, do we distort this understandable sense by an unconditional reverence or, even worse, by an unconditional rejection? Instead of properly worshipping the holy forms, neither separating them from, nor confusing them with, their content, why do we have to pass from idolatry to iconoclasm and from it to a new and worse idolatry?¹³⁶

¹³² C], for example,] *Absent in B*

¹³³ E] Already years earlier, Solov'ëv wrote of "the self-affirming human *I*." PSS, vol. 4: 73. Cf. Solovyov 1995: 69.

¹³⁴ C] *must not*] cannot **B**

¹³⁵ C] their rejection of historical organization.] a rejection of its embodiment. **B**

¹³⁶ C] Some claim, for example, ... and worse idolatry?] *Absent in A*

Why are there these obvious distortions of the truth, these obvious deviations from the direct path? Is it not as clear as day that we should unconditionally accept only what is good in itself, or in its essence, and should unconditionally reject only what is evil in itself, or in essence, and everything else must be accepted or rejected according to its actual relation to this inner essence of good or evil?¹³⁷ Is it not clear that if the good exists, then it must have unique, inner attributes and determinations that ultimately¹³⁸ do not depend on any historical forms and institutions, and even less on a rejection of them?

The moral meaning of life is originally and ultimately determined by the good itself, which is accessible to us inwardly through our conscience and reason to the extent that these *inner* forms of the good are freed by moral deed from slavery to the passions and from the limitations of personal and collective selfishness.¹³⁹ This is the final criterion of all outer forms and appearances. “Know ye not,” says the apostle Paul, “that we shall judge angels?”¹⁴⁰ If heavenly things are under our jurisdiction, then all the more are earthly things. The human being is in principle or by vocation¹⁴¹ an *unconditional* inner form of the good, taken as unconditional content. Everything else is conditional and relative. The good in itself is not conditioned by anything; it conditions everything and through everything is realized. That nothing conditions it constitutes its *purity*. That it conditions everything reveals its *completeness*, and that it is realized through everything reveals its *power* or efficacy.

[23] Without the purity of the good, without the possibility in every practical question to distinguish good from evil unconditionally and in every particular case to say “yes” or “no,” life would be entirely devoid of its moral character and dignity. Without the completeness of the good, without the possibility of connecting all actual relations to it, of justifying the good in everything and of improving everything by the good,¹⁴² life would be one-sided and poor. Finally, without the strength of the good, without the possibility of its ultimate triumph over everything, including “the last enemy,”¹⁴³ viz., death, life would be futile.¹⁴⁴

The inner attributes of the good determine the¹⁴⁵ purpose of human life. Its moral meaning lies in its service to the pure, all-round and all-powerful Good.

¹³⁷ C], and everything else ... of good or evil] *Absent in A*

¹³⁸ C] ultimately] *Absent in A*

¹³⁹ C] to the extent that ... collective selfishness] *Absent in AB*

¹⁴⁰ E] I Corinthians 6: 3

¹⁴¹ C] in principle or by vocation] *Absent in AB*

¹⁴² C] of justifying the good in everything and of improving everything by the good,] of correcting and guiding to perfection everything spoiled by evil, **A**

¹⁴³ E] I Corinthians 15: 26

¹⁴⁴ C] futile.] futile. The three characteristics of the good itself are equally essential and necessary, and consequently cannot be isolated from each other. If, as it were, one of them was stripped away, the dissemination of the good would inevitably be lost and the two others would be dropped from the very essence of the good. A one-sided morality would inevitably be both impure and impotent. **A**

¹⁴⁵ C] determine the] determine definitively and integrally the **A**

In order to be worthy of its object and of our own selves, such service must be *voluntary*, and in order to be this it must¹⁴⁶ pass through human consciousness. The job of moral philosophy is to assist in this process and partly also to anticipate the result to be attained. The founder of moral philosophy *as science*, Kant, dwelled on the first essential attribute of the absolute good, viz., its purity, which demands from the human being a formally unconditional, or autonomous, will, free from all empirical taints. The pure good demands that it be chosen only for itself. Any other motivation would be undignified for it. Without rejecting what Kant stated so well concerning the question of the formal purity of the good will,¹⁴⁷ I have turned, in particular, to the second essential attribute of the good, viz., its all-unity, without separating it from two others (as Kant did with regard to the first) but directly developing the rational content of the all-one¹⁴⁸ good from the actual moral data in which it lies. I obtained, therefore, not dialectical moments of an abstract idea (as in Hegel) nor empirical complications of natural facts (as in Herbert Spencer), but the completeness of moral norms for all fundamental practical relations of our individual and collective life. Only such completeness justifies the good in our consciousness, and only on the condition of such completeness can the moral good realize for us its purity and its invincible¹⁴⁹ strength.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ C] be *voluntary*, and in order to be this it must] *Absent in B*

¹⁴⁷ C] *The following appears as a footnote in B alone*: For the many readers inadequately familiar with German philosophy, I have attached at the end of this book a precise exposition of Kant's ethical principles (according to his *Critique of Practical Reason* and *The Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*). I first published this exposition 18 years ago in my *Critique of Abstract Principles*. I am saved from expounding and analyzing other ethical systems and theories, which have in my view only historical significance, by the appearance in Russian (under my editorship) of Professor Jodl's well-known fundamental work *Istorija etika*. E] See Jodl 1896. This is a Russian translation of Jodl 1882–1889. The Russian translation appeared with a preface written by Solov'ëv. His reference here to a "precise exposition of Kant's ethical philosophy" is to an appendix accompanying the *Justification* in both the 1897 and the 1899 editions. In the former, it is entitled "An Exposition and Appraisal of the Formal Principle of Morality (Kant's) with Critical Remarks on Empirical Ethics," whereas in the latter the title runs: "The Formal Principle of Morality (Kant's) – An Exposition and Appraisal with Critical Remarks on Empirical Ethics." The appendix can be found in SS, vol. 2: 371–397. It is essentially that which appears in PSS, vol. 3: 45–74; SS, vol. 2: 37–71. The differences are presumably the result of his abandoned attempt to produce a second edition of the *Critique of Abstract Principles*. Solov'ëv's brother, acting as the editor of the first edition of Vladimir's "collected works" remarks: "Intending to re-edit the *Critique of Abstract Principles*, V. S. Solov'ëv several times took to review and correct this work. However, he did so each time very reluctantly and soon gave up." Solov'ëv n.d., vol. 2: 350.

¹⁴⁸ C] all-one] *Absent in B*

¹⁴⁹ C] invincible] gentle **B**

¹⁵⁰ C] In order to be worthy ... its invincible strength.] *Absent in A*

[24] Introduction

Moral Philosophy as an Independent Discipline

I

The unique object of moral philosophy is the concept of the *good*. The task of this philosophical discipline is to elucidate all that reason, aroused by experience, construes in this concept and, thereby, to provide us with a definitive answer to the chief question of the *proper* concern or meaning of our lives.¹

Higher animals undoubtedly have the ability to perform a rudimentary positive or negative evaluation of things. Within them, various *sensations* of a pleasant and unpleasant nature are² combined with more or less complex *representations* of desired and undesired objects. In making such an evaluation, however, the human being passes beyond single sensations and particular representations and rises to a general, rational *concept* or idea of good and evil.

Many people deny the universal character of this idea but only because of a misunderstanding. True, there is no abomination that would not be recognized somewhere and sometime as good. Nevertheless, there is along with this not now, nor was there ever, any human tribe that would deny the significance of a constant,

E] This “Introduction” was first published with a footnote to the title reading “Introductory chapter from a work being prepared for publication entitled: ‘Foundations of Moral Philosophy.’” In the first edition of the compiled work from 1897, the “Introduction” spans pp. 1–33.

¹ C] to provide a definite... our lives] to answer the chief questions: *How should I live, what should I do, what should I strive for.* **AB.**

² C] Higher animals... unpleasant nature are] Independent of the level of their awareness, we find that all animals possess a certain rudimentary idea of the good, which determines the *basis* of their relations and actions. Each of the so-called protozoa relates to its environment in a certain way: it is attracted to some objects as good, i.e., as useful for it and is averted from others as bad, i.e., as harmful. There is no reason to deny that this obvious external distinction is connected in the organism itself with certain agreeable or disagreeable *sensations*, which correspond to good or bad (for it) properties of the respective objects. If the faculty for such a rudimentary evaluation of things can arguably be seen in protists, then it, undoubtedly, is found in higher animals where it is **AB.**

universal *norm* and ideal to its conception of the good (whatever that might be).³ The red-skinned Indian, for whom the scalping [25]of as many human heads as possible was a virtue, saw this as good and heroic not only on that particular day but throughout his entire life and not just for himself alone but for any decent man. An Eskimo who sees the highest good in the greatest supply of putrid fat from seals and cod undoubtedly ascribes a universal validity to his ideal. He is convinced that what is moral in his eyes is good for all time and people and even in the world to come. If he should hear of barbarians for whom putrid fat is disgusting,⁴ he either would not believe they exist or would deny them the dignity of being normal. Similarly,⁵ the famous Hottentot who said that it is good when *he* steals cows and bad when *his* are stolen certainly sees this ethical principle as applicable not to himself alone but understands it as applicable to *everyone*. The good lies in the successful appropriation of another's property and evil in the loss of one's own.

Thus, even in its imperfect application the idea of the good undoubtedly retains its formal universality. That is, although the content of this presupposed norm (i.e., the answers given to the question concerning what is good), does not completely correspond to the formal⁶ demand of the idea, having only a contingent, particular and crudely material character, its recognition is a constant norm for all.⁷ Certainly the moral ideas of even the lowest savages are not limited to scalped heads and stolen cows. The mentioned Iroquois and Hottentots also observe a certain modesty in sexual relations. They know pity for others close to them, and they know how to bow to their superiors. Nonetheless, as long as these rudimentary manifestations of true morality stand alongside certain savage and inhuman demands or even recede into the background, as long as ferocity is valued above modesty and rapacity above compassion, we must recognize that the idea of the good, though retaining its formal universality, is devoid of the actual content corresponding to it.

The ability of reason to form ideas is just as originally inherent in humans as any organic function that is peculiar to our organism. It is impossible to deny that the alimentary organs and their functioning are *innate* in animals. However, no one takes this to mean that animals are born with food already in their mouths. In precisely the same way, [26]the human being is not born with ideas but only already with a faculty to be conscious of them.⁸

³ F] In these *preliminary* remarks, which are merely introductory, I intentionally take the idea of the good at first in its original complexity, i.e., not only in the sense of the value of our actions, but also in the sense of objects that, in general, are viewed as desirable to enjoy or possess ("all his goods, etc."). Some doctrines, in essence, deny this distinction, and I cannot immediately presuppose it before undertaking a philosophical elucidation.

⁴ C] ascribes a universal validity... putrid fat is disgusting] ascribes to his ideal the character of an absolute norm valid for all time and people and even in the world to come. If he should hear of barbarians for whom putrid fat is an abomination, A.

⁵ C] Similarly,] In the same way, A.

⁶ C] formal] ideal AB.

⁷ C] constant norm for all.] constant norm for all or as something *universally applicable*. A.

⁸ C] The ability of... conscious of them] In AB *this entire paragraph is simply presented as a footnote to the next sentence* "Thanks to a rational consciousness...." *except that the last sentence in*

Thanks to this rational awareness, human beings originally possess a general idea of the good as an unconditional norm. With its further development, however, this rational awareness gradually imparts the proper content to the formal idea of the good. Such an awareness strives to establish moral demands and ideals that are in their essence universal and necessary, that express the proper development of the universal idea of the good and that do not represent only its external application to one or another material motive foreign to it. When this work of human consciousness elaborating the true content of morality reaches a certain degree of clarity, distinctness and systematization, it becomes *moral philosophy* or *ethics*. The various ethical systems and theories present⁹ various degrees of completeness and consistency.

II

In terms of its essence, moral philosophy is most closely connected with religion, but in terms of its cognitive method it is most closely connected with theoretical philosophy. We cannot explain in advance what this connection is, but we can and must now say what it *is not*. It should not be presented as if ethics unilaterally *depends* on positive religion¹⁰ or on speculative philosophy. Such dependence would remove from the moral sphere its proper content and independent significance. The view that morality and moral philosophy are *entirely* subordinate to *theoretical* principles found in philosophy and positive religion¹¹ is quite prevalent in one form or another. The unfounded nature of this view is all the clearer to me in that I myself once was very close to this position, if I did not fully share it.¹² Below are some of the considerations that forced me to abandon that viewpoint. I will mention only those that can be understood prior to an exposition of [moral] philosophy¹³ itself.

Those who reject the independence of morality say “only¹⁴ true religion gives people the strength to carry out the good; but the entire value of the good lies in its fulfillment. In other words, [27]ethics has no significance apart from true religion.” That true religion gives its true adherents strength to carry out the good is indisputable. That this strength is given *only* through religion and that apart from religion good cannot possibly be done is an extraordinary assertion that is supposedly demanded in the name of the higher interests of faith. Yet, as a matter of fact, it directly contradicts the teaching of the greatest defender of the rights of faith, the

this paragraph in AB reads: The theory of innate ideas is sometimes understood by its opponents in just such an absurd way.

⁹ C] present] present in turn A.

¹⁰ C] positive religion] religion A.

¹¹ C] positive religion] religion A.

¹² F] Cf. *Kritika otvlechenykh nachala*, §XXVI. E] PSS, vol. 3: 175–177; SS, vol. 2: 189–192.

¹³ C] [moral] philosophy] the [moral] discipline AB.

¹⁴ C] Those who reject the independence of morality say “only] “Only A.

apostle Paul,¹⁵ who as is well known, recognized that pagans can do good according to natural law. He says, “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.”¹⁶

In order to obtain the strength—regardless of its source—to carry out the good, it is necessary to have a concept of it, for otherwise carrying it out would be merely a mechanical activity. And it is wrong to think that the entire value of the good lies in carrying it out. The *manner* in which this is done is also important. The automatic, unconscious performance of good acts does not comply with human dignity and consequently does not express the human good. An awareness of it is a necessary condition to carrying out the *human good*. That such an awareness of the good is possible independently of true religion is shown in everyday life as well as in historical experience and is confirmed by the testimony of such a champion of the faith as the apostle Paul.¹⁷

Furthermore, if piety demands we acknowledge that the strength to carry out the good¹⁸ comes from God, then, on the contrary, it would be greatly impious for us to restrict the Deity’s means of communicating this strength. Since some people are conscious of the good and create it independently of religion, both experience and the Holy Scriptures [28]agree that *positive* religion is not the only path by which we obtain moral strength. Therefore, from a religious viewpoint it remains for us simply to accept this truth and, consequently, recognize that in a certain sense morality¹⁹ is independent of positive religion²⁰ and that moral philosophy is independent of any religious doctrine.²¹ A third consideration leads to the same conclusion.

¹⁵ C] that is supposedly... apostle Paul,] which directly contradicts the teaching of the apostle Paul, the greatest defender of the eternal rights of faith. He, A.

¹⁶ F] ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῆ οὗτοι νόμον μὴ ἔχοντες ἑαυτοῖς εἰσὶν νόμος οἵτινες ἐνδείκνυνται τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν συμμάρτυρουσῆς αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως καὶ μεταξὺ ἀλλήλων τῶν λογισμῶν κατηγορούντων ἢ καὶ ἀπολογουμένων (Romans 2: 14–15)

¹⁷ F] What the apostle says about the pagans of his time is undoubtedly applicable to those who after the appearance of Christianity were unable to accept it either because they did not hear about it or because it was presented to them in a distorted form. When they do good, they do so according to the natural law “written in their hearts.”

¹⁸ C] good] good (like everything else) A.

¹⁹ C] that in a certain sense morality] that morality AB.

²⁰ C] positive religion] religion A.

²¹ F] What is denied here is a dependence in the strict sense, i.e., that there is a relation between the two objects such that one of them entirely depends on the other and cannot exist without it. All I am claiming at this point is that ethics does not depend on *positive* religion, without at all deciding anything with regard to their actual connection or their mutual dependence in *concreto*. As will be shown later, the very concept of so-called natural, or rational, religion, arose on the basis of moral philosophy and has no sense outside ethics. I have in mind the view, which recently has become widespread, that moral life is entirely determined by the dogmas and the institutions of positive religion and must be absolutely subordinate to them. C] *The lines* “As will be ... subordinate to them.” *were absent in A.*]

However great our confidence in the truth of our own religion, it does not give us the right to close our eyes to the fact that a multitude of religions exist and that each of them claims to be exclusively true. In every mind not indifferent to truth, this fact arouses a need for an objective justification of one's faith, i.e., supportive reasons, which could be seen as convincing not just for oneself but also for others and ultimately for everyone. Nevertheless, all of the generally applicable arguments in support of a religion's veracity reduce to a single fundamental one, viz., an ethical argument that claims the moral superiority of one's own religion over the others. This is essentially the case even when the moral interest is completely obscured by other motives. For example, in support of his or her religion someone might point to the beauty of its church service. Indeed, we should not treat such an argument too lightly. If²² the beauty of the Greek service in the Cathedral of St. Sophia had not produced such a powerful impression²³ on the ambassadors of the Kievian Prince Vladimir, Russia would probably²⁴ not now be Orthodox.²⁵ But however important this aspect of religion may be, [29]one can ask wherein lies the aesthetic value of a certain church service as compared to others? It certainly does not lie in the fact that its forms and settings are distinguished in general by some sort of beauty.²⁶ Beauty of form by itself (i.e., the perfection of the sensuous expression of something) characterizes the most diverse sorts of objects: the beauty of a ballet, the beauty of an opera, the beauty of a battle plan or of an erotic picture, the beauty of a fireworks display. But when such sorts of beauty,²⁷ however small the degree, are introduced into religious worship, it is correctly censured as a distortion of the worship's true dignity. That is, the aesthetic value of a church service lies not in the fact that its sensory forms are beautiful, but in the fact that their beauty is expressed as clearly as possible and that they embody as fully as possible the spiritual content of the true religion. Although partly dogmatic, this content is chiefly ethical (in the broad sense).²⁸ The holiness of the Deity, His love for people, the gratitude and the devotion of people to the Heavenly Father and their mutual brotherhood—here is that ideal essence which, already embodied in the figures and the events of sacred history, through this sacred and historical medium, is artistically embodied anew in

²² C] lightly. If] lightly. For example, the Slavophile writer Khomjakov neither mocked nor became indignant upon reading Chateaubriand's [*Le*] *Génie du Christianisme*, where, among other things, the aesthetic impression of the peeling of a bell, of an altar illuminated by twinkling candles, etc. is pointed out. The Orthodox believer forgot that if **A**] lightly. For example, the Slavophile writer Khomjakov did not become indignant upon reading Chateaubriand's [*Le*] *Génie du Christianisme*, where, among other things, the aesthetic impression of the peeling of a bell, of an altar illuminated by twinkling candles, etc. is pointed out. The Orthodox believer forgot that if **B**.

²³ C] impression] effect **AB**.

²⁴ C] probably] perhaps **AB**.

²⁵ C] Orthodox.] Orthodox, and it would not have to distinguish itself so arrogantly from Western Christianity. **AB**.

²⁶ C] some sort of beauty] a beauty of whatever sort it may be **AB**.

²⁷ C] But when such sorts of beauty] In brief, every artistic work is independent of its subject and character. But when such elements of beauty **AB**.

²⁸ C] (in the broad sense).] *Absent in* **AB**.

the church's ceremonies, symbols, prayers and religious hymns. But if the spiritual essence of religion can act on some only through its manifestation in a service, then others (and with the development of consciousness these have become all the more numerous) are able to perceive it directly and apart from this service as a theory. Here again the moral aspect of a religious doctrine decisively predominates over its dogmatic aspect. The metaphysical dogmas of true Christianity, for all their inner validity, undoubtedly exceed the level of ordinary human understanding. This is why they cannot serve, and never have served, as the *initial* means of convincing²⁹ people who are not of our creed of its veracity. In order to accept these dogmas on faith, one must already be a Christian, and in order to understand their meaning within the sphere of speculative reason, one must be a philosopher of the Platonic or Schellingian direction. Consequently, this path cannot be accepted as universally valid, and so the only means we have available to convince non-believers is to show the superiority of the moral aspect of our religion.³⁰ Actually [30] in the attempt to provide a moral and practical justification for one's faith disputes quite often arise not only between separate religions but also between different branches of one and the same religion. Thus, the Roman Catholics quite gladly cite in their favor the firm solidarity and energetic activity of their clergy, which stands united through the religious and moral force of the papal monarchy. They point out the irreplaceable moral influence of the clergy on a nation's masses, and they point out the role of the Pope as the universal defender of justice, as the supreme judge and peacemaker. And they especially point to the performance of abundant *charitable deeds* in their foreign and domestic missions. In turn, the Protestants, having originally separated³¹ from the Catholic Church because of differences in *moral* theology, claim as their fundamental advantage the moral level and purity of their teaching, which frees the individual conscience and the life of the community from the slavery of superficial deeds and from various, in their opinion, nonsensical³² traditions and practical abuses. Finally, Orthodox apologists and polemicists most often make moral accusations against Western Christianity. They reproach Catholicism for its pride and ambition, for trying to confer on its hierarchical leader the things that belong to God as well as those that belong to Caesar. They accuse the Catholic hierarchy of fanaticism,³³ of being attached to the world and of greed; they hold it responsible for the general sin of persecuting heretics and infidels. Like the Protestants, they constantly return to three chief accusations: the Inquisition, indulgences and Jesuit morality. Finally, independently of the Protestants, they include in this

²⁹ C] and never have served, as a *initial* means of convincing] cannot serve as the means of convincing **AB**.

³⁰ F] One critic—God help him!—took this as claiming that that religion is true to which the greatest number of good people belong. With this I wish he would have hinted to some method for compiling such moral statistics! C] *This entire note is absent in A*.

³¹ C] having originally separated] having separated **AB**.

³² C] various, in their opinion, nonsensical] various nonsensical **AB**.

³³ C] fanaticism,] cruelty, **AB**.

accusation the sin of moral fratricide, which was expressed in the autocratic legitimation (without the knowledge of the Eastern Church) of local Western traditions.³⁴ Less sharp, but just as weighty, are the ethical accusations lodged by our polemicists also against the Protestant creed. They accuse it of individualism, which, they claim, destroys the church as an actual and integral moral entity. They charge it with ruining (by a rejection of traditions) the loving bond in the church between not only the present and its historical past, but also (by rejecting prayers for the deceased) between [31]the visible and the invisible, etc.

Without going³⁵ into the realm of theology and without resolving the extent to which all these squabbles have a basis and whether there is a need for them,³⁶ I would merely like to point out that none of the disputants rejects the moral principles presented by the opposing side. Each merely tries to utilize them in its own favor. Thus, when Catholics boast of their charitable deeds as that which especially distinguishes their church, neither their Protestant nor their Greco-Russian opponents³⁷ says that charity is stupid. They merely claim that the goal of Catholic charitable institutions is to promote an ambitious political agenda and that the institutions are distorted by being combined with an extraneous element, thereby more or less losing their moral value.

In turn, Catholics do not reply that ambition in itself is good and that Christian love must be subordinate to politics. On the contrary, they reject the reproach of ambition and say that power for them is not the goal, but only the necessary means for carrying out their moral duty. Precisely the same can be said when the Orthodox (together with the Catholics) reproach Protestantism for their lack of spiritual filiation and for their disregard of the Patristic traditions. No prudent Protestant, however, would say that the traditions must be disdained. On the contrary, they argue that Protestantism is also a return to the venerable and genuine traditions of Christianity, cleansed of all false and harmful elements.

Clearly, therefore, the disputants stand here on the self-same moral ground (it is thanks to this alone that a dispute is possible). They have the same undisputed ethical principles and standards, and the dispute is only about their application. These principles do not belong by themselves to one of the creeds but form the general platform to which they all equally appeal. In essence, the representative of each side

³⁴ C] *In A alone, we find the following footnote to these words:* Even in Khomjakov, who sees “rationalism” as the greatest of Western errors, this theoretical sin somehow is imperceptibly absorbed in the moral act of “fratricide.” I suppose that Khomjakov’s polemic is bound to do this, because of its relatively popular style. Only the Slavophile circle, whose members are anchored more firmly in Hegel’s “phenomenology of spirit” than in church dogmatics and history, can comprehend the accusation of rationalism (particularly against Catholicism, subordinating theoretical reason to a mystical faith and practical reason to authority). At least the reproach of “fratricide,” for all its improbability, was understood by everyone.

³⁵ C] going] intruding **AB**.

³⁶ F] Concerning the reproach of “moral fratricide” see my article “Dogmaticheskoe razvitie cerkvi” in *Pravoslavnoe Obozrenie*, 1885: E] See Solov’ev 1885.

³⁷ C] their Greco-Russian opponents] we **AB**.

says to his opponent only, “I employ more faithfully and better than you the same moral principles that [32]you also hold. Therefore, you must recognize my rectitude and renounce your mistakes.” Thus, the ethical norms equally presupposed by all the creeds cannot by themselves depend on denominational differences.

Ethics, however, turns out to be just as independent of the wider differences in religions. When a missionary convinces a Muslim or pagan of the superiority of the Christian moral doctrine, he obviously supposes that his listener has (at least potentially or secretly) the same moral norms as he does. That is, the norms the Christian has in common with the pagan, who has them “written in his heart,”³⁸ are independent of positive religion in general. Furthermore, all positive religions, including the absolutely true one, appeal to general moral norms in their disputes for confirmation of their rights and claims. They, thereby, see themselves as dependent on these norms in some sense similar to the way the two contending sides in a trial are³⁹ subject to the legal verdict. And if they both defer to it, this means that they recognize its jurisdiction.

III

Moral philosophy has an object of its own (viz., moral norms) independent of positive religion (in a certain sense, the latter even presupposes these norms). Therefore, from its objective or actual side it is independent. Is not moral philosophy, then, formally, i.e., as a discipline, subordinate to theoretical philosophy, in particular to that part of it which examines the bases⁴⁰ and limits of our cognitive faculties? Reason, however, in elaborating moral philosophy simply *develops* on the basis of experience the implications of the idea of the good inherent in it (or, in other words, the original fact of moral awareness) and to this extent does not transgress the bounds of its own inner field. In scholastic language, we would say its *employment* here is *immanent* and consequently independent of this or that solution to the problem of the (transcendent) cognition of things in themselves. In simpler terms, moral philosophy is concerned only with our inner [33]attitude towards our own activities, i.e., with something *indisputably* accessible to our cognition, since we ourselves create it. We leave aside the contentious issue of whether we can or cannot know what lies in some other spheres of being independent of us. The ideal content of morality⁴¹ is known by the same reason that (in this respect) creates⁴² it. Consequently, cognition here coincides with its object (i.e., is *adequate* to it), leaving no room for any critical

³⁸ E] Romans 2: 15.

³⁹ C] the two contending sides in a trial are] the way a defendant, even if he is a holy man whose piety is toward a higher law, is not automatically excused. He is A.

⁴⁰ C] bases] basis A.

⁴¹ C] The ideal content of morality] Morality AB.

⁴² C] that (in this respect) creates] that creates AB.

doubt. The progress and the results of this intellectual process speak for themselves, presupposing nothing except the general logical and psychological conditions of all mental activity. Without the pretense to theoretical cognition of any metaphysical essences whatever, ethics in itself is indifferent to the dispute between dogmatic and critical philosophies, the former claiming the reality and, consequently, also the possibility of such knowledge and the latter, on the contrary, denying this possibility and, thus, its reality.

Despite the general formal independence of ethics from theoretical philosophy, there are two metaphysical questions, a certain solution to which *apparently* has a fatal significance for the very existence of morality.

The first⁴³ is the following. The starting point of all serious speculation is a doubt in the objective validity of our knowledge. That is, are things in fact as we know them? This doubt in the veracity of our knowledge, however, leads eventually to a doubt in the very existence of the *known*, i.e., of the world and everything in it. This world is created out of our sense perceptions, out of which the understanding constructs a connected whole. But are not our perceptions only our own sensations, and is not the connection between things only our thoughts? But if so, if the entire world is only my representation, then everyone with whom I stand in a moral and practical relation, i.e., everyone besides myself, conceived as integral parts of my represented world and of whom I have knowledge like of everything else, also turns out to be only my representation. Since moral prescriptions (to a significant extent at least) determine my dutiful relation to other people, and if others [34] do not exist, are not these moral prescriptions, then, transformed into pointless and impractical demands? Such would be the case if the nonexistence of all other beings could be known with the same indubitability (within its sphere) as moral prescriptions (within their sphere). If at the same time as my conscience, with its inherent indubitability, obliges me to moral action towards certain objects, theoretical reason proves with the *same indubitability* that these objects do not exist, and that consequently the prescriptions with regard to them are senseless; if, therefore, practical certainty were undermined by an *equivalent* theoretical certainty and the indubitability of the prescription were annulled by indubitable knowledge of its impracticality, then our position would actually be hopeless. In fact, however, the two *equal* certainties do not and cannot conflict. A doubt in the independent existence of external beings is not a certainty in their nonexistence and can never become one. Even if we assume as entirely proven that our senses and our understanding are unreliable witnesses to the existence of other beings, we could logically from this only question the evidence, but never be certain of the truth of the contrary. Even if it were positively proven that a certain witness had falsely testified to a fact that this person actually had not witnessed, who would conclude from this that that very fact could not exist? *Other* witnesses could speak in support of it, and finally it could take place without any witnesses and yet still be a fact. Both my senses and my understanding speak in favor of the existence of other people besides myself. Let us suppose, however,

⁴³ C] The first is] The first point is **AB**.

that an investigation reveals this to be a deception, that these means of cognizing, in fact, warrant only the existence of objects *in our representations*, but not their independent existence, which we consequently begin to doubt. But to proceed further, to replace our earlier certainty in the existence of other beings with not just a doubt, but a certainty in their nonexistence, we would have to presuppose that if something is not genuinely found in our senses and understanding, it cannot exist. This, however, would be [35]a quite arbitrary supposition for which there are not only no logical bases, but also no rational ground.

If, concerning the existence of other beings, we cannot critically entertain more than a doubt, then we can rest easy concerning the fate of moral prescriptions. For a theoretical doubt is obviously insufficient to undermine moral and practical certainty. Besides, we must remember that this critical doubt is not the ultimate philosophical point of view. In one way or another, it is always overcome. One of these ways is through the Kantian distinction of phenomena from noumena (appearances from things in themselves). The objects of moral duty, being appearances, are deprived of existence proper, but this is more than made up for, on the other hand, as noumena. Another of these ways is the appearance of new more reliable witnesses to external existence than either sensations or the understanding (e.g., Jacobi's immediate *faith* or Schopenhauer's *will*, which makes itself known as the basis of our own reality and, analogously, also that of others). Or new paths are found toward a different, deeper speculative dogmatism, which reconstructs the objective significance of all that exists (the philosophies of Schelling, Hegel et al.).

However, whatever the force and the importance of a critical doubt in the existence of external beings, this, in any case, has to do with only *one aspect* of the moral sphere. Every ethical prescription, as such, simply by its outward end, so to speak, concerns the object of an action (*viz.*, other people). Its own⁴⁴ foundation always lies within the one who acts (the subject), on which no positive or negative theory of the external world has effect. That external aspect of moral prescriptions, which connects them to the object, forms the peculiar subject-matter of law, and not of morality in the narrow sense. Although, as we will see later, law depends on morality and cannot be separated from it, this does not blur the sharp distinction between the two spheres. One and the same action, e.g., murder, can be condemned equally by both the criminologist and the moralist. Although both find the same group of psychological factors, crowned by the material fact of the killing, relevant to their verdict and although their conclusions concur, the starting point and, therefore, their entire respective trains of thought [36]are different and opposed to each other. From the criminologist's point of view, what is of fundamental significance is the objective fact of murder, i.e., the action that violates the rights of the other individual. It is this that characterizes the executor of the action as an abnormal member of society. Of importance for a thorough and complete depiction of this characteristic are also the inner, psychological moments, above all the presence of a criminal intent, the so-called *animus* of the misdeed. All the other subjective conditions of the matter are of some importance, but only in connection with the fact of the

⁴⁴ C] own] inner A.

murder or in a causal connection with it. If someone's whole life is consumed with hate and the idea of murder but the passion remains only in the mind of the subject and does not find expression in an actual murder or real attempts to murder, nor in scheming to mutilate, etc., this subject, despite all his hellish malice, would be of little interest to the criminologist as such. From the moral point of view, however, the situation is quite the contrary. The most insignificant fit of malice or anger, even if never expressed in either word or deed, is already in itself an immediate object for ethical judgment and condemnation. From this point of view, the fact of murder is of importance not objectively, but merely as an expression of the extremely intense level of the evil feeling that already by itself in all its degrees deserves to be condemned. For the jurist, the loss of life is a violation of rights or a loss unlawfully inflicted upon the victim and upon the social order.⁴⁵ From the moral point of view, however, the loss of life is still not thereby⁴⁶ a loss, but can even be a gain for the victim. A murder is an *undoubted* loss only for the murderer, not as a fact, but as the final word of that rage which itself is a loss for that person. For it robs him of his dignity as a rational being. Certainly from an ethical standpoint, murder is worse (more sinful) than a simple outburst of anger but only because the former needs a greater degree of the same vile passion than does the latter. By no means is murder worse because it is an injurious fact, whereas anger is just a feeling. If someone who firmly intends to slaughter his enemy mistakenly stabs a mannequin instead, he is morally a full-fledged murderer *even though* no one was killed and no one's individual rights were violated. *However*, from a juridical viewpoint this crime, involving a relatively worthless object (in terms of the penal code),⁴⁷ does not even remotely [37]resemble murder. What really happened in this case involves merely a certain amount of insignificant damage to another person's property.

Extreme idealism, which recognizes the actual existence of the subject's inner, psychic states alone, does not deny that there are *qualitative differences* in these states, which express greater or lesser degrees of *one's* own activity. Consequently, from this viewpoint our actions, despite the illusiveness of their objects, retain all of their moral significance as *indicators* of our spiritual states. For example, as with any *passion*, the feeling of rage or anger indicates a spiritual *passivity* or an inner subordination to an illusory appearance. In this sense, it is immoral. Clearly, the degree of immorality here is directly proportional to the strength of the given passion or to the degree of our passivity. The stronger the passion, the greater spiritual passivity it shows. Therefore, a raging anger leading to premeditated murder is more immoral than a momentary fit of temper, quite apart from the theoretically possible illusiveness of external objects. In general, even for subjective idealism vile actions are morally worse than vile emotional fits that do not lead to actions.⁴⁸

Clearly, the answer to our problem follows from this. If the entire world were only my dream, only the objective, outwardly-oriented aspect of ethics (in the broad

⁴⁵ C] and upon the social order.] *Absent in A.*

⁴⁶ C] thereby] *eo ipso A.*

⁴⁷ C] , involving a relatively worthless object (in terms of the penal code),] *Absent in A.*

⁴⁸ C] Extreme idealism ... to actions] *Entire paragraph absent in A.*

sense) would be destroyed but not its peculiar, inner sphere. My juridical, political, social and philanthropic interests would be undermined, but my moral interest concerning my own individual self, my obligations to myself, would⁴⁹ remain intact. I would cease to care about protecting the rights of others but would continue to protect my inner dignity. Without any tender concern at all for the apparitions surrounding me, I, nevertheless, should refrain from all evil or shameful passions with respect to these phantoms. If moral dignity demands that we not be angry with a living person, then it is all the more so in relation to an empty apparition. What's more, if it is shameful to fear what exists, then it is more shameful to fear what does not exist. If to aspire to the material possession of actual objects is shameful and contrary to reason, then such an aspiration concerning the apparitions from my own imagination is no less shameful and even more nonsensical. In spite of what [38]dreamy idealism says, seeing ourselves doing something immoral in an ordinary dream evokes shame in us after waking. Certainly, if I dreamt that I killed someone, upon awaking I am not so much ashamed of this action as I am glad that it was only a dream. Nevertheless, when I am awake I am ashamed of the malicious feeling I experienced in my sleep.

Combining these considerations with what we said earlier, we come to the following general conclusion. In theoretical philosophy (viz., in the critique of knowledge) we can raise doubts only in the actual existence of the objects of morality but by no means certainty in their nonexistence. This doubt (which, by the way, that same philosophy resolves in one way or another) cannot outweigh the certainty inherent in the evidence of conscience. However, even if certainty in the nonexistence of other beings (as objects of moral action) were possible, the significance of this would be limited only to the objective aspect of ethics, leaving its proper, fundamental⁵⁰ sphere untouched. This conclusion adequately protects the inner independence of moral philosophy on the first point, i.e., with regard to the critique of cognition. The second point concerns the metaphysical question of freedom of the will.

IV

The quite prevalent view is that the fate of moral awareness depends on one solution or other to the problem of whether the will is free. The problem amounts to the following alternative: Either our actions are free, or they are necessary. This is why some claim that the latter solution, viz., determinism, or the view that all of our actions and states are necessary, makes human morality impossible and thereby strips moral philosophy of any sense. It is asked whether if the human being is only a cog in the celestial machine, how can we speak of any moral actions? The entire force of such an argument, however, lies in the mistaken confusion of mechanistic determin-

⁴⁹ C] my moral interest concerning my own individual self, my obligations to myself, would] my purely moral interest would **AB**.

⁵⁰ C] proper, fundamental] inner **AB**.

ism with determinism in general, an error from which even Kant himself was not free. Determinism in general asserts only that everything that takes place and, consequently, all human action is *determined* (determinatur—whence the name of this theory) by *sufficient reasons*, [39] *without* which they *cannot* occur and *with* which they *necessarily* do occur. But this necessity, the general concept of which is always the same, is manifested differently in various spheres.⁵¹ Corresponding to the three chief sorts of necessity (concerning appearances and actions), we distinguish three sorts of determinism: (1) *mechanical*, which if it were the only sort would actually exclude morality as such, (2) *psychological*, which allows certain moral elements but is hardly compatible with others, and (3) *rationaly ideal*, which allots room for all moral demands with all their force and full scope intact.

Phenomenally, mechanical necessity undoubtedly exists, but the assertion that it alone exists is only a consequence of a materialistic metaphysics that would like to reduce everything in existence to the sum of the mechanical movements of matter.⁵² However, what is there in common between this view and the conviction that there are sufficient reasons for everything that happens and that these reasons necessarily determine them? In order to see the human being as a cog in a celestial machine we must at least recognize the existence of such a machine. However, by no means do all deterministic philosophers agree on this. Many of them consider the material world as such to be only a representation in the mind of spiritual beings. In this view actual things do not mechanically determine these beings, but apparent things are mentally determined in accordance with the laws of the inner nature of spiritual beings, which includes ourselves.

Leaving aside for now such a metaphysical point of view and confining ourselves to general experience, we, undoubtedly, find an inner, psychological necessity in the animal world that is essentially irreducible to any mechanism. The actions of animals⁵³ [40] are determined not by external causes alone but also from within,

⁵¹ C] But this ... various spheres.] Since there are various sorts of necessity, which is a general or generic concept, there happen to be various determinations. **AB**.

⁵² E] Solov'ëv's term "*veshchestvo*" is here translated as "matter" even though elsewhere he distinguishes this term, which can also be rendered as "substance," from the term "*materija*." In his respective contribution to the *Brockhaus-Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary*, Solov'ëv wrote, "Usually this word [*veshchestvo*] is used as equivalent to the word "matter" [*materija*]. However, we can establish a definite distinction between the two terms. Matter in the metaphysical sense appears in the Pythagoreans, Plato and Aristotle as a potential principle of bifurcation, separation and variability, as possibly taking on numerous forms. Such a conception of matter is not that of substance. ... Substance is matter not in itself, but already formed, actually determined and differentiated in various ways. It exhibits certain properties according to certain laws. These particular properties and laws are a subject of study in physics and chemistry. Philosophers since the time of Descartes have posed the question: 'What is substance in general, i.e., what is every substantial object composed of?'" Solov'ëv 1997: 29. Here in the *Justification of the Moral Good*, there is no reason to think that Solov'ëv is using the term "*veshchestvo*" in a technical sense.

⁵³ F] In a certain sense, we can certainly say the same about plants and even about different parts of the inorganic world, because pure mechanism or absolute callousness do not exist in nature. In these preliminary considerations, however, I am trying to stick to what is indisputable and generally understandable. On the various sorts of causality and necessity in connection with the problem of freedom of the will, see in particular Schopenhauer's "Grundproblemen der Ethik" and "Wille

not by the pushes and shoves of things but by inducing motives, i.e., by their own ideas which, albeit aroused (we assume) by external objects, are formed and act on the animal's mind only in accordance with the animal's own nature. There certainly is no freedom here. The error of Kant's intended identification of psychological necessity with the mechanical variety is perfidiously underscored by a strikingly unsuccessful comparison. In his words, that our own ideas determine our ability to act is "at bottom... no better than the freedom of a turnspit, which, once it is wound up, also accomplishes its movements of itself."⁵⁴ Not only Kant, who was opposed to any hylozoism (endowing matter with life), but even the most poetically inclined of the *Naturphilosophen*⁵⁵ certainly do not ascribe to an object, such as the spit, the ability to produce its own motion. When we say that it turns by itself this only means that it continues to move through the force of an earlier push *alone*. The expression "by itself" means here "without the help of a new attendant impulsive force"—what the French call *tout seul*⁵⁶—and does not presuppose any inner involvement in the motion on the part of that which moves. However, in saying that an animal moves by itself we mean precisely by its own internal *involvement* in affecting its movements. It flees an enemy or falls upon food not because earlier these movements were externally reported to it, but because at that moment it felt a fear within itself of the enemy or a desire for [41]food. Certainly, these psychological states are not free acts of the will, but, in turn, they do not immediately create corporeal movements on their own. They just set in operation already existing mechanisms adapted for certain movements.⁵⁷ There is, however, an essential peculiarity that prevents the reduction of animate life to a mere mechanism alone. For the normal interaction of an animal with its external surroundings, the latter must be represented in the animal itself as motives that determine its actions in accordance with an agreeable or disagreeable feeling. The presence or absence of this faculty of feeling, inseparably connected with the two other faculties, viz., that of desiring and of representing, i.e., the presence or absence of one's own inner life, is the most essential distinction

in der Natur." I reproduced the essence of his discussion in my *Kritik otvlech. nach.*, pp. 85–96 E] See PSS, vol. 3: 81–89; SS, vol. 2: 78–89. C] pp. 85–96.] *The page references in SS are replaced by the chapter reference: Chap. IX.*

⁵⁴ E] Kant 1996a: 218.

⁵⁵ E] *Naturphilosophen*] A movement within German idealist philosophy in the early nineteenth century.

⁵⁶ F] In Polish the word *sam* retains only this negative sense, not the others (the derivative *samotny* means "lonely"). In Russian and German both senses are possible. If the positive sense (one's own, inner causality) is given, then the negative (the absence of another cause) is presupposed but not vice versa. Thus, the word *samouchka* [self-educated -TN] means a man who has educated himself and studied alone without the help of others (both senses here are combined as in similar words in German, e.g., *Selbsterziehung* or, for example, in the English word "self-help"). But when we say that the spit moves by itself alone (*selbst*), only the negative sense is given, i.e., that at the present moment nothing external pushes this object and not of course that it is the cause of its own motion. Rather, on the contrary, the cause is entirely given in the earlier push, independent of it.

⁵⁷ C] mechanisms adapted for certain movements.] organisms adapted for certain organs. A.

that we can conceive. If we recognize this mental activity in animals and deny it in mechanical devices, we have no right to identify them in the sense that Kant does.⁵⁸

The psychic life manifested in animals (and continued in humans) has in the various species and in individual animals various qualities by which we distinguish, for example, animals that are fierce and gentle, courageous and cowardly, etc. Although the animals themselves are not aware of these qualities as good or evil, the same qualities in humans are appraised as of a good or bad nature. Therefore, we have here a certain moral element, and since it is without doubt from experience that a good nature can be developed and an evil one weakened or corrected, we already have here a certain object for moral philosophy and a task calling for its practical application, although it is not a matter of freedom of the will. Certainly, however, the decisive independence of ethics from this metaphysical question must be discovered not in the realm of the psychic life that humans have in common with animals, but in the sphere of human morality proper.

[42]V

Just as psychological necessity in the animal world is combined with mechanical necessity without destroying the latter and is irreducible to it, so in a human an ideally rational or *moral necessity* is combined with the other two. Serving as motives or sufficient reasons of human actions, particular and concrete ideas act on our ability to desire by means of pleasant and unpleasant feelings. The essence of moral necessity, however, is that there still can be a universal rational idea of the good, acting on the conscious will in the form of the absolute good or, in Kant's terminology, the categorical imperative. Putting it in simpler terms, a human can do good in spite of and contrary to any selfish considerations, for the sake of the very idea of the good, from respect for duty or for the moral law alone. This is the culminating point of morality, and it is fully compatible with determinism without demanding in any way so-called freedom of the will.

By claiming the opposite, we would, above all, have to rid our minds and our languages of the very expression "moral necessity." If morality is possible only under the condition of free choice, this expression would be a *contradictio in adjecto*. Yet not only does everyone understand the idea contained in the expression "moral necessity," but the idea also follows from the essence of the matter. Necessity in general is the complete dependence of an action (in the broad sense—an *effectus*) on a cause or reason, which determines it and which, therefore, is called sufficient.

⁵⁸ F] The logical right to doubt the mental activity of *animals* can rest only on the same grounds on which I can doubt the mental activity of all other *people* besides myself (cf. above). The exact resolution of this purely theoretical doubt is impossible in the field of ethics. Indeed, it is unnecessary for it: This task is epistemological and metaphysical. E] Solov'ev surely has in mind a contemporary dispute within Russian philosophy initiated by Aleksandr I. Vvedenskij at St. Petersburg University concerning the grounds for ascribing to other people mental activity in all essentials similar to my own.

When this reason is a physical blow or stimulus, the necessity is mechanical; when it is mental excitement,⁵⁹ the necessity is psychological, and when the reason is the idea of the good, then the necessity is moral. Just as there have been futile attempts to reduce psychology to mechanics, so there have been equally futile endeavors to reduce morality to psychology, i.e., to prove that the genuine motives of human actions can be only psychic affects, and not the consciousness of duty, i.e., that humans never act from conscience alone. It is certainly impossible to prove this. Of course, it is true that the moral idea happens to be the sufficient reason for an action only in comparatively rare cases. But what follows from this? Plants and animals represent only a insignificant quantity in comparison with the inorganic mass of the Earth. [43]No one concludes from this, however, that there are no flora and fauna on Earth. Moral necessity is simply the highest blossom on the psychological soil of humanity—all the more reason why it has significance for philosophy.

By its very existence everything that is higher or more complete presupposes a certain *liberation* from what is lower or, to put it more precisely, from the exclusive supremacy of the lower. Thus, the ability to be determined to act through ideas or motives is a liberation from an exclusive subordination to material stimuli or blows. That is, psychological necessity is a freedom from mechanical necessity.

In the same sense moral necessity, fully remaining a necessity, is a freedom from a lower psychological necessity. If someone can be determined to act by virtue of the pure idea of the good, or by the absolute demand of moral duty, this means such a person is free from the subduing strength of psychic affects and can successfully fight against the most powerful of them.⁶⁰ This *rational freedom*, however, has nothing in common with so-called freedom of the will, the precise sense of which is that the will is not determined by anything except itself, or, in the irreproachable formula of Duns Scotus, “nothing other than the will is the total cause of volitions in the will” (*nihil aliud a voluntate causat actum volendi in voluntate*).⁶¹ I am not saying that there is no such thing as freedom of the will. I claim only that there is no such freedom in moral actions. In these actions the will is merely something determined and that which determines it is the idea of the good or the moral law. Such law is universal, necessary and independent of the will both in its content and in its origin.⁶²

If it can be, however, that the very act of accepting or rejecting the moral law as the foundation of our will depends only on this will, what explains that one and the same idea of the good is accepted by some as the sufficient⁶³ motive for actions but is rejected by others? In the first place one and the same idea has a different degree of clarity and completeness for different people. This, in part, explains the difference in the action⁶⁴ resulting from the idea. In the second place, this differ-

⁵⁹ C] excitement,] affect **A**.

⁶⁰ C] If someone . . . powerful of them.] *Absent in AB*.

⁶¹ E] Duns Scotus 1974: 599.

⁶² C] its origin.] its origin (but is posited by reason). **B**.

⁶³ C] sufficient] *Absent in A*.

⁶⁴ C] action] effect **AB**.

ence follows from the fact that different individuals naturally have different degrees of sensitivity to moral motivation in general. Surely, however, all causality and all necessity presupposes a *special* sensitivity of the given objects to impulses and [44]stimuli⁶⁵ of a certain sort. The stroke of a billiard cue, which sets a ball in motion, has no effect on a ray of light from the sun; the lush grass, which is irresistibly attractive to a deer,⁶⁶ usually does not prove to be attractive to a cat, etc. If the indifference of a solar ray to the cue's impact or the aversion of carnivorous animals to vegetable foods is considered a manifestation of a free will, then, certainly, good or evil human actions must also be considered arbitrary. We would merely be introducing a confusing terminology and nothing more and for no good reason.⁶⁷

In order for the idea of the good in the form of duty to serve as a sufficient reason or motive two factors must be united: This very idea in consciousness must be sufficiently clear and complete, and there must be sufficient moral sensitivity in the subject. Clearly, in spite of the opinions of one-sided schools of ethics, the presence of one of these factors in the absence of the other is insufficient to effect moral action. Thus, to use biblical examples, Abraham, who had the greatest moral sensitivity but an inadequate conception of what is contained in the idea of the good, decided to kill his son.⁶⁸ He was fully aware of the imperative form of the moral law as the expression of a higher will⁶⁹ and accepted it unconditionally. He simply lacked, however, a conception of what can and what cannot be a good or an object of God's will⁷⁰—clear proof that moral philosophy is not useless even for the righteous. In the biblical text, Abraham's decision is valued in two ways: (1) with respect to its religious selflessness, the boundlessness of which brought to the patriarch and his descendants the greatest blessings, and (2) with respect to the idea of the qualitative indifference of God's will. This idea was so mistaken and dangerous that intervention from above was required in order to prevent the accepted solution from being carried out. (I need not here go into either the historical connection of the events with pagan darkness or with its mysterious relation to Christian light.)⁷¹ In opposition to Abraham and⁷² with full knowledge of his duty, the prophet Balaam's depraved heart forced him to prefer the king's gifts to the orders of the divine will so as to bring him to curse the nation of God.⁷³

When the moral motive is insufficient in one respect or another, the motive [45]is inoperative; when it is sufficient in both respects, it is operative with necessity just like any other cause. Let us suppose that in accepting the moral law I seek to carry it out solely for its own sake, out of respect for it without combining it as a motive

⁶⁵ C] stimuli] motives **AB**.

⁶⁶ C] deer,] cow, **AB**.

⁶⁷ C] If the indifference ... good reason.] *Absent in A*.

⁶⁸ E] See Genesis 22: 1–13.

⁶⁹ C] as the expression of a higher will] *Absent in AB*.

⁷⁰ C] or an object of God's will] *Absent in AB*.

⁷¹ C] In the biblical text ... Christian light.)] *Absent in AB*.

⁷² C] In opposition to Abraham and] On the other hand, **AB**.

⁷³ E] See Numbers 22.

with any others. This very ability to respect the moral law so highly and disinterestedly, preferring it to all others is a quality of my character and not something arbitrary. The action that results from it, although rationally *free*, is entirely subordinate to moral *necessity* and cannot in any way be viewed as arbitrary or fortuitous. It is free in a relative sense—free from a lower mechanical and psychological necessity, but not free from the inner, higher necessity of the absolute Good. Morality and moral philosophy are based entirely on rational freedom, or moral necessity, and completely exclude irrational, absolute freedom, or arbitrary choice.⁷⁴

In order for the idea of the good to determine in *its* favor a person's conscious choice with full inner *necessity*, in order for this choice to be *sufficiently* motivated, it is necessary that the content of this idea be properly developed, that the mind present this idea to the will with its full force. These tasks are carried out by moral philosophy. Therefore, ethics is not only compatible with determinism, but even makes possible the highest manifestation of necessity. When a person of high moral development with full awareness subordinates his will to the idea of the good, an idea thoroughly known to him and thought through to the end, then it is clear to all that in this subordination to the moral law there is no arbitrariness. It is completely necessary.

Nevertheless, there is unconditional freedom of choice.⁷⁵ It is found, however, neither in moral self-determination, nor in the acts of practical reason as Kant sought, but precisely at the opposite end of the inner world. At present, I can only *partially* explain my point and that through allusion. As I remarked earlier, the good cannot be the direct object of an arbitrary⁷⁶ choice. Given the appropriate cognition and sensitivity on the part of the subject,⁷⁷ its own superiority is a sufficient reason for preferring it over the opposite principle, and there is no room for arbitrary choice here. [46]When I choose the good, it is not because I simply want to do so, but because it is good, because it is the positive thing to do and because I am able to appreciate its significance. But when I reject the good and choose evil, what determines my action? Is it, as a certain school of ethics thinks, simply because I do not know evil and mistakenly take it for the good? That it was *always* so cannot be proven. If a sufficient knowledge of the good in combination with a sufficient sensitivity to it *necessarily* determines our will in the moral sense, we are left with another question: Is an insufficient sensitivity to the good and a sensitivity to evil necessarily simply a fact of nature? Can it not also depend on the will, which in this case, lacking rational grounds to determine it in this bad direction (because to be subordinate to evil instead of to the good is contrary to reason) can actually be the proper and final⁷⁸ cause of its self-determination? Since there is no objective basis

⁷⁴ C] The action that results ... choice.] *Absent in AB.*

⁷⁵ C] unconditional freedom of choice.] freedom of the will. **A.**

⁷⁶ C] an arbitrary] a free **AB.**

⁷⁷ C] Given the appropriate ... the subject,] *Absent in A.*

⁷⁸ C] final] sole **AB.**

(for a rational being) to love evil as such, the will can select it only arbitrarily, assuming, of course, a clear and full⁷⁹ awareness. In a semi-conscious state the choice is adequately explained as a mistaken judgment. The good determines my choice in its favor by the very infinite nature of its positive content and being. Consequently, this choice is *infinitely* determined; its necessity was absolute, and there is *nothing* arbitrary in it. On the contrary, in choosing evil there is no determining reason, *no* necessity and, consequently, infinite arbitrariness.⁸⁰ The question, however, then becomes: Can a given rational being with a full and clear knowledge of the good be so insensitive as to reject it and accept evil unconditionally and decisively? Given such complete knowledge of the good, an insensitivity to it would be something absolutely irrational.⁸¹ Only such an irrational act would comply precisely with the concept of an unconditionally free will or of arbitrary choice. We have no right to reject its possibility beforehand. Positive reasons “for” or “against” can only be sought in the most obscure depths of metaphysics. In any case, however, before posing the question: Is there such a being who can with full knowledge of the good arbitrarily reject it and prefer evil?—we should provide ourselves with a clear account of everything that is contained [47] in the idea of the good and what follows from it. This is the task of moral philosophy, which, from this point of view, is presupposed by the metaphysical question of freedom of the will (with its serious resolution),⁸² and in no way depends on it.⁸³ Prior to any metaphysical inquiry we can and must know what our reason holds to be good in human nature and how it develops and extends this natural good, raising it to the level of complete moral perfection.^{84, 85}

[Page 48 is blank in *Opravdanie* 1914.]

⁷⁹ C] and full] *Absent in A.*

⁸⁰ C] The good determines ... arbitrariness.] *Absent in A.*

⁸¹ C] Given such ... irrational.] In this case, an insensitivity to the good would be something completely irrational. **A.**

⁸² C] (with its serious resolution)] *Absent in AB.*

⁸³ F] A significant part of my *theoretical philosophy* will be devoted to a special investigation of the question of freedom of the will. For the time being, it was enough to show that moral philosophy, as the doctrine of the good, has its own content, because the good remains the good regardless of whether we see it as the object of an arbitrary choice or as a motive that necessarily determines the activity of rational moral beings. Further on in this book, in discussing human freedom, individual freedom, etc., I will always mean either moral freedom, which is an ethical *fact*, or civil freedom, which is an ethical *postulate*, without reverting to an unconditional freedom of choice, which is simply a metaphysical *problem*. C] *This entire note absent in A]* my *theoretical philosophy* will] my metaphysics will **B]** Further on in ... metaphysical *problem*.] *Absent in B.*

⁸⁴ C] Prior to ... moral perfection.] *Absent in A.*

⁸⁵ C] complete moral perfection.] an absolute moral ideal. **B.**

[49]Part I
The Moral Good in Human Nature¹

¹ C] Part I ... in Human Nature] *Absent in B*

Chapter 1

The Original Data of Morality

I

However great its inner persuasiveness or its external authoritativeness, any moral doctrine will remain powerless and sterile if it is not firmly rooted in human moral nature. Despite the great variety of levels we see in human spiritual development, both in the past as well as today, and despite all the individual variations and the broad influences of race, climate and historical conditions, general human morality, nevertheless, rests on an irreducible foundation, and upon it every significant construction in the field of ethics must be built. The recognition of this truth does not depend on any particular metaphysical or scientific view of the origin of the human being. Whether it be the product of a long series of variations in animal organisms or the immediate product of a higher creative act, human nature with all its distinctive traits, in any case, happens to exist. Among these traits, the moral ones occupy the most important place.

The renowned representative of scientific transformism¹ does not deny the distinctive character of human psychic nature in general. Charles Darwin writes, “No doubt the difference in this respect is enormous, even if we compare [50] the mind of one of the lowest savages, who has no words to express any number higher than four, and who uses no abstract terms for the commonest objects or affections, with that of the most highly organised ape. The difference would, no doubt, still remain immense, even if one of the higher apes had been improved or civilised as much as a dog has been in comparison with its parent-form, the wolf or jackal. The Fuegians rank amongst the lowest barbarians; but I was continually struck with surprise how

E] This chapter originally appeared with the subtitle “A Chapter from a Work in Progress Entitled ‘Foundations of Moral Philosophy.’” In the first edition of the compiled book, the first chapter spans pp. 34–58.

¹ E] scientific transformism] A late-nineteenth century term, though now largely obsolete, for the Darwinian theory of evolution.

closely the three natives on board H.M.S. “Beagle,” who had lived some years in England and could talk a little English, resembled us in disposition and in most of our mental faculties.”²

Further on, Darwin announces that he completely agrees with those writers who maintain that of all the differences between humans and other animals the most significant is our moral feeling,³ which he (in his view) considers not to be acquired but innate in humans.⁴

Carried away, however, by his (in certain respects legitimate) aspiration to fill in, as he puts it, the “enormous” distance with intermediate links, Darwin makes one basic mistake. He ascribes an exclusively *social* character to the entirety of our original morality, thereby connecting it with the social instincts of animals. According to Darwin, personal or individual morality has only a derivative significance and is a later result of human historical development. He claims that savages recognize only those virtues demanded by the interests of their own social group.⁵ Nevertheless, one simple and well-known fact is sufficient to refute such a view.

There is one feeling, which is of no social use and is completely absent in higher animals but [51]which, however, is clearly manifested even in the lowest of the human races. By virtue of this feeling, the most savage and undeveloped person *is ashamed* of, i.e., recognizes as *wrong* and hides, a physiological act that not only satisfies his own inclination and need, but, moreover, is useful and necessary for the preservation of the species. With this is directly connected an unwillingness to remain naturally nude, prompting the invention of *clothes* even among such savages, who, by climate and simple life-style, have no need of them.

This moral fact presents the sharpest distinction of all between humans and all other animals, among which we find not the slightest hint of anything similar. Darwin himself, in discussing the religiosity of dogs and other animals, does not attempt to find in any of them even the rudiments of modesty. Actually, even highly

² F] *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, beginning of Chap. 2 (in the translation of Victor Carus). E] Darwin 1871: 34. The German translation to which Solov’ëv refers is Darwin 1875. Solov’ëv’s reference to this translation is odd in that, on the one hand, he had some knowledge of English and, on the other hand, there was no shortage of Russian translations. As Vucinich remarks, “in 1871–1872 not less than three translations of this work were published in Russia, two under the editorship of the famous neurophysiologist I. M. Sechenov.” Vucinich 1974: 235. See, for example, Darwin 1871–1872.

³ F] *Ibid.*, beginning Chap. 3. E] Actually Darwin had placed his observation at the beginning of Chap. IV, i.e., Darwin 1871: 101. The German translation had correctly placed this observation, leading us to conclude that when originally writing these lines Solov’ëv either paid no attention to the accuracy of his citation or he gave the reference as he remembered it, without the translation before him. In either case, we must conclude that the conveyance of his ideas was paramount in his mind over accuracy and scholarship. That he did not correct his reference either for the 1st or 2nd edition of the work is additional confirmation of his concern for the ideas expressed and his negligence of contemporary scholarly precision and accuracy.

⁴ F] *Ibid.*, the objection to Mill.] E] See Darwin 1871: 102 f.

⁵ F] *Ibid.*, about social virtues.] E] See Darwin 1871: 112 ff.

endowed and quite well-bred domestic animals are no exception, not to mention still lower creatures. The, in other respects, noble steed gave the biblical prophet a suitable image for characterizing the shameless youths of the licentious Jerusalem nobility,⁶ the loyal dog has at all times been correctly considered a typical representative of the complete absence of shame. Among wild animals, the monkey, a creature even more developed in certain respects, presents an example of unlimited cynicism with particular clarity, precisely owing to its external similarity to us and to its extremely lively mind and passionate character.

Since it is impossible to discover shame in animals, naturalists of a certain school have had to deny it in humans. Not finding any modest animals, Darwin speaks of the absence of shame in savage peoples.^{7, 8} From the author who journeyed around the world aboard the ship “Beagle” we would expect the [52]positive and specific evidence of an eyewitness. Instead, however, he limits himself to short, unsubstantiated and unconvincing remarks. Not just savages but also the cultured peoples of biblical and Homeric times may seem shameless to us, but only in the sense that the feeling of shame, which they earlier undoubtedly had, was not always expressed in the same way nor did it extend to all the details of everyday life with which it is associated in us.⁹ In this respect, however, there is no need to look to far off places and times, because people from other social classes who live along side us in many cases consider as permissible things of which we are ashamed. Nevertheless, no one would claim that they have never felt shame. Even less can we draw general conclusions from cases of complete moral ignorance found in judicial annals. Sometimes, headless monsters are born among us,¹⁰ but the human head, nevertheless, remains an essential component of our organism.

To support his thesis that humans are originally shameless, Darwin devotes a few words to the religious customs of the ancients, viz., to the phallic cult. This important fact, however, sooner speaks against it. Deliberate and intense shamelessness, elevated to a religious principle, obviously presupposes the existence of shame. In a similar way, parents’ sacrifice of their children to the gods does not prove the absence of pity or parental love. On the contrary, it presupposes this feeling. Surely, the principal meaning of such sacrifices is precisely that the *loved* children were killed. If what was sacrificed was not dear to the one making the sacrifice, the sacrifice itself would be of no value. That is, it would not be a sacrifice. (Only later with a weakening of religious feeling is this fundamental condition of any offering

⁶ E] See Jeremiah 5: 8.

⁷ F] Darwin 1871. When the issue concerns savages, serious scholars sometimes reveal incomprehensible flippancy. Recently, I came across a funny example in the anthropologist Brocke, who claims that the aborigines of the Andaman Islands do not wear clothes, because, he explains, it is impossible to consider a thin belt with a piece of leather attached to it to be clothing. I think that one could deny the essential function of clothing to the European dress coat with greater reason.

⁸ C] the absence of shame in savage peoples.] shameless savages. **AB**.

⁹ C] is associated in us.] *In AB there is a footnote referenced to these words simply saying “Ibid.”*

¹⁰ C] are born among us] are born **AB**.

avoided by means of various symbolic *substitutes*.¹¹) It is impossible to base any religion, even the most savage, on the mere absence of shame just as much as on the absence of pity. If the true religion presupposes human moral nature, then false religion, for its part, also presupposes such a moral nature precisely by demanding its perversion. The demonic powers, which were worshipped in the bloody and licentious cults of ancient paganism, lived and were nurtured on this real perversion, by this positive immorality. [53] Did these religions demand only the simple, natural accomplishment of a certain physiological act? No! The concern here is with the intensification of depravity, in the transgression of all bounds laid down by nature, society and conscience. The religious character of these orgies proves the extreme importance of this point. If all are limited to a natural shamelessness, where do they get this tension, this perversion and this mysticism?¹²

Obviously, if he could refer to some reliable facts showing the presence of rudimentary modesty in animals, there would be no need for Darwin to resort to such unsuccessful indirect arguments for his view of the connection between human and animal morality. However, there are no such facts, and shame, undoubtedly, remains a distinguishing feature of the human being even from an external, empirical point of view.

II

As a matter of fact, the presence of a feeling of shame (in its fundamental sense) in humans unconditionally distinguishes us from everything of a lower nature, since¹³ no other animal has this feeling to any degree. It has been manifested in humans from time immemorial and can still be further developed.

By what it tells us, however, this fact has another, an even far deeper significance. The feeling of shame is a distinctive characteristic that does more than separate humans (for the purposes of external observation) from the rest of the animal world. Because of it, humanity actually separates itself from all of material nature, not just its own but all external nature as well. In being ashamed of our natural inclinations and human functions, we, humans, show that we have not only *this* natural, material being but also something else, something higher. We who are ashamed separate ourselves in the mental act of shame from the object of our shame. Material nature, however, cannot be foreign or external to itself. Consequently, if I am ashamed of my material nature, I thereby prove, in fact, that I have more than just a material nature. It is at that moment when a human being is subject to the material processes of nature and is lumped together with [54] them that his or her distinctive features and

¹¹ C] *substitutes*.] fictions. **AB**.

¹² C] Did these religions ... and this mysticism?] *Absent in AB*.

¹³ C] from everything of a lower nature, since] from other animals, since **AB**.

inner independence suddenly manifest themselves in the feeling of shame. In feeling shame, a person regards material life as something other, as something foreign and that should not own oneself.¹⁴

Therefore, even if there were specific cases of sexual shame in animals, such a fact would only be a rudimentary premonition of *human* nature. For a creature that is ashamed of its animal nature *thereby* clearly shows that it is not *just* an animal. No one who believes the story of the talking ass of Balaam¹⁵ ever for that reason denied that the gift of rational speech is a human characteristic distinguishing us from other animals. In this sense, however, human sexual shame has an even more fundamental significance.¹⁶

This fundamental fact of anthropology and history, unnoticed or deliberately omitted in the work of the contemporary luminary of science,¹⁷ was noticed 3000 years before him in the inspired lines of a book of greater authority. “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?”¹⁸ At the moment of the Fall, within the depths of the human soul, a higher voice resounds, asking: Where are you? Where is your moral dignity? Man, lord of nature and the image of God, do you still exist? And the answer is given: I heard the divine voice, I was afraid of exciting and revealing my lower nature: *I am ashamed, therefore I am*, not only physically, but also morally.¹⁹ I am ashamed of my animal nature, consequently I still exist as a person.

Through our own actions and experiences, humans acquire a moral self-consciousness. The efforts of materialistic science would prove futile were it to attempt to provide from its point of view a satisfactory answer to the question asked so long ago: Who told you that you are naked?

The independent and original meaning of our sense of shame would be [55]lost if this moral fact could be successfully connected to some material gain for the individual or for the species in its struggle for existence. Shame, in such a case, could be explained as one form of the instinct of animal self-preservation, whether it be individual or social. It is impossible, however, to find such a connection.

¹⁴ C] that should not own oneself.] improper. **AB**.

¹⁵ E] See Numbers 22: 22–30.

¹⁶ C] Therefore, even if ... more fundamental significance.] *Absent in A*.

¹⁷ E] Darwin.

¹⁸ E] Genesis 3: 7–11.

¹⁹ C] not only physically, but also morally] *Absent in AB*.

A shameful attitude towards sexual acts could be advantageous to the individual and to the species in order to guard against an abuse of this important function of our organism. In animals governed by instincts, there are no overindulgences²⁰ that are injurious to self-preservation, but owing to the greater strength of our individual consciousness and will the possibility exists in humans of such abuse. However, against the most dangerous of these overindulgences—an abuse of the sexual instinct—a useful counterbalance has developed in humans on the general foundation of natural selection, viz. the feeling of shame. Such an argument seems to be valid, but it only seems to be so. In the first place, it has an internal contradiction. If the most fundamental and powerful instinct in humans, that of self-preservation, proves to be powerless against pernicious overindulgences, where does this new, derivative instinct of shame derive its strength? And if the instinctive suggestions of this feeling do not exert sufficient influence over humans (as in fact is the case), then shame turns out to have no specific utility and remains inexplicable from a utilitarian-materialistic point of view. Instead of serving as a counterbalance to human abuses or violations of natural norms, shame turns out to be merely the superfluous object of such a violation, i.e., a completely unnecessary complication. In addition to this, another consideration undermines the utilitarian view of the feeling of shame. The fact is that this feeling manifests itself most strongly before the beginning of sexual relations. Shame speaks most clearly and loudly *virginibus puerisque*,²¹ so that if its voice had a direct practical effect, it would render impossible the very abuses that it is supposed to prevent. Consequently, if shame had a practical significance, not only would it not be useful, but it would be pernicious to both the individual and to the species. In fact, however, if shame, even when it speaks loudest, is of no practical utility, what [56]subsequent effect can we expect from it? When shame appears, there can be no question of abuses *yet*, but when abuse does appear, then *already* we cannot speak of shame. A normal person is adequately protected from pernicious excesses by the simple feeling of a satisfied desire, but an abnormal person or someone with perverted instincts is not noted at all for modesty. Thus, in general, from a utilitarian point of view, in those cases when shame could be useful, it is not to be found, and when it does manifest itself it is unnecessary.

In fact, a feeling of shame is elicited not by the abuse of a certain organic function, but by simply exercising this function. A fact of nature is sensed to be shameful. If this is a manifestation of the instinct of self-preservation, it has a quite peculiar sense. What is being protected here is not the material well-being of the subject, but one's higher human dignity. Or, to put it more accurately, shame does not protect dignity, but, rather, *testifies* that dignity still lies deep within this subject.²² The most powerful manifestation of the material organic life evokes a reaction from the spiritual principle, which reminds the personal consciousness that a person is not merely a fact of nature and must not passively serve as an instrument of nature's worldly goals. This is only a *reminder*, and it depends on one's personal rational

²⁰ C] overindulgences] excesses A.

²¹ E] *virginibus puerisque*] Latin: for maidens and youths.

²² C] that dignity still lies deep within this subject.] that there is still dignity. AB.

will whether to use it or not. As mentioned, this moral feeling has no real, direct effect. If its suggestions are not heeded, shame itself gradually disappears and finally is completely lost.

It is clear, therefore, that all indications of an absence of shame in particular individuals or in entire tribes—even if these indications are quite precise—do not have the significance ascribed to them. The indubitable absence of shame in individuals as well as the questionable absence of it in entire peoples can mean only that in those particular cases the spiritual principle within us, which makes us stand out from material nature is either still undiscovered or has already been lost, that this person or this group of people has not yet actually risen at present above the bestial state or has again returned to it. Can the hereditary or acquired bestiality of one or another people destroy or weaken the significance of human moral dignity, which in the vast majority is obviously manifested in the feeling [57] of shame, a feeling completely unknown to any animal? Does the fact that, like animals, suckling infants and mutes are unable to speak diminish the significance of language as a manifestation of a special, purely human rationality, not found in other animals?

III

Apart from any considerations about the empirical origin of the feeling of shame in human beings, the fundamental significance of this feeling is that it determines our ethical relation to our material nature. We are ashamed of the latter's supremacy²³ within us or of our subordination²⁴ to it (particularly in its chief manifestation) and thereby recognize, with respect to it, our inner independence and higher dignity. For this reason, we must possess and not be possessed by it.

Along with this fundamental moral feeling, there is in human nature another feeling that forms the basis of an ethical relationship not to the lower, material principle of life in each person, but to other humans and, in general, to living beings similar to us, viz. the feeling of *pity*.²⁵ In general, it amounts to the fact that a given subject senses, in a corresponding manner, the suffering or needs of others, i.e., responds to them more or less painfully, thereby more or less displaying his or her solidarity with others. Not a single serious thinker or scientist denies the original innate character of this moral feeling for the simple reason that the feeling of pity or compassion—as opposed to shame—is inherent (at a rudimentary level) in many animals²⁶ and, consequently, cannot be seen, regardless of viewpoint, as a later

²³ C] the latter's supremacy] it **AB**.

²⁴ C] or of our subordination] or, more precisely, of our subordination **AB**.

²⁵ F] I use the simplest term; usually in the literature on this subject the terms "sympathy" and "compassion" are used.

²⁶ F] Facts concerning this are found in abundance in various works of descriptive zoology (cf. particularly Brehm's *Life of Animals*) and also in the literature on animal psychology that has recently been significantly developed. E] See Brehm 1882–1884.

product of human progress. Therefore, if a person [58] who lacks a feeling of shame reverts to the bestial state, someone who lacks pity falls lower than the animal level.

The very nature of the feeling of pity makes it impossible to doubt its close connection with the social instincts of animals and humans. Nevertheless, however, this feeling is an individual moral condition, which social relations cannot entirely conceal even in animals, let alone in a person. If a need of the social organism is the sole basis of sympathy, each creature would be able to experience this feeling only towards those belonging to the same social whole as it does. Although it usually happens that way, by no means is it always so, at least not in higher animals. Numerous facts testifying to the tenderest of love²⁷ between animals (not only domestic, but also wild) belonging to different, sometimes quite remote zoological groups are well known. Therefore Darwin's assertion that among savage peoples feelings of sympathy are limited to members of one and the same narrow social group is very strange. Certainly even among civilized peoples, the majority display genuine sympathy chiefly towards their family and their closest circle, but individual moral feeling in all peoples can transcend—and actually since olden days has transcended—not just these narrow limits, but all other empirical ones as well. To accept Darwin's assertion unconditionally, even if only for savage tribes, would mean admitting that a human savage is incapable of attaining the moral level which dogs, monkeys and even lions sometimes reach.^{28, 29}

[59] The feeling of sympathy is capable of indefinite growth and development, but its fundamental principle is one and the same in all types of living creatures. The first³⁰ stage and the basic form of any solidarity both in the animal world and in the human world is parental (in particular maternal) love. The entire complex of inner and external social relations arises from this simple root. Here we see with complete clarity that the individual-psychological essence of the moral relation is nothing other than pity. For what other mental state³¹ can express the original solidarity of a mother with her weak, helpless, in a word, *pitiabile* brood, which is entirely dependent on her?

²⁷ F] Love in the purely psychological sense (beyond the materially sexual and aesthetic relation) is constant, deeply rooted pity or compassion (sympathy). Long before Schopenhauer, the Russian people identified in their language these two concepts: "to pity" and "to love." Both mean one and the same thing. We need not go so far, but no one can seriously dispute that this fundamental subjective manifestation of love, as a moral feeling, is pity. C] no one can seriously dispute.] it seems to us indubitable. A] as a moral feeling] as a moral affect **AB**.

²⁸ F] It goes without saying, of course, that such cases concerning wild animals can thoroughly be observed only when they are in captivity. It is quite likely, however, that these instances of aroused sympathetic feelings occur chiefly in captivity. C] It goes] On reliable testimony we know, for example, one case in a zoological park of a lion that became so attached to a female dog that died of grief after having lost her. It goes **A**.

²⁹ C] attaining the moral level which dogs, monkeys and even lions sometimes reach.] the moral level that dogs, monkeys, and even lions sometimes reach. In this case, there is hardly anyone who trusts the words of the famous scientist. **A**.

³⁰ C] first] fundamental **AB**.

³¹ C] state] affect **AB**.

IV

Our unique feelings of shame and pity fundamentally determine our moral attitude, firstly towards our own material nature and secondly towards all other living creatures. Since human beings are modest and compassionate, we act morally “towards ourselves and our fellow creatures” (to use the old terminology). Shamelessness and ruthlessness, on the contrary, undermine our moral character at its roots. In addition to these two fundamental feelings there is in us another, a third feeling, that is irreducible to them and yet just as original. It determines our moral attitude neither to the lower side of our own nature nor to the world of creatures similar to us, but to something separate that we recognize as *higher*. We are neither *ashamed* of this something nor can we *pity* it; rather, we must *humble* ourselves before it. This feeling of *respect* (piety, *pietas*) or reverence (*reverentia*) towards what is *higher* constitutes in the human being the moral foundation of religion and the religious order of life.³² This feeling, abstracted by philosophical thought from its historical manifestations, forms so-called “natural religion.”³³ The original or innate character of this feeling cannot be denied for the same reason that the innate nature of pity and sympathy is not seriously denied. We find both pity and sympathy as well as the feeling of respect in animals to rudimentary degrees and in rudimentary forms. Although it is absurd to try to find religion, as we understand it, [60] in animals, the general elementary feeling on which religion ultimately rests in each person’s soul, viz. the feeling of respectful reverence towards something higher, arises unconsciously in other creatures in addition to the human being. In this sense,³⁴ we can recognize the veracity of the following remarks.

The feeling of religious devotion is a highly complex one, consisting of love, complete submission to an exalted and mysterious superior, a strong sense of dependence, fear, reverence, gratitude, hope for the future, and perhaps other elements. No being could experience so complex an emotion until advanced in his intellectual and moral faculties to at least a moderately high level. Nevertheless, we see some distant approach to this state of mind, in the deep love of a dog for his master, associated with complete submission, some fear, and perhaps other feelings. The behaviour of a dog when returning to his master after an absence, and, as I may add, of a monkey to his beloved keeper, is widely different from that towards their fellows. In the latter case the transports of joy appear to be somewhat less, and the sense of equality is shewn in every action.³⁵

³² C] of life.] or human life. **AB**.

³³ C] This feeling, abstracted ... “natural religion.”] *Absent in A*.

³⁴ C] In this sense,] Speaking of this subject, Darwin is mistaken only in not distinguishing religious feeling in its present human complexity from simple fundamental respect. With this reservation, **A**] Speaking of this subject, Darwin is mistaken only in not distinguishing religious feeling in its present human complexity from its simple foundation—respect. With this reservation, **B**.

³⁵ F] Darwin 1871, end of Chap. II. Before this, Darwin spoke of the intellectual aspect of religion, of the recognition of an invisible cause or causes for unusual phenomena. He also finds this in animals. E] end of Chap. II.] Actually, the quotation appears towards the end of Chap. III, viz., Darwin 1871: 68. C] in animals.] in animals, but hardly in a substantial way. **A**.

Thus, the representative of scientific transformism recognizes that in the quasi-religious attitude of the dog or the monkey towards a higher creature (than them) there is also in addition to fear and self-interest a moral element, quite distinct from the sympathetic feelings that these animals display towards³⁶ those similar to themselves. This specific feeling towards what is higher is precisely what I call respect. Recognizing it in dogs and monkeys, it would be strange for us to deny the presence of respect in humans and deduce human religion from fear and self-interest alone. Although we cannot help but see that these lower feelings play a role in the formation and development of religion, its deepest foundation, nevertheless, is still the distinctive³⁷ religious-moral feeling [61] of human respectful love towards that which is superior to ourselves.

V

The fundamental feelings of *shame, pity and respect* exhaust the sphere of possible human moral attitudes towards those lower, equal to and higher than us. *Domination* over material sensibility, *solidarity* with living creatures, and an inner voluntary *submission* to the superhuman principle are the eternal, unshakeable foundations of human moral life. The degree of this ascendancy, the depth and scope of this solidarity, and the completeness of this inner submission change in the course of history, passing from a state of lesser to greater perfection. However, the principle in each of these three spheres of relations remains one and the same.

All the other phenomena of moral life, all of the so-called virtues, can be shown to be modifications of these three foundations or to be the result of an interaction between them and our intellectual side. *Courage* and *bravery*, for example, are undoubtedly manifestations, though only in a more external, superficial form, of the very same principle rising and prevailing over the lower, material side of our nature. We find a deeper and more significant expression of this principle in shame. In its fundamental manifestation,³⁸ shame raises the human being above the animal³⁹ instinct of preservation of *species*; courage elevates us above another animal instinct, viz., *personal*⁴⁰ self-preservation. In addition to this distinction in the object or sphere of application, these two types⁴¹ of a single moral principle differ in another, deeper respect. The feeling of shame, by its very essence, involves censuring what it opposes. By the very fact that I am ashamed, I declare that what I am ashamed of is bad or improper. On the other hand, courageous feeling or behavior may simply

³⁶ C] these animals display towards] they have for **AB**.

³⁷ C] distinctive] specific **AB**.

³⁸ C] In its fundamental manifestation,] *Absent in AB*.

³⁹ C] animal] material **AB**.

⁴⁰ C] *personal*] individual **AB**.

⁴¹ C] types] forms **AB**.

be a display of the nature of a given creature and in itself contains no censure of its opposite. This is why bravery is part of the nature of animals and in them lacks any moral significance. The complicated and developed function of feeding and procuring food becomes in certain animals a destructive predatory instinct, [62] which can sometimes outweigh the instinct of self-preservation.⁴² This domination of one natural instinct over another is precisely animal courage. Its presence or absence is no more than a natural⁴³ fact without any intrinsic connection to self-appraisal. No one would think of claiming that a hare or a hen is ashamed of its timidity.⁴⁴ When, as sometimes happens, brave beasts are afraid, they are not ashamed of this fear, just as they are not proud of their feats. In a person, the quality of bravery is directly of the same character. By virtue of our higher nature and attendant reflection, however, this quality takes on a new meaning, which connects it with the root of human morality proper, viz. with shame. A human being is aware of courage not only as the predominant predatory instinct, but as the ability of the spirit to rise above the instinct of personal⁴⁵ self-preservation. The presence of this spiritual power appears as a virtue and its absence is condemned as *shameful*. Therefore, the essential affinity between modesty and bravery⁴⁶ reveals itself in the fact that a shortage of the second is condemned in accordance with the norm⁴⁷ established by the first. An absence of courage becomes an object of shame. It is impossible to say the same thing with the same force about the other virtues (charity, justice, humility, piety, etc.), the absence of which is usually condemned in other ways. When assessing the feelings and actions of others, spite, injustice, arrogance, impiety appear more odious and revolting than shameful. This determination is expressly limited to cowardice and sensuality,⁴⁸ i.e., to the vices that violate the personal dignity of the human individual as such, and not our duties to our fellow creatures and to God.

Thus, courage receives its moral significance or becomes a virtue only to the extent that it is connected with the first foundation of human morality—modesty—in one general principle: the defense of the individual from one's lower nature or carnal⁴⁹ instincts.

[63] The intrinsic dependence of the other human virtues on the three primary⁵⁰ foundations of morality we have found will be shown in their proper place.

⁴² C] of self-preservation.] of individual self-preservation. **AB**.

⁴³ C] natural] material **AB**.

⁴⁴ C] timidity.] cowardice. **A**.

⁴⁵ C] personal] material **AB**.

⁴⁶ C] modesty and bravery] shame and courage **AB**.

⁴⁷ C] in accordance with the norm] in the form **AB**.

⁴⁸ F] Such a complex crime, as, e.g., treason, is recognized not only as outrageous, but also as shameful for the same reason, namely because treason includes cowardliness, which prefers secret treachery to open enmity. C] prefers secret treachery to] substitutes secret treachery for **A**.

⁴⁹ C] carnal] material **A**.

⁵⁰ C] primary] elementary **A**.

VI

Of the three primary foundations of moral life, one, as we saw, belongs exclusively to humans (shame), another (pity) to a significant degree is a characteristic of many animals, and a third (respect or reverence towards those higher than oneself) is found only to a small degree in some animals. However, although we see the rudiments of moral feeling (of the second and third category) in animals, there is a formal distinction between them and the corresponding human feelings. Animals may be good or bad, but they are not consciously aware of the distinction between good and bad, as such. In humans, a knowledge of good and bad is not only given immediately in the distinctive feeling of shame,⁵¹ but gradually extending and refining its concrete-sensuous form it extends to the entire field of human ethics taking the form of our *conscience*. We have seen that within the bounds of our moral relation to ourselves or to our own nature the feeling of shame (which, properly speaking, originally has a⁵² sexual character) retains its formal identity independent of whether it is opposed to the animal instinct of self-preservation of the individual or of the species. A cowardly attachment to mortal life is just as *shameful* as giving in to one's sexual inclination. When we turn to relations of another type, not those to oneself as an individual human being or as one member of a species,⁵³ but those to our fellow creatures and to God—relations incomparably more complex, objectively different and variable—moral self-appraisal cannot remain in the simple form of a concrete sensation. It unavoidably passes through the medium of abstract consciousness and takes on a new form, viz., *conscience*. The inner essence, however, of both phenomena are undoubtedly the same.⁵⁴ Shame and conscience speak a different language and on different [64]occasions, but the meaning of what they say is the same: *This is not good; this is wrong; this is unworthy*.⁵⁵

Shame has such a sense; conscience adds the analytical explanation: If you do this illicit or wrong thing, you are guilty of evil, of sin, of crime.

Only the voice of conscience, which determines our relations to our fellow creatures and to God as good or evil, gives them a moral significance that they otherwise would not have. And since conscience itself is merely a development of shame, the *whole* of human moral life in all three of its spheres, arises, as it were, *from one root*, a purely human root essentially different from anything in the animal world.

If the primary foundation of conscience is the feeling of shame, then⁵⁶ obviously we would seek in vain to find in animals, which lack this elementary feeling, its more complex manifestation, viz., conscience. Based on the embarrassed look of

⁵¹ C] distinctive feeling of shame.] peculiar feeling of shame, which we alone have, **AB**.

⁵² C] which, properly speaking, originally has a] which originally has a specifically **AB**.

⁵³ C] as an individual human being or as one member of a species] *Absent in AB*.

⁵⁴ F] These very words “*stydno*” (I am ashamed; literally “shame-ly”) and “*sovestno*” (literally, “conscience-ly”) in Russian are often taken as synonymous. In general, from the very essence of the matter it is impossible to make a precise distinction here.

⁵⁵ C] *this is wrong; this is unworthy.*] *this is impermissible*. **AB**.

⁵⁶ C] shame, then] shame, which is peculiar to the human being alone, then **AB**.

animals that are guilty of something, some people infer the presence of a conscience in them. Such an inference, however, undoubtedly rests on a misunderstanding, namely on a confusion of two phenomena, the essential difference between which we know from our own experience.⁵⁷ The moral state of an aroused conscience or of repentance has an analogy in the intellectual sphere in an awareness of a mistake or a blunder, i.e., of an act that practically or in terms of utility is pointless or *unfavorable*, and the dissatisfaction with oneself that follows from it. These two phenomena have common formal characteristics and to an equal extent express themselves externally as *embarrassment* (physiologically in the rush of blood to the face).⁵⁸ The essence of the two, however, is so different that, although in some instances they coincide, in others they do not just appear separately, but directly exclude one another. Thus, for example, when the mayor (in *The Government Inspector*) is terribly indignant with himself for having been taken in by Khlestakov and not the other way round, or when someone being confused by a cheat curses himself for not being sufficiently adroit to swindle in cards, then obviously such self-condemnation not only has nothing in common with the aroused conscience but also shows a deep-rooted unscrupulousness. Intellectual self-condemnation, undoubtedly, is a characteristic of higher animals. If a well-disciplined dog is so strongly aware of its blunders that it sometimes even skillfully tries to hide them, this certainly speaks in favor of its mind, but it has no relation to conscience.

[65]VII

The highest moral doctrine can only be a complete and correct *development* of the mentioned original data of human morality, because the general demands they contain cover the entire sphere of possible human relations. The *generality* of these demands, however, is precisely what forbids us from stopping at establishing their simple existence as something given in our nature and makes it necessary for us to further develop and justify them.

The original, natural morality we have examined is nothing other than a reaction of our spiritual nature to the lower forces, viz., carnal lust, egoism and savage passions, which threaten to suppress and absorb it. Our ability to react in this way makes us moral beings, but if its actual force and scope remain indefinite, this reaction, by itself, cannot ground the moral order in human beings. All factual manifestations of our moral nature, as such, have only an individual, contingent and relative character. The human being happens to be *more or less* modest, compassionate and religious. A universal norm is not given here as a fact, and the voice of conscience, speaking *more or less* distinctly and persistently, obviously (as a *fact*) can obligate only to the extent to which it is heard in any given case.

⁵⁷ C] own experience.] own inner experience. **AB.**

⁵⁸ C] (physiologically in the rush of blood to the face).] *Absent in AB.*

Human reason, which is just as innate as the moral feelings,⁵⁹ from the start presents its demand for universality and necessity to the moral sphere. Rational consciousness cannot be satisfied with the contingent existence of relatively good qualities, from which no general rule follows. The first fundamental distinction between the moral good and evil already implies the idea of the moral good *without any limitations*,⁶⁰ and which contains in itself the *unconditional norm* for life and activity. This idea of the good, as a postulate, is formally inherent in human reason, but the actual content of this idea is determined and developed by intricate thoughtful work.

From the original data of morality, we inescapably pass to the principles that reason deduces from them and that in turn appear in the foreground in various ethical theories.⁶¹

⁵⁹ C] , which is just as innate as the moral feelings.] *Absent in AB.*

⁶⁰ C] *without any limitations*] as such **AB.**

⁶¹ C] original data of ... foreground in various] natural data of morality, we inescapably pass to **A.**

[66]Chapter 2

The Ascetic Principle in Morality

I

The fundamental moral feeling of shame in fact¹ contains our negative attitude towards our own animal nature which threatens to overpower us.² Even at a very low stage in its development, the human spirit sets an awareness of its own dignity against the sharpest and most powerful manifestation of that nature: I am ashamed to submit to my carnal³ desire; I am ashamed of being like an animal; the lower side of my nature must not prevail in me. Such predominance is shameful and sinful. Reason raises this self-assertion of our moral dignity, which in the simple feeling of shame is semi-conscious and unstable, into *the principle of asceticism*.

The object of asceticism's negative attitude is not material nature in general. There is no possible point of view from which one could rationally assert that our material nature, considered objectively—either in its essence or phenomenally—is evil. In this connection, it is usually assumed that so-called “Eastern” teachings, which are distinguished by their extreme asceticism, are characterized by their particular identification of the principle of evil with the matter of the physical world (as opposed to true Christianity, which places the source of evil in the moral sphere). Strictly speaking, however, it is impossible to find such an identification of evil with material nature in any of the religio-philosophical systems of the East. To see this, all we need to do is recall the three most typical systems in the classical country of asceticism, India, [67]viz., orthodox Brahmin Vedanta,⁴ the independent Sankhya and, finally, Buddhism.

E] In the first edition of the compiled work from 1897, Chap. 3 spans pp. 59–83.

¹ C] in fact] *Absent in AB*.

² C] which threatens to overpower us] *Absent in AB*.

³ C] carnal] material **AB**.

⁴ F] Although it developed in its present form only around the time of Buddhism's disappearance from India (VIII–XIII centuries A.D.), its fundamental ideas can already be found in the ancient Upanishads. C] (VIII–XIII centuries A.D.)] *Absent in AB*.

According to the Vedanta,⁵ evil amounts to a conscious illusion that takes objects as essences, separate from each other and from the soul, and takes the soul as an essence separate from the one absolute being. The blame for this illusion rests with the one original spirit itself (Paramatman), which, in an incomprehensible moment of blindness or ignorance (Avidya), suddenly conceived the possibility of something other than itself, desired this other and thereby fell into an illusory bifurcation, from which the entire world arose. This world⁶ does not exist independently (as something other outside the one), but is mistakenly taken to exist in such independence, and therein lies illusion and evil. When a traveler in the woods takes a cut-off branch of a tree for a snake or, vice versa, a snake for a branch of a tree, there is neither in the figure of the snake nor in that of the branch by itself anything false or bad. What is bad is simply that one is taken for the other and both for something else. Similarly, the entire world is an illusion even though in fact it does not violate the absolute unity. Ignoramuses think that their evil deeds are something special and distinct from the one truth. However, the evil deed, like the evil-doer himself, and the false thought of their separate reality, are all part of the one absolute, original spirit, which abides *partly* in a state of ignorance.⁷ Its self-identity is restored in the thought of wise ascetics, who by mortifying their flesh have overcome within themselves the illusion of a separate existence and learned that *all is one*. In this system, evil, obviously, cannot be a property of material nature, for such a nature is recognized as non-existent. Its reality is accepted in another of India's principal teachings, viz., in the independent (or atheistic) Sankhya. There, the pure spirit (Purusha), which exists only in the multitude of separate individuals,⁸ is opposed to the original matter, or nature [68](Prakriti). The latter, however, is not in itself the principle of evil or wrong. Evil (and then only in a relative sense) is the abiding connection of the spirit with it. These two principles *must* be connected, but only *temporarily*. Nature must be the temporal means, and not the goal, of spirit. The enfeebled guide who can see (viz., the spirit) must rest on the shoulders of the blind athlete (viz., nature) in order to reach the goal of his travels. However, when it is reached they must part. The goal of the spirit is self-knowledge, i.e., knowledge of itself as distinct from nature. However, if the spirit has to learn that it is not nature, it must first get to know the latter—their proper relationship depends on this alone. Nature is the dancer; spirit the spectator. Nature has shown herself; spirit has seen her, and they can part company. The ascetic who resists natural inclinations is simply a sensible person who makes no use of superfluous means once the goal has already been attained. Orthodox Brahminism claims that there is only the one and that

⁵ E] For Solov'ëv's *Encyclopedic Dictionary* entry on Vedanta, see SS, vol. 10: 294–297; also Solov'ëv 1997: 22–25.

⁶ C] This world] It **AB**.

⁷ F] In some Indian books, this “part” of ignorance is determined arithmetically: it forms 1/4 (according to others, 1/3) of the absolute. Probably in order for the relation to remain constant the birth of ignoramuses is counterbalanced by the enlightenment of the wise.

⁸ C] the multitude of separate individuals] its separate exemplars **AB**.

there is no other (the principle of *Advaita*—of non-duality or indivisibility).⁹ On the other hand, the Sankhya philosophy recognizes the existence of this other, i.e., of nature, though as something foreign and—after it is known—as unnecessary for the spirit. Buddhism resolves this duality in a general indifference: Both spirit and nature—both the one and the other—equally lose their existence. “All is empty.” There is no object to be desired. An aspiration to absorb the spirit into the absolute is as senseless as the desire for natural enjoyments. Asceticism here amounts to a simple state of *undesiring*.

Turning from these Indian views, we find a sharp and original expression of a different type of world-view, viz., the Egyptian, in Valentinian gnosticism’s idea¹⁰ of the natural world as having a mixed and heterogeneous structure. First, the world is the work of the evil principle (Satan), and, second, the creation of a neutral Demiurge, which is neither good nor evil (and hence, unconscious). And finally, third, these poet-thinkers recognized in material nature manifestations of heavenly Wisdom that had fallen from higher spheres. Thus, the visible light of our world was, for them, the smile of Sophia remembering the celestial radiance of the Pleroma (the completeness of absolute being). Therefore, materiality in general here is not evil, because light is material, and light is a manifestation of the good principle. [69] Matter is seen as Satan’s creation, though not because it is in itself evil. On the contrary, it is seen as evil only insofar as it is Satan’s creation, i.e., insofar as it manifests or externally expresses the intrinsic quality of evil, insofar as it is darkness, disorder, destruction, death—in a word, *chaos*.

In the Iranian system of thought (Manicheism), which is even more sharply dualistic, material nature is identified with evil no more than in the Egyptian gnosis. The natural world contains the element of light, which arises from the kingdom of the totally good divinity. This element is manifested not only in luminous phenomena, but is also latent in vegetable and animal life. The Manicheans represent the highest divinity in nothing other than the form of light.

Thus, none of these “Eastern” systems identify evil with material nature, or at least not material nature in itself. If instead of this senseless identification we claim that *evil lies in the material nature of the world and¹¹ the human being*, we would find all sagacious doctrines, both Eastern and Western, support this truth. It does not depend on any metaphysical conception of matter and¹² nature. Since we ourselves are part of material nature, we can know from our inner experience what it is and what is not in it with respect to the demands of our spirit.

⁹ C] (the principle of *Advaita*—of non-duality or indivisibility)] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁰ E] On Valentinian gnosticism, see Solov’ëv’s *Encyclopedic Dictionary* entry in SS, vol. 10: 285–290; also Solov’ëv 1997: 3–8.

¹¹ C] *the world and*] *Absent in A*.

¹² C] and] or **AB**.

II

In spite of Plotinus's well-known declaration to the contrary, the normal person of the highest spiritual development is by no means ashamed of the fact that he or she is in general a corporeal or material entity. No one is ashamed of having a spatially extended body with a definite shape, with a definite color and weight. That is, we are not ashamed of all that we have in common with a stone, a tree, or a piece of metal. It is only towards those creatures in the world of nature that we see as most similar to ourselves—the higher animals—that¹³ we have a feeling of shame and inner hostility. This feeling shows that it is essentially when we come into contact with the material life of the world, when we actually are *able* to merge with it, that we must wrench ourselves away and rise above it.¹⁴ The feeling of shame is excited neither by the part of our [70]corporeal being that in general has no direct relation to the spirit at all (such as the above-mentioned material qualities which the spirit has in common with inanimate objects), nor by the part of the living organism that serves as the primary expression and instrument of the specifically human rational life—the head, the face, the hands, etc. Rather, the object of shame turns out to be a sphere of our material being that has an immediate relation to the spirit, since it can inwardly arouse (affect) the spirit. This sphere, however, not only does not serve as an expression or instrument of spiritual life, but, on the contrary, through it the process of purely animal life seeks to take the human spirit into its own sphere to subdue or absorb it. This *seizure* on the part of material life, which tries to make the rationality of the human being into a passive instrument or a useless appendage to the physical process, is what arouses a reaction on the part of the spiritual principle, which is immediately expressed in the feeling of shame. Here, the rational expression of a certain moral norm psychologically manifests itself in the affect of a fear to violate it or of a sorrow at having violated it. This norm, logically presupposed by the fact of shame, in its most general form, reads: *The animal life in the human being must be subordinate to the spiritual*. This thesis has an obligatory (apodictic) validity, for it is a correct deduction from fact on the basis of the logical law of identity. Being ashamed that we are merely animals, we thereby prove that we *are not* just animals, but something else, something higher (for if we were on a lower or equal level, shame would be meaningless). Limiting ourselves to the formal aspects of this issue alone, it is indubitable that a clear consciousness is higher than an obscure sensation, that a rational principle is worth more than a blind instinct, that spiritual self-control is better than surrendering oneself to a physical process. If we unite in ourselves two different elements, one standing higher and the other lower, the demand to subordinate the latter to the former follows already from the very nature of the case. The fact of shame is independent of individual, racial, and other peculiarities, and the demand contained in it has a *universal* character, which, in conjunction with the logical *necessity* of this demand, imparts to it the full significance of a moral *principle*.

¹³ C] creatures in the world ... animals—that] animals that we see as similar *higher* creatures **AB**.

¹⁴ C] This feeling shows ... rise above it.] *Absent* in **AB**.

[71]III

As with animals, the human being participates in the general life of the universe. The essential difference lies simply in the manner of participation in this life. The animal, as an animate creature, participates inwardly or psychically in the processes of nature in which it is caught up. The animal knows what is agreeable to it and what is disagreeable in these processes; it instinctually feels what is harmful in them and what is useful for its own self-preservation as well as for the species. All this, however, refers exclusively to the external environment that immediately effects the animal at a given time, and the world-process as a *whole* does not exist for the animal soul. It cannot know anything of the bases and goals of that process, and its participation in it is purely passive or instrumental. As humans, we ourselves evaluate our participation in the world-process not just with respect to the given phenomena that act on us as *psychological motives*, but also with respect to the general principle of all activity. This principle is the idea of worth or worthlessness, or moral good and evil, which itself becomes the determinative foundation or motive of human activity. This higher consciousness, or inner self-evaluation, places the human being in a definite relation to the *entire* world-process, namely as an active participant in its *purpose*. For in determining all our actions by the idea of the moral good, we human beings positively share in this general life *only insofar as its purpose is the moral good*. However, since this higher consciousness, in fact, grows out of material nature and is formed, so to speak, at its expense, this naturally arouses in us a reaction on the part of our lower nature or animal soul. Therefore, it turns out that there are two opposing tendencies in our life—one spiritual and the other carnal.¹⁵ The spiritual principle, as it appears immediately to our consciousness at present, is¹⁶ only a particular tendency or process in our lives, one directed towards realizing in our whole being the rational idea of the moral good. Likewise, the carnal principle with which we are concerned in our inner experience [72] is neither a physical organism nor even the animal soul in itself, but only a tendency excited in this soul and opposed to the higher consciousness, seeking to absorb and drown the beginnings of spiritual life in the material process.

Here material nature actually appears as an evil, for it tries to destroy what is worthy of being and which has¹⁷ within it the possibility of something better than material life. Not in itself, but only in this bad relation to the spirit, human material nature is what, in biblical terminology, is called the *flesh*.

¹⁵ F] This is a fact of our inner experience, which, neither in its psychological reality nor in its ethical significance, depends on any metaphysical conceptions concerning the essence of the spirit and matter.

¹⁶ C] The spiritual principle ... at present, is] The spiritual principle that we are aware of within ourselves is not some special “substance” in the form of the soul that is the concern of “rational psychology” (which was refuted by Kant in his critique of the “paralogisms”). It is **A**.

¹⁷ C] and which has], for it has **AB**.

Taken conceptually, the *flesh* should not be confused with the *body*. From the ascetic viewpoint,¹⁸ the body is the “temple of the spirit”¹⁹; bodies can be “spiritual,” “glorified,” “heavenly,”²⁰ whereas “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.”²¹ The flesh is excited animality, which escapes its bounds and ceases to serve as the material or hidden (potential) basis of spiritual life, which, by its very essence, animal life should be on both its physical as well as its psychic side.

At the elementary stages of our development, we are spiritual beings more in terms of potentiality than in reality. This potential, however, for a higher existence, is expressed in self-consciousness and self-control, in opposition to our blind and uncontrolled nature. It is precisely this self-conscious and self-controlling spiritual potential that is exposed to danger from carnal lust. The flesh, i.e., matter that seeks a way out of its suffering and conceptually strives for independence and an absence of constraints, thereby seeks²² to attract spiritual power to itself, to involve this power in its own concerns so as to absorb this power into itself and gain strength [73]at its expense. Although by its ideal essence spiritual existence is unlike material existence, this is possible because the spirit, or more precisely, the life of the spirit, in its factual *manifestation*²³ in an actual person, as an incarnated force, is only a modification (or transformation) of material existence (i.e., to be more precise, of the animal soul). From this real point of view, the two sorts of energy can be transformed into each other, just as mechanical motion can be transformed into heat and vice versa.²⁴ The flesh (i.e., the animal soul as independent) is strong only if the spirit is weak and lives only if the spirit is dead. This is why the preservation and the reinforcement of the spirit demands that the flesh be weakened and its active state be converted to a potential one. Such is the real meaning of the moral norm, or fundamental thesis, adduced above that the flesh should be subordinate to the spirit. Such is the foundation of any genuine moral ascetic practice.

¹⁸ C] From the ascetic viewpoint,] *Absent in AB.*

¹⁹ E] “temple of the spirit”] Cf. I Corinthians 6: 19.

²⁰ E] “heavenly”] I Corinthians 15: 40.

²¹ F] In the Holy Scriptures, the word “flesh” is sometimes used in a broad sense to mean material being in general. For example, “The Word became flesh,” [Genesis 6: 3—TN] i.e., It became a material phenomenon. This did not prevent the incarnate Word from being a purely spiritual, sinless divine person. Usually, however, the terms “flesh” and “carnal” are used in the Scriptures in the bad sense of material nature, a sense which violates material nature’s proper relationship to the spirit, opposing and excluding it from its own sphere. Such a use of the word is often found not only in the New but also the Old Testament, for example, “My spirit will not remain in humans, for they are flesh.” E] Cf. Genesis 6: 3.

²² C] thereby seeks] wants **AB.**

²³ C] *manifestation*] existence **AB.**

²⁴ C] vice versa.] vice versa. In this way, the law of conservation of energy is fully applicable to spiritual life. **B.**

IV

The moral demand to subordinate the flesh to the spirit, in fact, confronts the reverse aspiration of the flesh to subordinate the spirit to itself. As a consequence of this, the ascetic principle has two aspects. In the first place, it demands that the spiritual life be protected from the clutches of the carnal principle and, in the second place, that the sphere of the flesh be subdued, that animal life be made only a potentiality or material of the spirit. Owing to the inseparable inner connection and continuous interaction between the spiritual and carnal aspects of human existence as a single process, these two demands—that the spirit preserve itself from the flesh and that the spirit be realized in the flesh—cannot be completely fulfilled separately, but inevitably pass into one other. In fact, the spirit²⁵ can be protected from the clutches of the flesh only at the expense of the latter, consequently by being partially realized in it. At the same time,²⁶ the spirit can be realized only through incessant acts of self-preservation from continuous carnal encroachments on its independence.

Here are the three chief factors in this entire process: (1) the spirit's inner *distinguishing* of itself from the flesh, (2) the spirit's real defense of its *independence*, and (3) the *predominance* achieved by the spirit over nature or the elimination of the evil carnal principle as such. The first factor, which, in contrast to animals, is characteristic of the human being, [74] is something given, namely in the feeling of shame. The third, as a consequence of a spiritual perfection to be²⁷ attained, cannot be the direct object of a moral demand or prescription at the present time. Let us take someone who possesses a moral attitude and who despite this person's present imperfection seeks betterment. It is impossible to present to such a person the categorical imperative in the form: "Become now immortal, or imperishable!"²⁸ Thus, only the second moment remains in the ethical sphere, and our moral principle takes the following form: *Subordinate the flesh to the spirit, to the extent that this is necessary for its dignity and independence. Having as your final, hoped-for goal complete mastery over your own physical forces and over nature in general, set as the immediate goal of your moral obligation not to be, at any rate, an indentured servant of rebellious matter, or chaos.*²⁹

The flesh is something that has no self-control, that is entirely directed outward—emptiness, hunger and insatiable, something that swells in externality and ends in real disintegration. In contrast to this, the spirit is something inwardly determined, self-contained, self-controlled. Its outward actions are by its own power, without passing into externality, neither disappearing nor dissolving into it. Consequently, self-preservation of the spirit is, above all, the preservation of its *self-control*. This is the main point of any true asceticism.

²⁵ C] In fact, the spirit] In fact, on the one hand, the spirit **AB**.

²⁶ C] At the same time,] On the other hand, **AB**.

²⁷ C] to be] already **AB**.

²⁸ C] at the present ... or imperishable!"] *Absent in AB*.

²⁹ C] *Having as your ... matter, or chaos.*] *Absent in AB*.

The human body (in its anatomical structure and its physiological functions) has no independent moral significance, but can serve as an expression and an instrument both of the flesh and of the spirit. Hence, the moral struggle between these two aspects of our being arises in the sphere of the corporeal or organic life, as a struggle for power over the body.

V

In the sphere of corporeal life, our moral task lies, properly speaking, in not being passively determined by the desires of the flesh, particularly from the two chief functions of our organism—nourishment and reproduction.

However, as a preliminary exercise, which, by the way, has no independent moral character, it is important that [75]the spirit acquire power over the physiological functions that are not directly related to the “lusts of the flesh,”³⁰ such as *breathing and sleep*.³¹ Breathing is a fundamental condition of life and a continual³² means of intercourse between our body and the surrounding³³ environment. For the power of the spirit over the body, it is quite simply desirable that this fundamental function be under the direction or “control” of the human will. An awareness of this everywhere long ago led to various ascetic techniques concerning breathing. We find the practice and theory of such exercises among Indian hermits, and among ancient and more recent wizards as well as among the monks of Mount Athos and other similar monasteries, in Swedenborg³⁴ and, in our own day, in Thomas Lake-Harris³⁵ and Laurence Oliphant.³⁶ The mystical details of this matter are of no interest to moral philosophy. We will limit ourselves, therefore, to only some general remarks. A certain control of the will over breathing is demanded by simple good manners. The goals of asceticism alone prompt us to go further in this direction. Through constant exercise, one can easily learn not to breathe through the mouth either when awake or when asleep, and then the next step will be to learn how to refrain from breathing for a more or less extended period of time.³⁷ The power acquired over this

³⁰ E] See Galatians 5: 17—“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit”.

³¹ F] I mean normal sleep; concerning abnormal sleep, see below.

³² C] continual] chief A.

³³ C] surrounding] external physical A.

³⁴ E] Swedish scientist and religious thinker. He is arguably best known today as the object of Kant’s 1766 attack *Dreams of a Spirit-Seeker*. Solov’ëv wrote a lengthy entry for the *Brockhaus-Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary* on Swedenborg. See SS, vol. 10: 487–497; also Solov’ëv 1997: 433–446.

³⁵ E] Born in 1823, Harris was an American Christian mystic, who founded a community in Wassaic, NY and later moved part of it to Santa Rosa, CA.

³⁶ E] A disciple of Harris, Oliphant was a noted travel author.

³⁷ F] As one condition of “meditation,” Orthodox mystics assiduously practiced, and in places even still now practice, so-called “nostril breathing” and also complete control over breathing.

physiological function, undoubtedly, increases our spiritual³⁸ strength and gives it a secure foothold for further ascetic achievements.

Sleep, as a temporary break in the activity of the brain and of the nerves, i.e., of the direct physiological instruments of the spirit, is a weakening of the connection between spiritual and corporeal life. It is important for the spirit that it should not appear here to play a purely passive role. If sleep is evoked by physical causes, then the spirit must be able, for its own reasons, not to accept the approach of sleep or to interrupt sleep that has already begun. The difficulty itself of such action, which is undoubtedly possible, shows its significance. The ability to surmount sleep and to awake at will is an indispensable demand of spiritual hygiene. By the way, [76]there is another side to sleep that distinguishes it from breathing and the other (morally) insignificant physiological functions of our organism and connects it with nourishment and reproduction. As with these two functions, sleep can be abused in favor of the carnal and to the detriment of spiritual life. The inclination to excessive sleep itself shows the preponderance of the material, passive principle. A surrender to this inclination and an actual abuse of sleep, undoubtedly, weakens the spirit and strengthens carnal lusts. Therefore, in the historical manifestations of asceticism, for example in Christian monasticism, the struggle with sleep plays an important role. Of course, during sleep a weakening of the connection between the spiritual and the corporeal life (more precisely, between the cognitive and the instinctive spheres) can take place in two ways: Sleepers must be distinguished from dreamers. However, we can accept that as a general rule a special ability to have significant and prophetic dreams shows spiritual power has already been achieved through ascetic practice (consequently, through the struggle as well with the enjoyment of bodily sleep).

VI

In animals, the preponderance of matter over form arises from an abundance of food, as we can clearly see, for example, in caterpillars among the lower animals and fattened pigs among the higher animals.³⁹ In the human being, the same reason (an abundance of food) causes the preponderance of the animal life, or the flesh, over the spirit. For this reason abstaining from food and drink—fasting—has always and everywhere formed one of the fundamental demands of morality. This abstinence has to do, in the first place, with quantity—and here there can be no general rule—and, in the second, with quality. With respect to the latter, the rule always and everywhere was to abstain from the consumption of animals and, in particular, of meat (i.e., from the flesh of warm-blooded animals). The reason for this is that meat, being more easily and completely converted into blood, more quickly and

³⁸ C] spiritual] *Absent in AB.*

³⁹ F] “Krasota v prirode,” *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii*, 1889, bk. 1, pp. 1–50. E] See Soloviev 2003b.

more powerfully raises the energy of carnal life.⁴⁰ Undoubtedly, abstinence from flesh food [77] can be affirmed as a universal demand. No objections to this rule can stand scrutiny, and all were refuted long ago not only by moralists but also by natural scientists. There was a time when the consumption of raw or cooked *human* flesh was considered normal.⁴¹ From the⁴² ascetic standpoint, abstention from the consumption of meat (and of animals in general) is doubly useful: (1) since it weakens the energy of the carnal life, and (2) since the hereditary habit has developed a natural desire for such food, abstention from it, i.e., exercising one's will power over a material inclination, thereby raises one's spiritual energy.

As for drink, simple prudence again forbids the use of strong drink that leads to the loss of reason. The ascetic principle, certainly, demands more than this. In general, wine raises the energy of the nervous system and, through it, one's mental activity. At a low stage of spiritual development, where carnal motives still dominate the soul, everything that excites and elevates the nervous energy that services the soul benefits the predominant carnal element and, consequently, is extremely harmful to the spirit. This is why complete abstinence "from wine and strong drink"⁴³ is necessary here. However, at the higher stages of moral life, which were achieved even in the pagan world, for example by Socrates (cf. Plato's *Symposium*), the energy of the organism serves more spiritual than carnal purposes. The increase of nervous energy (provided, of course, it does not affect one's bodily health) intensifies the spirit's activity and, consequently, to a certain extent can [78] be not only harmless, but even directly useful.⁴⁴ There remains here just one universal and unconditional rule: *Preserve one's spiritual sobriety and lucid consciousness.*⁴⁵

In the physiological sphere, that which has the most important and decisive significance in the struggle of the spirit with the flesh is the sexual function. The physical fact of childbirth (and conception) is a certain expiation of sin. For this reason,

⁴⁰ F] There is yet another reason to abstain from the consumption of meat and animals in general. Although it does not have an ascetic character, it too is of a moral character, indeed, an altruistic character, namely the extension to animals of the commandment of mercy or pity. The second reason is predominant in Buddhist ethics, whereas the ascetic one is adopted by the Christian Church.

⁴¹ F] According to the Bible, normal human food in paradise consisted of some fruits and herbs in their natural form. Even now, this is the rule for the strictest monastic fast both in the East and in the West (the Trappists). Between this extreme and the easy Catholic fast for the laity, there are a number of degrees, which have their basis in nature (for example, the difference between warm-blooded and cold-blooded animals, owing to which fish is considered one form of food that is permissible during a fast). But these degrees have no fundamental and obligatory significance.

⁴² C] considered normal. From the] considered necessary. Beef steak, mutton, pork and chicken were recognized as having the same necessity. From the **AB**.

⁴³ E] Cf. Leviticus 10: 9 "Do not drink wine nor strong drink."

⁴⁴ C] even directly useful.] but even in certain exceptional cases directly useful. **AB**.

⁴⁵ F] By the way, at the present moral level of humanity the supremacy of the carnal desires is the rule and the predominance of spiritual motives only the exception and, therefore, cannot be counted upon. For this reason, preaching sobriety and a battle against artificial hallucinogens can, without any practical inconvenience, be presented as a rule calling for complete abstinence from strong drink and all other stimulants. This, however, has a merely pedagogical and prophylactic significance and is fundamentally not of moral importance. C] This, however, has ... moral importance.] *Absent in AB*.

we certainly should not see moral evil (carnal sin) there, but, rather, only in the immeasurable and blind desire (lust of the flesh, *concupiscensia*) for an external, animal and material union with another person (whether in fact or in the imagination), which is taken as an end in itself, an independent object of pleasure.⁴⁶ The predominance of the flesh over the spirit expresses itself most strongly, sharply and firmly in the carnal union of two people. It is not for nothing that an immediate feeling of shame is connected with this act. To suppress or distort the evidence after so many millennia of inner and outer development and to proclaim from the heights of intellectual refinement something to be good that even the simple savage sensed as bad is, indeed, the supreme disgrace to humanity and a striking proof of our depravity. The actual or supposed necessity of a certain act for extraneous purposes cannot serve as an adequate basis for evaluating its proper enduring quality. Against some diseases, taking poison may prove necessary, but this very necessity is an anomaly from the hygienic point of view.

The moral question concerning the sexual function is, above all, a question of one's *inner* relation to it, of evaluating it in its essence. What should we ourselves make of this fact in terms of the final moral norm, from the viewpoint of what unconditionally should be?⁴⁷ Do we approve it, or do we condemn it? On *which path* must we start and proceed down with respect to this fact? Do we follow the path of its affirmation and [79]dissemination, or the path of its denial, limitation and ultimate elimination? The feeling of shame and the voice of conscience in each concrete case definitely and decisively give the second answer, and the only thing that remains for moral philosophy is to give to it the form of a general rational⁴⁸ principle. For the human being, the carnal means of reproduction is an evil. It expresses the predominance of the senseless material process over the spirit's self-control. It is an act contrary to human dignity, a destroyer of human love and life. Our moral relation to this fact must be decisively negative. We must follow the path that ends in its limitation and elimination. When and how this elimination is accomplished in humanity as a whole or even merely in us is a question that has nothing to do with the moral sphere. The entire transformation of our carnal life into spiritual life, *as an event*, is not within our power, since it is connected with the general conditions of the historical and cosmic process.⁴⁹ This is why it cannot be the object of a moral obligation, principle or prescription. Certainly for us, what has moral significance is our inner relation to this fundamental manifestation of carnal life, namely that we recognize it as evil, that we resolve not to yield to it and conscientiously hold to this resolution, so far as it depends on us. From this point of view we, of course, can judge our external actions, but only because their connections with our inner moral conditions are known to us. We must not judge the actions of others in this sphere, only their *principles*. In any case, taken as a principle an affirmation of

⁴⁶ C] , an independent object of pleasure.] and not as a means of bearing children. **A**.

⁴⁷ C] What should we ... should be?] What should I myself make of this fact? **AB**.

⁴⁸ C] rational] *Absent in AB*.

⁴⁹ C] since it is connected ... cosmic process.] *Absent in AB*.

the carnal relation between the sexes⁵⁰ is for a human being an evil. Humanity's final conciliation with the kingdom of death, which is supported and perpetuated by carnal reproduction, deserves unconditional condemnation. Such is the positive Christian viewpoint, from which this all-important question is resolved according to the spirit, and not according to the letter and, consequently, without any *external* exclusivity. "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."⁵¹ Marriage is approved and consecrated, child-bearing is blessed, and celibacy is extolled: "they... are as the angels of God in heaven."⁵² But this designation of it as *angelic* seems to allude to a third, higher path, viz. the *divine one*. For the human being, by vocation, is higher than the angel (cf. "The Meaning of Love" and also "Plato's Life-Drama").⁵³

If, in Its usual habit [80]of deriving a greater moral good from evil, the highest Wisdom uses our carnal sins in order to improve humanity by means of new generations, then this certainly works to Its glory and our consolation but is not a justification. It treats every other evil in exactly the same way without, however, eliminating the distinction between good and evil or the obligatory nature of the former for us. To suppose that preaching sexual abstinence, however energetic and successful, will *prematurely* stop the physical reproduction of the human race and lead to its ruin is a view so absurd that we should rightly doubt its sincerity. In this respect, no one can seriously fear there is any danger to humanity. As long as a succession of generations is necessary for the renewal of the human race, the desire to work for such a succession will certainly not become a rarity in people. In any case, the moment when all people will finally vanquish sexual lust in themselves and become completely chaste, even if it—*per impossibile*⁵⁴—would come tomorrow, will be the end of the historical process and the beginning of "the life to come"⁵⁵ for all of humanity, and consequently the very idea of a premature cessation of child-bearing by virtue of the preaching of chastity is the purest nonsense, invented by hypocrites. In fact, what person, in surrendering to the carnal inclination, ever thought that by doing so he or she was securing the future of humanity?^{56, 57}

⁵⁰ C] relation between the sexes] reproduction A.

⁵¹ E] Matthew 19: 12.

⁵² E] Matthew 22: 30; cf. Mark 12: 25.

⁵³ C] Humanity's final conciliation ... "Plato's Life-Drama").] *Absent in AB*] E] See Soloviev 2000a.

⁵⁴ E] Latin: assuming the impossible.

⁵⁵ E] Cf. 1 Timothy 4: 8.

⁵⁶ F] I am not concerned here with the marriage union in its highest spiritual sense, which has nothing to do either with carnal sin or with child-bearing, but is the prototype of the most perfect union of beings. "This is a great mystery. But I speak concerning Christ and the church." Concerning the mystical significance of matrimony see *The Meaning of Love* (VFP, books 14, 15, 16, 17 and 21). E] See Soloviev 2003c. Solov'ev quotes the same biblical passage, Ephesians 5: 32, again in Soloviev 2003c.

⁵⁷ C] In any case, the ... future of humanity?] *Absent in AB*.

VII

In the sphere of our corporeal life, the rules of ascetic morality concern acquiring power over breathing and sleeping, to limit our eating and to abstain from carnal lusts. By their very nature as rules for the will, all of them have an equally intrinsic moral and psychological character, but because they have different objects they do not have an identical connection to the psychological [81]side of corporeal life. Purely physiological functions form the object of the first rule and partly of the second (concerning breathing and sleeping). In themselves, these functions are not hostile to the spirit and present no direct danger to it. The spirit intends here to control these functions in order to increase its own power for the later, more important struggle. Nourishment and particularly reproduction—and consequently the ascetic rules concerning them—have a different quality. The positive feelings of pleasure that arise with these functions can become a goal of the will, bind the spiritual forces and draw them into the stream of corporeal life. In particular, the latter of these functions is completely incompatible (under ordinary conditions) with the preservation of spiritual self-control. On the other hand, breathing and sleeping are merely processes within our own organism. Nourishment and reproduction, however, are connected with external objects, which, aside from their factual existence and relation to us, can, as subjective *representations*, dominate the imagination and the will and absorb the spiritual sphere. Hence, we have a necessary ascetic struggle with the inner carnal sins, which are even more shameful than the outer sins. For the gourmet, whose mouth waters at the mere thought of exquisite foods, is undoubtedly further removed from human dignity than the person who admits to the fact of excessive eating without thinking in particular about this matter.

In this respect, the ascetic attitude towards the functions of sex and nourishment belongs neither to the physiological nor to the psychological side of the struggle of the spirit with the flesh. This struggle is not pitted immediately against the functions of our organism, but against certain mental states, viz., gluttony, drunkenness and voluptuousness. These sinful affects, which can turn into passions and vices, are on the same level as other evil emotions such as anger, envy, greed, etc. By their object (viz., that they concern other people), these other passions, which are not merely *shameful* but also *evil*, are the object not of ascetic but of altruistic morality. However, there are certain general rules for the intrinsic, moral and psychological struggle with sinful inclinations as such, independent of whether they concern other people or one's own material nature.

[82]The inner process, by means of which an evil inclination⁵⁸ takes control of the individual *self*, goes through three chief stages. At first, there arises in the mind an idea of some object or action corresponding to one of the evil propensities of our nature. This idea⁵⁹ evokes the spirit to think about it. At this first stage, a simple act of the will to *reject* this idea is enough. All the spirit has to do is stand firm and be

⁵⁸ C] evil incarnation] carnal desire A.

⁵⁹ C] some object or ... nature. This idea] a seductive object which A.

impervious to foreign elements.⁶⁰ If this is not done, the reflection develops into an entire dream-like scene of this or that sort—it can be sensual or maliciously vindictive or conceited, etc.⁶¹ This scene forces⁶² the mind to concern itself with it and cannot turn itself away by a mere negative act of the will. What is necessary is to *distract* the mind by reflecting in the opposite direction (e.g., reflecting on death). But if at this second stage the mind, instead of being distracted from scenes of sin, dwells on them and, so to speak, identifies itself with them, then the third [83]moment inevitably approaches when not just the mind secretly prompted by an evil inclination,⁶³ but the whole spirit *surrenders* itself to sinful thought and enjoys it. As a rule, neither a merely purposeful act of reflection nor a divertive mental reflection can deliver the spirit from this bondage. What is needed is practical moral work that *reestablishes* an inner balance in the entire person. For otherwise, the sinful stimulation is victorious over the spirit and becomes a passion and a vice. In such a case, the person loses rational freedom, and our moral prescriptions lose their power over him or her.

Ethics is the hygiene and not the therapeutic of spiritual life.

VIII

In order to preserve human moral dignity the spirit must prevail over the flesh. The principle of true asceticism is the principle of spiritual self-preservation. However, the inner self-preservation of an *individual* person, who, although a spiritual being (i.e., possessing reason and a will), is, nevertheless, taken individually,⁶⁴ *limited* or

⁶⁰ F] The Church Fathers designate this principle as the demand “to dash the Babylonian little ones against the stones” in accordance with the allegorical sense of the line in the Psalm [137: 8–9—TN] “O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, . . . that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.” (Babylon = the kingdom of sin; the Babylonian little one = the mentally conceived but as yet unexecuted sin; the stone = the firmness of faith).

⁶¹ F] In our younger years, with a lively imagination and little spiritual experience, we develop an evil thought very quickly and, reaching an extreme absurdity, evoke a powerful moral reaction. Thus, you think, for example, of a person you dislike, a thought accompanied by a slight feeling of resentment, indignation or anger. If you do not now dash this Babylonian infant against the stones, then your imagination, being obedient to your evil passion, will immediately draw a vivid picture for you. You have already met an unpleasant person and placed this person in an awkward position. His or her entire worthlessness is revealed. You feel the *velleitas* of magnanimity, but your passion has already flared up and is overwhelming you. However, you keep within the bounds of your good upbringing. You make subtly caustic remarks, but soon they become more caustic than subtle. They give way to “insulting words,” then “insulting actions.” With a devilishly powerful fist you deal victorious blows. The villain falls; the villain is killed, and you dance like a cannibal on his corpse. . . . One can go no further and must simply cross oneself and turn away in disgust. C] *This entire note absent in AB.*

⁶² C] dream-like scene . . . scene forces] dream-like scene, which forces A.

⁶³ C] secretly prompted by an evil inclination,] *Absent in AB.*

⁶⁴ C] taken individually,] *Absent in AB.*

relative, cannot be the *unconditional moral good* or the supreme and final goal of life. Human slavery to carnal inclinations (in the broad sense, i.e., to everything that is absurd and nonsensical)⁶⁵ transforms a human being into the worst sort of animal and is, undoubtedly, an evil. In this sense, no one can honestly argue against asceticism, i.e., against abstinence as a principle. Everyone agrees that the inability to resist animal instincts is a weakness of the spirit, that it is *shameful* in a person and, consequently, bad. In other words, the ability to resist or abstain is a moral good and should be accepted as a norm from which we can deduce specific rules for living. On this point (as on others) moral philosophy merely explains and elaborates what ordinary human consciousness asserts. Leaving aside moral principles, gluttony, drunkenness and debauchery immediately arouse disgust and contempt, whereas abstaining from these vices enjoys automatic respect. That is, such abstinence is recognized as a moral good. Taken alone, however, this good is *not* unconditional.⁶⁶ For the power of the spirit over the flesh, or will power, acquired through proper abstinence can be used for immoral purposes. [84] *A strong will can be evil*. Human beings can suppress their lower nature in order to boast or to be proud of themselves for their greater power. Such a spiritual victory is not a moral good. It is even worse if spiritual self-control and will power are used to harm others, even if the goal is not for low personal gain.⁶⁷ There have been and still are successful ascetics who are disposed to spiritual pride, hypocrisy and vanity and even some who are malicious, crafty and cruel egoists. It is generally admitted that such an ascetic is morally a far worse person than a simple-hearted drunkard or glutton or a compassionate profligate. Thus, asceticism in itself is not yet a moral good, and consequently cannot be the supreme or unconditional principle of morality. The true (moral) ascetic acquires control over the flesh not for the sake of strengthening his formal, spiritual powers, but for better assisting a realization of the moral good. An asceticism, which frees the spirit from shameful (carnal)⁶⁸ passions only in order to bind it more tightly to evil (spiritual)⁶⁹ passions, is obviously a false or immoral asceticism.⁷⁰ According to the Christian idea, we should recognize its prototype in the devil, who neither eats, drinks nor sings and who remains celibate. Since we cannot morally

⁶⁵ C] (in the broad ... and nonsensical)] *Absent in AB*.

⁶⁶ C] Taken alone, ... is *not* unconditional.] It is clear, however, that this good is only *relative* or *conditional*. **AB**.

⁶⁷ C] , even if the goal is not for low personal gain] *Absent in AB*.

⁶⁸ C] (carnal) *Absent in AB*.

⁶⁹ C] (spiritual) *Absent in AB*.

⁷⁰ F] If suppression of the flesh is taken not as a means for the moral good or for evil, but as a goal in itself, then a peculiar kind of false asceticism arises in which the flesh is identified with the body and any bodily pain is considered a virtue. By the way, although it does not originally have an evil goal, this false asceticism, called masochism, easily becomes an evil upon being further developed. It either turns into a slow suicide or becomes a peculiar kind of voluptuousness. It would be careless, however, to condemn all cases of masochism. Those who have a particularly strong material life have a nature that may require heroic means to suppress that life. Therefore, one must not indiscriminately condemn Stylitism, chains, and other such means of mortifying the flesh that were in use in the heroic epoch of asceticism.

approve of an evil or ruthless ascetic, it follows that the very principle of asceticism has only a *conditional* moral significance. That is, it has moral significance only in conjunction with the principle of *altruism*, which is rooted in pity. Let us now look at this second moral principle.⁷¹

⁷¹ C] Let us now ... moral principle.] *Absent in AB.*

[85]Chapter 3

Pity and Altruism

I

For a long time it was thought that the highest virtue or holiness lies in asceticism, in a “mortification of the flesh,” in a suppression of natural inclinations and affections, in abstinence and dispassionateness. Many are once again beginning to think this way. We saw that there undoubtedly is truth in this ideal, since clearly the higher or spiritual side of human nature must prevail over our lower or material side. Our intentional efforts in this direction are acts of spiritual self-preservation and are the first condition of any morality. It is impossible, however, to transform *a first condition into the ultimate goal*. Human beings must strengthen their spirit and subordinate their flesh to it, not because this is the purpose of life, but because only after having been liberated from bondage to blind and evil material inclinations can we properly serve truth and goodness and reach genuine perfection.

The rules of abstinence strengthen the spiritual powers of the person who follows them. However, in order for this spiritual power to have moral significance, that is, in order for it to be a moral good and not evil, power over one’s own flesh must be united with a positive goodwill towards other beings. As history demonstrates, without this condition an ascendancy of the ascetic principle—even when based on the true religion—leads to horrifying consequences. The attendants of the medieval church, who tortured and burnt heretics, Jews, sorcerers and witches were, for the most part, ascetically irreproachable men, but in the absence of pity their one-sided spiritual power made them [86]devils incarnate. The bitter fruits of medieval asceticism provide adequate justification for the reaction towards it. In the field of philosophical ethics, such a reaction has led to an ascendancy of the *altruistic* principle in morality.

This principle, in the form of our sense of pity, is deeply rooted in human nature and is something we have in common with other living creatures. If our sense of shame distinguishes us from the rest of nature and sets us apart from other animals,

E] The original form of this chapter was first published, with the subtitle “From moral philosophy.” In the first edition of the compiled work from 1897, Chap. 3 spans pp. 84–109.

our sense of pity, on the contrary, connects us with the entire living world and does so in a two-fold way: first, because pity belongs to humans *as well as* to all other living creatures, and, second, because all living creatures can and must be the *objects* of that sense for humans.

II

That our moral relation to others is naturally rooted not in a concern or a feeling of solidarity in general, but in pity or compassion, has nothing at all to do with any metaphysical system (for example, with Buddhism or with Schopenhauer's "philosophy of the will"). Rather, it is quite independent of any pessimistic view of the universe and of life. As is well known, Schopenhauer claims that the essence of the universe is the will and that the will is essentially a state of dissatisfaction (since with satisfaction nothing is desired). For this reason, dissatisfaction or suffering is the fundamental and positive characteristic of any being (within it itself), and consequently the inner moral connection (or solidarity) between creatures is compassion. Leaving aside, however, such dubious metaphysics (and thereby the dubious calculations of Hartmann, who tries to prove that the amount of human suffering in the world is substantially greater than the amount of pleasure) we essentially find that the moral relation to other creatures can, *in principle*, be based only on pity or compassion, and not on rejoicing or sharing pleasures with others.

Human delights, pleasures and joys certainly can be innocent enough and even downright morally good, and so participation in them along with others has a positively moral character. However, [87]delights can also¹ be, and often are, immoral. A malicious and vindictive person takes pleasure in insulting and tormenting those close to him. He delights in their humiliation; he rejoices in the harm he has done to them. The hedonist finds that the greatest joy in life lies in debauchery, a cruel² person in the killing at least of animals, if not of people. A drunkard is happy when he drinks himself into a stupor, etc. In all these cases, the feeling of pleasure is inseparable from the bad actions that produce it. Sometimes the pleasure imparts an immoral character to actions that would otherwise by themselves be morally indifferent. Thus, when a soldier in war kills an enemy on command simply out of "doing one's duty," then regardless of what our attitude toward war in general might be in principle, we certainly cannot accuse this soldier of immoral cruelty. It is another matter, however, if this soldier finds *pleasure* in the killing and delights in stabbing a person with a bayonet. In simpler cases, the situation is even clearer. Thus, it is indisputable that the immorality of drunkenness lies not in the external action³ of swallowing certain drinks, but only in the inner *pleasure* that a person finds in artificially stupefying oneself.

¹ C] be innocent enough ... delights can also] *Absent in AB.*

² C] debauchery, a cruel] debauchery and seduction, a cruel **AB.**

³ C] action] fact **AB.**

If, however, a certain pleasure is in itself immoral, then another person's participation in it (rejoicing or sharing pleasures with others) acquires the same immoral character. The fact is that positive participation in some pleasure implies an *approval* of this pleasure. Thus, by participating with the drunkard in his favorite delight, I thereby approve hard drinking; by sharing in someone's pleasure obtained from successful vengeance, I thereby approve of revenge. Since these are evil pleasures, those who participate in them with someone approve what is evil and, consequently, themselves lapse into immorality. Just as participation in a crime is itself recognized as a crime, so participation in a depraved delight or celebration must itself be recognized as depraved. In addition to approving it,⁴ participation in some evil pleasure actually presupposes the same evil inclination in the participant. Only a drunkard rejoices in another's hard drinking; only a malicious person delights in taking vengeance on another.⁵ In other words, participation in another's pleasure or joy just happens to be good or evil *depending on the object*. Consequently, [88]participation *by itself* is by no means the basis of moral relations, since it can also be immoral.

It is impossible to say the same about suffering and compassion. By its very concept, suffering is a state in which the will of the sufferer plays no direct and positive part. When we speak of "voluntary suffering," the object desired, of course, is not the suffering itself, but what makes the suffering necessary, namely the good that is attained by means of the suffering. A martyr consents to torture not for its own sake, but as something that, under the circumstances, necessarily follows from his or her faith and the means to a higher glory and to the kingdom of heaven.⁶ Nevertheless, suffering can be deserved. That is, although the suffering itself is distinct from its cause and does not itself infer moral blame, it can be brought on by an evil action. On the other hand, suffering is recognized as a disclosure and an expiation. If heavy⁷ drinking is a sin, no moralist, however stern, looks on the headache from a hangover as sinful. This is why sharing another's suffering (even if it is deserved)—through compassion or pity—can never⁸ be presented as something immoral. In commiserating with the sufferer, I do not thereby approve of the evil cause of his suffering.⁹

⁴ C] In addition to approving it,] *Absent in B*.

⁵ C] In addition to ... vengeance on another.] *Absent in A*.

⁶ C] When we speak ... kingdom of heaven.] *In A, these two sentences appear as a footnote to the previous sentence.*

⁷ C] When we speak ... If heavy] This is why suffering, even if deserved, can be immoral. Evil actions can be the cause of suffering, but the suffering itself is distinct from its cause and does not itself infer moral blame. On the other hand, suffering is recognized as a disclosure and an expiation. If heavy **A**.

⁸ C] never] not **AB**.

⁹ F] An *apparent* example of the contrary is the case in which someone commiserates with a person who is sorry that his attempted crime was unsuccessful. In fact, insofar as my concern arises here solely from pity, it by no means has to do with the evil cause of the grief; such sympathy does not presuppose approval at all and, consequently, is innocent and good. If, being sorry for the murderer who missed his mark, I also mourn his failure, it is not my pity for the criminal but, rather, my *lack of pity* for the intended victim that is immoral. In general, when several people participate as one in some crime, the moral condemnation refers not to their solidarity but only to the evil intent

Pitying the criminal for his suffering certainly does not mean approving or excusing the crime. On the contrary, the greater my pity for the deplorable consequences of someone's sins, the more forceful is my *condemnation* of these sins.

Participating with another in some pleasurable activity can always be a matter of self-interest. For example, even in the case of an old man who shares in the joy of a child, the altruistic character of his feeling is [89]doubtful. In any case, to this old man it is pleasant to revive the memories of his own carefree childhood. On the contrary, any genuine feeling of sorrow for the other on account of his or her suffering, whether moral or physical, is painful for the one who experiences that feeling and, consequently, is contrary to one's egoism. This is clear already from the fact that sincere grief for others disrupts our personal joy and dampens our fun. That is, it turns out to be incompatible with a state of egoistic satisfaction. Thus, genuine *compassion* or pity cannot have selfish motives and is a *purely* altruistic feeling, whereas *co-rejoicing* or sharing pleasures with others is (in the moral sense) a mixed and indefinite feeling.

III

There is yet another reason why sharing in the joys or pleasures of others cannot by itself have the same fundamental ethical significance as the feeling of pity or compassion. Reason demands that morality be¹⁰ *based* solely on feelings that always contain a motive for a definite course of action, and then a definite moral rule or principle is formed based on their generalization. However, pleasure or joy is the *end* of an action. In pleasure the goal of the activity is achieved, and sharing pleasure with another as well as the sensation of one's own pleasure contains no motivation or basis for further action. On the other hand, pity directly moves us to act in order to save another being from suffering or to help him. Such action may be purely inward, for example, when pity for an enemy prevents me from offending or harming him. In any case, however, this is an action, not a passive state as is joy or pleasure. Of course, I may find inner satisfaction in the fact that I did not offend my neighbor, but this can happen only after the willful act has taken place. Similarly, when it is a matter of friendly assistance to a neighbor in pain or in need, the pleasure or joy (afforded by this, both to him as well as to the one who renders assistance) is only the final consequence and the culmination of the altruistic act and not its foundation. In fact, if I see or find out about someone who is suffering and is in need [90]of assistance, one of two things happen: Either the other person's pain also arouses a certain degree of pain in me, and I experience pity. In such a case, this feeling is a direct and sufficient reason to move me to render assistance. Or, on the

of that solidarity.] *This entire note absent in A.*] *In B alone, this entire note appears but also adds at its end the following:* See below concerning "extended egoism."

¹⁰ C] Reason demands that morality be] Morality is A.

other hand, if the other person's pain does not arouse pity in me or does not arouse me sufficiently to act, the idea of the pleasure that would result from my action would be even less likely to do so. Clearly, the abstract and conditional thought of a future mental state cannot possibly have more effect than an immediate intuition or concrete representation of actual physical and mental states that directly impact action. Consequently, the actual basis or productive cause (*causa efficiens*) of any altruistic action is the perception¹¹ or the idea of the other's suffering, which exists now, and not the thought of some pleasure that could arise in the future as a result of a good deed. Certainly when someone, out of pity, decides to help a suffering person, he or she may (if time permits) picture to oneself, particularly recalling earlier experiences,¹² the joy one will thereby give both to the other person as well as to oneself. However, to take this concomitant and contingent thought as the actual basis of the decision would be contrary to both logic and psychological experience.

Thus, on the one hand, sharing in the actual pleasures and joys of other people can, by its very idea, contain neither the bases for nor the rules of action, just as sharing in the states of attained satisfaction cannot. On the other hand, the conditional representation of future pleasures, which are supposed to result from the elimination of suffering, can only be an indirect and secondary addition to an actual sense of compassion or pity that moves us actively to pursue the moral good. Consequently, such feeling alone is the genuine basis of altruistic acts.

Those who pity the sufferings of other people will certainly also share in their joys and pleasures when these are harmless and innocent. However, it is impossible to take this natural consequence of our moral relation to others as the *basis* of morality. [91] We can accept only what is good in itself as a truly moral good. This is why it retains its morally good character *in every case*, never becoming evil. Therefore, the genuine basis of morality (understood as the good) in any sphere of relations¹³ can only be that which is given, and from it the *general* and absolute rule for moral relations¹⁴ is derived. Such is precisely the nature of the pity we experience with respect to those similar to us.¹⁵ Since pitying all those who suffer is something that we always and absolutely approve in all cases, it can be elevated to a rule that requires no reservations. On the other hand, sharing in the joys and pleasures of another person is something that can be approved only conditionally and with reservations. And even in those cases when it is approved, the sharing contains, as we saw, no rule for acting.

¹¹ C] perception] sensation **A**.

¹² C] particularly recalling earlier experiences,] *Absent in A*.

¹³ C] in any sphere of relations] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁴ C] for moral relations] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁵ C] we experience with respect to those similar to us] *Absent in AB*.

IV

Individuals can, through their feelings, transcend, as it were, their individuality and respond painfully to the suffering of others, experiencing it as if it were their own. This indisputable and widely known fact may seem to some to be¹⁶ enigmatic and mysterious. It is regarded as such by the philosopher who takes compassion to be the sole basis of the whole of morality.

“But how is it possible,” he asks, “that a suffering which is not mine and does not touch me to become, however, just as directly a motive as in other cases only my own normally does, and to move me to action?”¹⁷ “This presupposes,” he says further on, “that to a certain extent I have identified myself with the other, and that consequently the barrier between the *self* and *non-self* is for the moment abolished; only then do the affairs of others, their needs, distress, and sufferings, directly (?—VS) become my own. I no longer see them as if they were something given to me in empirical representations, as something foreign to me, something indifferent to me (?—VS), as something entirely (?—VS) separate from me. On the contrary (i.e., with compassion), I share the suffering in another person (this foreign entity), in spite of the fact that his or her skin does not enclose my nerves. Only through such an identification can *the other’s* suffering, *his or her* distress, become a motive *for me*; otherwise it [92] can be only my own suffering. This phenomenon is mysterious to the highest degree. It is the genuine mystery of ethics, for it is something our reason cannot give a direct account of (!—VS), and its grounds cannot be discovered on the basis of experience. And yet it happens every day. Everyone has often experienced it within oneself and seen it in others. This mystery happens every day before our eyes in individual cases every time when on the spur of the moment, and without further reflection, one person helps and defends another, sometimes clearly risking danger to one’s own life for someone whom one has never seen before, without thinking of anything except that he or she sees the other’s great distress and danger. This mystery appears on a large scale when an entire nation sacrifices its property and blood to defend or liberate another oppressed nation. The necessary condition for such acts to merit absolute moral approval is the presence of this mysterious act of compassion or inner identification of oneself with another without any other motives.”^{18, 19}

¹⁶ C] may seem to some to be] is to some A.

¹⁷ E] Cf. Schopenhauer 1965: 165.

¹⁸ F] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die beiden Grundprobleme der Ethik*, 2nd edition, Leipzig, 1860, p. 230. E] Schopenhauer 1860.

¹⁹ E] Although Solov’ev marks this as a quotation, he diverges considerably from Schopenhauer’s text, particularly towards the end. The words provided here are a translation of Solov’ev’s Russian rendering of Schopenhauer’s words and not directly of Schopenhauer’s German-language text. Cf. Schopenhauer 1965: 166. Solov’ev quietly dropped Schopenhauer’s praise for Britain and Christianity’s notable silence on the morality of slavery. Also of interest is that Solov’ev provided these same words in his *Critique of Abstract Principles*, without there claiming them to be a quotation, but only a paraphrase of Schopenhauer’s text. Cf. PSS, vol. 3, pp. 40–41; SS, vol. 2: 33–34.

This discussion of the mysterious character of compassion is distinguished more by literary eloquence than by philosophical accuracy. The mystery here lies not in the fact itself, but that it emerges from an incorrect description that utilizes extreme terminology with excessively exaggerated vividness and acuity. The actual transitions and the relations between these transitions are completely concealed, as if they did not exist. Schopenhauer, in his field, abused the rhetorical device of contrast, or antithesis, just as Victor Hugo did in his. The situation is presented as though a given being, who is *unconditionally a separate* individual from another, all of a sudden *identifies* with this other through a sense of compassion. Such an event would certainly be a mystery of the highest sort. However, in reality neither the complete separation nor the immediate identification of which Schopenhauer speaks exists at all. In order to understand any relation, we must first take it in its simplest and initial [93]manifestation. Such is the maternal instinct in animals. When a bitch defends her puppies or pines at their loss, where is the mystery of which Schopenhauer speaks? Do we picture these puppies as “something foreign, indifferent and completely separate” from their mother? Between them and their mother, there is from the start a real connection, both physical and organic, that is independent of any metaphysics and that is clear and indubitable to the simplest empirical observation. These creatures were for a certain period a real part of her body, her nerves and theirs were actually covered by one and the same skin, and the very beginning of their existence involved a change in her own organism and was reflected in her sensations.²⁰ At birth this real organic connection is weakened or, so to speak, loosened. It is not, however, completely broken nor replaced by a “complete separation.” This is why the participation of the mother in the sufferings of her offspring is essentially as much a natural fact as the pain we feel when we cut a finger or hurt a leg. Of course, in a certain sense this is a mystery, but not in the sense that the philosopher of compassion has in mind. Moreover, all the other more complex manifestations of this feeling have the same basis. In general, all that exists, and in particular, all living creatures, are mutually connected by their joint existence in the world and by their common origin. All are parts of and arise from one common mother, viz., nature. Nowhere do we find that “complete separation” of which the philosopher speaks. The natural, organic connection of all creatures, as parts of one whole, is given in²¹ experience, and is not merely an intellectual idea. Therefore, the psychological expression of this connection—the inner participation of one creature in the suffering of others, i.e., compassion or pity—is understandable even from the empirical point of view as the expression of the natural and obvious *solidarity* of all that exists.²² This participation between creatures corresponds to the obvious sense of the universe and fully agrees with reason. Moreover, it is quite rational. On the

²⁰ F] Certain animals as well as human mothers have been observed to suffer from *nausea a conceptu*. Having been established on the basis of a physical connection, the maternal *feeling*, like all feelings, can be deceived and transferred to the young of *another* animal. E] Having been established ... of another animal.] *Absent in A*.

²¹ C] is given in] is a fact of **AB**.

²² C] as the expression ... all that exists] *Absent in AB*.

other hand, what is senseless or irrational is the mutual alienation [94] of creatures, their subjective separation, which contradicts their objective inseparability. What is actually the most mysterious and enigmatic is not this mutual participation between the parts of one nature, but this inner egoism. Reason cannot provide a direct account for it, and the basis of *this* phenomenon cannot be found empirically.

There is no complete separation of creatures and cannot be one, even though egoism claims there is but does not carry it out in practice. On the other hand, the mutual connection between creatures, which is psychologically expressed in compassion or pity, is not that “immediate identification” of which the philosopher speaks in his *Will and Representation*.²³ When I am sorry for my friend with a headache, my feeling of compassion usually does not become a headache. Not only do I not identify myself immediately with him, but even our very states are *not* identical. I clearly distinguish my head, which does not ache, from his, which does. To the best of my knowledge, it has never yet happened that a compassionate person who plunged into the water to save a drowning person has taken this other person for oneself or oneself for the other person. Even a hen—a creature undoubtedly more philoprogenitive than wise—nevertheless understands clearly the distinction between herself and her chicks and behaves towards them in a way that would be impossible if, in her maternal compassion, “the barriers between the *self* and *non-self* were abolished.”²⁴ If this were the case, the hungry hen, owing to her inability to distinguish herself from her chicks, might sometimes ascribe this sensation to them and begin feeding them despite their satiation while she is dying of hunger. Or, at another time, ascribing their hunger to herself she would satisfy herself at their expense. In fact, in all real instances of pity the boundaries between the creature that pities and the creatures pitied are not at all removed.²⁵ Rather, the boundaries simply turn out not to be as absolute and impenetrable as the abstract reflection of scholastic philosophers have imagined them to be.

The removal of the barriers between the *self* and *non-self*, i.e., their immediate identification, is merely a figure of speech and not an expression of an actual fact. Like the equal vibration of concordant strings, the connection between living creatures through sympathy is also not a simple identity, but a harmony of the similar. From this viewpoint as well, the fundamental moral [95] fact of compassion or pity corresponds completely to the actual nature of things or to the sense of the world. For the indissoluble connection of this nature or sense is not a unity of emptiness but embraces the full scope of specific differences.

²³ E] Solov’ëv, of course, means here Schopenhauer’s magnum opus, *The World as Will and Representation*.

²⁴ E] Cf. Schopenhauer 1965: 166.

²⁵ C] If this were ... at all removed.] In fact, in both this and the other cases the boundaries are not removed. **AB**.

V

As a basis of morality, the feeling of pity appropriately has no external limits to its application. Starting from the narrow sphere of maternal love, which is already so powerful in higher animals, it can (in humans), by extending itself more and more, pass from the family to the clan and tribe, to the civil community, to the entire nation, to all of mankind and finally embrace all that lives in the world. When we see individual cases of concrete suffering, we actively pity not only *every* person—regardless of race or religion—but even every animal. This is indubitable and, indeed, a common occurrence. Although less ordinary, we even encounter the breadth of the compassionate heart, which, for no apparent reason, immediately embraces the multitude of living creatures in the whole world with a keen feeling of pity. It is difficult to suspect the following naive description of *universal pity as an actual state* as being one of artificial rhetoric or affected pathos. It bears very little resemblance to so-called “*Weltschmerz*”²⁶: “And what is a merciful heart? It is the heart’s burning for the sake of all creation, for men, for birds, for animals, for demons and for every created thing; and by the recollection and sight of them the eyes of a merciful man pour forth abundant tears. From the strong and vehement mercy which grips his heart and from his great compassion, his heart is humbled, and he cannot bear to hear or see any injury or slight sorrow in creation. For this reason, he continually offers up a tearful prayer, even for irrational beasts, for the enemies of the truth and for those who harm him, that they be protected and receive mercy. And in like manner he even prays for the family of reptiles because of the great compassion that burns in his heart without measure in the likeness of God.”^{27, 28}

[96] This description of the basic altruistic impulse in its highest form contains neither “immediate identification” nor “a lifting of the barrier between the *self* and *non-self*.” It differs from Schopenhauer’s account just as living truth does from literary eloquence. These words from a Christian writer also show us that we have no need, as Schopenhauer erroneously thought, to turn to Buddhism or to Indian dramas to learn the prayer: “May all living creatures remain free from pain.”²⁹

²⁶ E] A melancholic or pessimistic mood concerning the state of the world associated primarily with the nineteenth century Romantic poets.

²⁷ F] “*Izhe vo svjatykh Otca nashego avvy Isaaka Sirijanina, podvishnika i otshel'nika, byvshego episkopom khristoljubivogo grada Nivevii,*” *Slova Podvizhicheskie*, Moscow, 1858, p. 299. E] Isaak Sirijanin 1858.

²⁸ E] Solov’ev had already quoted these same words, and for much the same purpose, in his *Critique of Abstract Principles*. See PSS, vol. 3, p. 44; SS, vol. 2: 37–38.

²⁹ E] “May all living ... free from pain.”] Solov’ev again quotes Schopenhauer, though here without indicating the source. See Schopenhauer 1965: 173. Solov’ev had already cited the same quotation in his *Critique*. See PSS, vol. 3: 41; SS, vol. 2: 35. However, unlike here, Solov’ev in the *Critique* indicated the source.

VI

The universal consciousness of humanity decisively recognizes that *pity is a moral good*. A person who shows this feeling is called morally good. The deeper one experiences it and the more one applies it, the more that person is considered to be morally good. On the other hand, the merciless person is, for the most part, considered to be *evil*. However, it does not follow from this that *all* of morality or the essence of *every* moral good can be reduced to compassion or “sympathetic feeling,” as so often happens now.³⁰

“Boundless compassion for all living creatures,” Schopenhauer remarks, “is the firmest and surest guarantee of pure moral conduct, and needs no casuistry. Whoever is inspired by this feeling will surely injure no one, will inflict no suffering on anyone, and all his actions will bear the stamp of justice and mercy. On the other hand, if we attempt to say, ‘This man is virtuous but knows no compassion,’ or, ‘He is an unjust and evil man, yet he is very compassionate,’ the contradiction is obvious.”³¹ These words are true only with significant reservations. Pity, or compassion, is undoubtedly an actual basis of morality, but Schopenhauer’s obvious mistake is that he saw this feeling as the *sole* basis of *all* morality.³² In fact, it is only one of the three foundations of morality, and it has a specific sphere of application, [97]namely determining our proper relation to other creatures in the world. Pity is the only genuine basis of *altruism*, but altruism and morality are not one and the same. The former is only a part of morality. It is true that “boundless compassion for all living creatures is the firmest and surest guarantee,” but not of³³ moral action *in general*, as our philosopher mistakenly claims. Rather, compassion is only such a guarantee of moral action with respect to those creatures that are the object of compassion. Despite all its importance, this relation, nevertheless, does not exhaust morality in its entirety. In addition to our relation to similar creatures, we human beings also stand in a certain relation to our own material nature and to the higher principles of all being. These relations also demand a moral determination so that we can distinguish the moral good from the evil in them. Those who act out of a feeling of pity certainly do not offend or cause suffering to anyone, i.e., they will not offend *anyone else*. But a person may very well offend oneself by indulging in carnal passions that destroy human dignity. Despite having a most compassionate heart, one may be inclined to debauchery and other low vices which, though not opposed to

³⁰ C] *all* of morality ... often happens now.] the essence of all morality—or everything morally good—consists only of compassion or “sympathetic feelings,” as various points of view often assume. A.

³¹ F] Die beid[e] Grundprob[leme] der Ethik, 2 ed., p. 23. E] Schopenhauer 1860. Cf. Schopenhauer 1965: 172. Solov’ev quotes Schopenhauer but omits many words in the passage without any indication that he has done so.

³² F] I must all the more point out this important error on the part of this fashionable philosopher, since I myself made it years ago when I wrote my dissertation *Kritika otvlechnnykh nachal*. E] Cf. PSS, vol. 3: 34–45; SS, vol. 2: 25–37.

³³ C] not of] not only of A.

compassion, are opposed to morality. It follows from this that the two concepts are not necessarily identical. Schopenhauer correctly claims that it is impossible to say, “He is an unjust and evil man yet he is very compassionate.” In a strange way, however, he forgot that one can and often must say, “This sensual and licentious man is a debaucher, a glutton, a drunkard—however he is very compassionate.”³⁴ All of us also hear it said, “Although this person leads an exemplary, ascetic life, he is pitiless to those near him.” Thus, on the one hand, the *virtue* of abstinence is possible apart from pity. Yet on the other hand,³⁵ an intense development of the sympathetic feelings—pity and mercy—excludes the possibility of *evil* actions only in the narrow sense, i.e., cruel, directly³⁶ harmful actions towards others. It does not, however, prevent *shameful* actions, which we cannot possibly consider morally indifferent even from an altruistic point of view. A good drunkard or libertine may pity those near him and never intends to harm them directly, but [98]certainly hurts not only himself but also his family by his debauchery and can finally ruin them without the least intention of causing harm.³⁷ If pity does not prevent such behavior,³⁸ our inner resistance to it must be based on something else in our moral nature, which we find in our feeling of shame. The rules of asceticism³⁹ are developed from it similar to the way in which the rules of altruism follow from pity.

VII

The true essence of pity or compassion is not an immediate identification of oneself with another, but a recognition of the inherent significance of the other—a recognition of the other’s right to existence and to possible happiness. When I pity another person or animal, I do not confuse myself with this other person or take the other for myself and myself for the other. Rather, I simply see in him or her a being akin or similar to myself, an animate being like myself who also wants to live and enjoy the good things in life.⁴⁰ Acknowledging my own right to the fulfillment of such desires, I acknowledge it in others. Painfully conscious of every transgression of my own right, of every offense caused to me, I respond, in a similar way, to a trans-

³⁴ E] Schopenhauer 1965: 172.

³⁵ C] All of us also ... on the other hand,] It is clear that **AB**.

³⁶ C] directly] *Absent in AB*.

³⁷ C] even from an altruistic ... causing harm] *Absent in AB*.

³⁸ C] such behavior,] it, **AB**.

³⁹ F] Interestingly, Schopenhauer himself recognized and even greatly exaggerated the significance of asceticism, but for some reason he completely divorced it from his moral theory. This is one of many examples of incoherent thinking in this famous writer. E] See Schopenhauer Schopenhauer 1969: 380ff.

⁴⁰ C] good things in life.] *All editions consulted, with the exception of Opravdanie 1988, have this as “good things of existence.” However, as the translators/editors of the German translation point out, the alteration is given in the list of corrections at the end of the 1899 edition. See Solowjew 1976, p. 747.*

gression of the other's right, to an offense against another. Pitying myself, I also pity the other. When I see a creature suffering, I do not identify or confuse myself with it, but only start to imagine myself *in its place* and, recognizing its similarity to me, I equate its states with my own and, so to speak, "put myself in its shoes." This *equalization* (but not identification) between the two of us takes place immediately and spontaneously in the feeling of pity and is raised by reason to a clear and distinct idea.⁴¹

Thus, the intellectual content (the idea) of pity, or compassion, taken in its universality, independently of the subjective mental states in which it is manifested (i.e., taken logically and not psychologically)⁴² is true and just. It is true that there are other creatures similar to me, and it is just [99]that I should treat them as I treat myself. This position, which is clear in itself, becomes even clearer with a negative test. When I treat other creatures pitilessly or with indifference, when I consider it permissible to hurt them and consider that I have no obligation to help them, when I look on them only as means for my own ends, they appear to me not as they really are. A creature appears only as a thing, something living appears as something dead, an animate being as soulless, those near to me as alien, those like me as unconditionally different. Such an attitude, in which a certain object is taken to be not as it in fact is, is a direct negation of truth, and the actions that follow from it will be unjust. Consequently, the opposite attitude, which is subjectively manifested in the inner feeling of sympathy, pity or compassion, objectively speaking, *expresses the truth*, and the actions that follow from it will be *just*. Everyone recognizes that to measure by a different set of standards is an elementary expression of injustice. However, when I am pitiless to others, i.e., treat them as soulless things without any rights but, instead, hold myself as a person with a soul replete with rights, I obviously am measuring by a different set of standards and crudely contradict truth and justice. On the other hand, when I pity others as I do myself, I measure by a single standard and, consequently, act in accordance with truth and justice.

When it is taken as a constant property and a practical principle, pitilessness is called *egoism*. A consistent egoism in a pure and uncompounded form does not exist—at least not between people. But in order to understand the general essence of any egoism, we need to characterize it as a pure, unconditional principle. Here is what it is:⁴³ Between my own *self* and other beings there is an unconditional opposition, a bottomless abyss. I am everything to myself and must be everything to others, but by themselves others are nothing and become something only as a means for me. My life and well-being are an absolute goal; the life and the well-being of others are taken only as instruments to the realization of my goals, i.e., as necessary means for my self-affirmation. I am the indivisible center, and the whole world is only the periphery. Although such a viewpoint is seldom expressed, it⁴⁴ undoubtedly lies, however, with some reservations at the heart [100]of our natural

⁴¹ C] When I see a creature ... clear and distinct idea.] *Absent in AB.*

⁴² C] taken in its universality ... and not psychologically)] *Absent in AB.*

⁴³ C] A consistent egoism ... what it is:] *Absent in AB.*

⁴⁴ C] expressed, it] expressed in all its purity, it **AB.**

life. We do not see unconditional egoists on Earth: Everyone does appear to pity⁴⁵ someone; everyone sees in someone a being similar to oneself. But, restricted to a certain (usually very narrow) sphere, egoism manifests itself with all its might in other, wider spheres. A person who does not take the egoistic viewpoint towards one's own relatives, i.e., who includes one's family within one's *self*, all the more ruthlessly opposes this extended *self* to everyone else. A person who extends (usually very superficially) one's *self* to include the entire nation adopts the egoistic viewpoint with all the more ferocity, both for oneself and for one's nation, towards other nations and other peoples, etc. That the circle of inner solidarity is widened or that egoism is transferred from the individual to the family, the nation and the state is, indisputably, of great significance in the life of humanity, insofar as within the bounds of a given circle selfishness is limited or outweighed, or even forced out by philanthropic, moral relations. This, however, does not destroy the *very principle* of egoism in humanity, a principle⁴⁶ which consists of an unconditional intrinsic opposition of oneself and what is one's own to what is other by claiming an abyss exists between them. This principle is essentially false, because in reality there is no such, and cannot be such an, unconditional opposition or abyss. It is clear here that exclusivity, egoism, and pitilessness are essentially untrue. Above all, egoism is *unreal*, fantastic. It affirms what does not exist and what is impossible. To consider oneself (either in the narrow or the broad sense) as the exclusive center of the universe is essentially as absurd as to consider oneself a glass bench or the constellation of the Big Dipper.⁴⁷

[101]Therefore, if reason condemns egoism as the senseless assertion of what does not exist and is impossible, the opposite principle of altruism, which is psychologically based on the feeling of pity, is fully justified by reason as well as by conscience. Because of this principle, the individual person recognizes that⁴⁸ other creatures are just as much the same relative centers of being and of living forces as oneself.⁴⁹ This is an affirmation of truth and a recognition of what is. The feeling of pity, which is aroused by other creatures akin and similar to us, testifies internally to this truth in each of our souls, and from this truth reason⁵⁰ deduces a principle or rule for how we are to relate to all other creatures: *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*

⁴⁵ C] We do not see ... appear to pity] There are few unconditional egoists. The majority of people do pity **AB**.

⁴⁶ C] That the circle of ... humanity, a principle] Certainly, all these restrictions and modifications have a great material importance, but they do not concern the principle itself, **A**.

⁴⁷ F] Metaphysics provides a theoretical proof of the reality of the external world and of the inner psychic life of creatures. Moral philosophy is concerned only with a general awareness of this truth, which even the extreme egoist has to accept. When for some selfish purposes someone needs the cooperation of others (who are not dependent on this person) he or she, contrary to one's own fundamental principle, treats them as actual, independent creatures with a full set of rights. This person tries to convince them to take his or her side and takes their own interests into account. Egoism, therefore, contradicts itself and is in any case a *false* viewpoint.

⁴⁸ C] Because of this ... recognizes that] I recognize here that **AB**.

⁴⁹ C] oneself.] I myself am. **AB**.

⁵⁰ C] each of our souls, and from this truth reason] my soul, and from this truth my reason **AB**.

VIII

The general rule or principle of altruism⁵¹ naturally breaks down into two particular ones. We can already see the beginning of this division in the basic altruistic feeling of pity. In the first place, if⁵² I actually pity someone, I would not myself cause this person harm or cause suffering; I will not *injure* him or her. And in the second place when, independently of me, someone is suffering or is injured, I will *help* this person. Two rules of altruism follow from this—one negative and one positive: (1) *Do not do unto another what you [102]do not want others to do unto you*, and (2) *Do unto another all that you would want from others*. To put it more briefly and simpler, these two rules, which are usually combined, can be expressed in this way: *Injure no one and so far as possible help everyone* (*Neminem laede, imo omnes, quantum potes, juva*).⁵³

The first, negative rule, in particular, is called the rule of *justice* and the second that of *mercy*. Such a distinction, however, is not quite accurate. For justice lies also at the basis of the second rule. If I want others to help me when I am in need, then it is fair that I should help them. On the other hand, if I do not want to injure anyone, this is surely because I recognize others as creatures like myself who live and suffer. In such a case, I certainly will try to save them as much as possible from suffering: I do not injure them because I pity them, and if I pity them, then I will also help them. Mercy presupposes justice, and justice demands mercy—these are merely different sides or different manifestations of one and the same thing.⁵⁴

There is an actual difference between these two sides or degrees of altruism, but it is not and cannot be an opposition or contradiction. Not to help another already means to injure that person. A consistently just person will certainly fulfill one's merciful duties, and a truly merciful person cannot be at the same time unjust. Despite the difference between them, the fact that the two altruistic rules are

⁵¹ F] This term, introduced by the founder of positivism, Auguste Comte, is the precise expression of the logical antithesis to egoism and therefore answers to a real need of philosophical language (altruism—from *alter* or *other*, just as egoism comes from *ego* or *self*). Our staunch opponents of foreign words should be consistent and in rebelling against "altruism" should also expunge the word "egoism" from our speech. Instead of these words, they can say *druzhchestvo* (otherness) and *jachestvo* (selfness). It seems that the latter term is already being used by someone. If it were only a matter of *psychological* definitions, we could accept the words "*self-love*" and "*other-love*," but in order to designate ethical *principles* these words, including as they do the concept of love, are unsuitable. However, it is not a matter here of feelings, but of rules of action. One can love oneself far more than others and yet on principle work for the good of others as well as one's own. Undoubtedly, such a person will be an altruist. However, how is this person to be designated in this other terminology: as a "*self-lover*" or as an "*other-lover*"? Both are equally absurd. C] If it were ... equally absurd] *Absent in A*.

⁵² C] if] when **AB**.

⁵³ E] Solov'ëv provided this Latin expression in his *Critique of Abstract Principles*. He referred to it there as the simplest and purest form of the ethical principle. Quite possibly, Solov'ëv obtained the Latin expression from Schopenhauer, who also provided it in his *Schopenhauer* 1965: 69.

⁵⁴ F] In Hebrew, *sedek* means "just," and the noun based on it, *sedaka*, means "charity." C] *This note absent in A*.

inseparable is very important. This inseparability is the basis for the inner connection between law and morality, politics and the spiritual life of society.

The general rule of altruism—Do unto others as you would have them do unto you—does not presuppose the material or the qualitative equality of all individuals. Such an equality does not exist in nature, and to demand it would be nonsensical. It is not a matter of equality, but only of an equal right to existence and to the development of one's positive abilities. The Papuan savage has the same right to existence and to self-improvement in his own way as Francis Assisi or Goethe had in theirs. [103] We should respect *this* right equally in all cases. The murder of a savage is as much a sin as the murder of a genius or of a saint. It does not follow from this, however, that they are of the same value in other respects and that we should treat them the same outside the bounds of this universal human right. There is not only no material equality and therefore also no actual equality of rights (in the sense of equal legal and functional capacity) between different creatures, but there is also none even in one and the same creature. With changes in age and states, one's specific and particular rights and duties also change.⁵⁵ They are not the same in childhood as in mature adults; they are not the same when someone has a mental condition⁵⁶ as when one is healthy. However, a person's fundamental or universal⁵⁷ human rights and his or her moral self-worth as a person remains unchanged, just as it is not destroyed by the infinite variety and inequality of individuals, races and classes.⁵⁸ Something unconditional and identical must be preserved in all these differences, namely *the significance of each person as an end in oneself*, i.e., as something that cannot serve *merely as a means* for the ends of others.⁵⁹

The logical demands of altruism are all-encompassing; reason displays no biases nor barriers. In this respect, it coincides with the feeling upon which altruism psychologically depends. Pity, as we saw, is also universal and impartial. Through it, a person reaches "the likeness of God," because it embraces all without exception equally: both the morally good and the "enemies of truth," both people and demons, and even "those that naturally crawl."^{60, 61}

⁵⁵ C] and therefore also ... duties also change.] between different creatures, but there is also none even in one and the same creature with changes in age and states. **AB**.

⁵⁶ C] has a mental condition] is very ill **AB**.

⁵⁷ C] fundamental or universal] *Absent in AB*.

⁵⁸ C] classes.] levels of culture. **A**.

⁵⁹ C] Something unconditional and ... ends of others.] *Absent in AB*.

⁶⁰ F] In addition to separate references in the second and third parts of this book, the question of our moral duties with respect to animals will be examined in a special appendix at the end. C] *This entire note absent in AB*] E] Regrettably, no such appendix is found.

⁶¹ E] Again, Solov'ëv already quoted these words in his *Critique* (PSS, vol. 3: 44; SS, vol. 2: 37). For the original source, see Isaak Sirijanin 1858: 299.

[104]Chapter 4

The Religious Principle in Morality

I

Psychologically speaking, the moral rules of justice and mercy rest upon the feeling of pity. Although the *scope* of these rules extends to the entire realm of living creatures, the *content* of these rules does not exhaust all moral relations, even between human individuals. First of all,¹ what should be the normal relation of minors, of² children who are already able to understand moral demands, to their parents? Undoubtedly, there is something here, something peculiar and specific, that cannot be reduced to justice and love for other human beings and that cannot be derived from pity. Children immediately recognize their parents' *superiority* and their *dependence* on them; children *respect* their parents, and the practical duty of *obedience* follows from this feeling. All of this lies beyond the bounds of simple altruism, the logical essence of which is that I recognize others as similar and equal to myself and that I attach the same significance to them as I ascribe to myself. The moral relation of children to their parents, on the contrary, is not only not one of equality but even has the directly opposite character: It is based on a recognition that the people concerned are *unequal*. Indeed, in this case the psychological basis of the moral relation cannot consist in originally sharing the other's suffering (pity), for the parents immediately appear to the child not as needing the help of others, but as being able to render help to the child in its needs.³

This relation is certainly not contrary to justice, but it includes something special in addition to it. The general [105]principle of justice demands that we treat others as we want them to treat us. The moral relation of children to their parents can logically be placed under this: loving its mother or father, the child certainly wants their love. However, these two forms of love—that which the child has for the parents

E] In the first edition of the compiled work from 1897, Chap. 4 spans pp. 110–130.

¹ C] First of all,] *Absent in AB.*

² C] minors, of] minors, for example, of **AB.**

³ C] Indeed, in this ... child in its needs.] *Absent in AB.*

and that love which it wants from them—are essentially different, a difference that⁴ does not follow from our general principle. In the first relation, a feeling of admiration for someone superior prevails as does a dutiful obedience to this someone. This relation does not assume that the child demands for itself the same respect and obedience from the parents. We certainly could pursue such formal considerations further and state that children (of course, those who have reached the age of reason) who respect and obey their parents will want the same from their future children. This, however, establishes only an abstract connection between filial love and the general concept of justice, but in no way does it provide a foundation for the particular nature of this love. Apart from the problematic idea of future children, the moral feeling of *real* children to their parents has a *quite adequate foundation* in the actual relationship between children and their parents, viz., in their *complete dependence* on the parents as their Providence. This fact is inevitably connected with a recognition of their essential⁵ superiority, and the duty to obey logically follows from this. In this way, filial love receives the quite special character of respect or reverence (*pietas erga parentes*),⁶ which takes it beyond the general bounds of simple altruism.

We can note that parental (particularly maternal) love, or pity, which is the first fundamental manifestation of the altruistic attitude, also presupposes an inequality, though in the opposite direction. The inequality here, however, is of no essential importance. Pitying their helpless children and caring for them, parents *know* from their own experience the pains of hunger, of cold, etc., which arouse their pity. There is, in essence, here a comparing or equating of one's own states with those of another. On the contrary, children have never experienced for themselves the advantages of maturity that evoke in these children a feeling of respect or reverence for their parents, a feeling that [106]makes them see their parents as *higher* beings. Parents pity their children *because of their similarity* to themselves, as being like them, although in fact they are unequal. Whereas this inequality is only an attendant⁷ fact, the specific feeling of children to their parents is, in essence, determined by the superiority of the latter and, consequently, is directly based on an inequality.

If we carefully observe a child who tries to defend his mother from an actual or imagined insult, we easily see that among his feelings the predominant ones are anger and indignation towards the blasphemer. The child's anger with the offender is greater than his pity for the offended. This child's feelings are essentially similar to those that arouse the mob defending its idol. "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians! Death to the infidels!"^{8, 9}

⁴ C] essentially different, a difference that] a specific difference, which **AB**.

⁵ C] essential] unconditional **AB**.

⁶ E] Latin: respect for one's parents.

⁷ C] attendant] relative **AB**.

⁸ C] If we carefully ... to the infidels!"] *Absent in A*.

⁹ E] Acts 19: 34.

Equality essentially conditions all manifestations¹⁰ of pity and of the altruism that follows from it, and inequality appears in these manifestations merely as a contingent and temporary feature. In any case in pitying¹¹ another, I liken myself to this person: I put myself mentally in his or her place; I enter, so to speak, his or her skin. Doing so presupposes my equality with this person as someone similar to me. In recognizing another as equal to myself, I, through compassion, compare the other's state with similar ones in me and from the likeness between them deduce the moral duty to participate and to help.

*Non ignara mali miseris succurrere discor.*¹² To pity another, I must *compare* this other person to myself or myself to the other person, whereas the assumption¹³ of an essential inequality or dissimilarity, which excludes the idea of *similar* states, totally destroys pity and any altruistic attitude. "The twice born" Hindu is pitiless to the shudras and pariahs.¹⁴ He or she bases his or her attitude towards them on an inequality, i.e., on the impossibility of comparing oneself to them. The Hindu cannot put oneself in their position; he or she cannot liken their states to one's own, and consequently cannot sympathize with them. In this case, just as in the attitude of the white plantation owners to the Negroes, or of our own serf-owning landholders to "the sons of Ham,"¹⁵ the cruel relations that in fact appeared found their attempted justification in the idea of an essential inequality or heterogeneity.

[107]The recognition of inequality here is purely negative; it breaks the bond between entities and gives rise to or justifies all kinds of immoral relations. Of another character is that positive inequality that characterizes filial love or piety. The inequality between a Brahmin and a pariah or between a plantation owner and a Negro destroys the solidarity of feelings and interests between them. However, the superiority of parents over their children *conditions*, on the contrary, their solidarity and serves as the foundation of a peculiar sort of moral relation. Here is the natural root of *religious morality*, which forms a peculiar and important sphere in the spiritual nature of man, independently of positive religions and metaphysical systems.

¹⁰ C] *Equality* essentially conditions all manifestations] Besides parental love, *equality* essentially conditions all other manifestations **A**.

¹¹ C] any case in pitying] any case, although not identifying immediately with him in pitying **AB**.

¹² F] "Not ignorant of trials, I now can learn to help the miserable" (Dido's words in Virgil's *Aeneid*). E] Virgil 1982: 22.

¹³ C] other person, whereas the assumption] other person. On the contrary, the assumption **AB**.

¹⁴ E] "The twice born" Hindu is pitiless to the shudras and pariahs.] In Hindu society, there are four major castes. The top three are considered "twice born." The term "shudras" refers to members of the fourth and lowest Hindu caste. The word "shudra" literally means "slave." The term "pariahs" refers to a tribe in south India whose members are regarded by the Hindu majority as "outcasts" and "untouchables."

¹⁵ E] Genesis 10: 6.

II

Since the appearance of de Brosse's book on "god fetishes"¹⁶ in the last century, a view has become widespread and has recently enjoyed great popularity particularly under the influence of Auguste Comte's philosophy. According to this view, the original form of religion is a *fetishism*, i.e., the deification of material objects, partly natural (stones, trees) and partly even artificial, which have attracted attention to themselves by chance or have been arbitrarily selected. The rudiments or the remains of such a material cult can, undoubtedly, always be found in every religion, but to see fetishism as humanity's fundamental and original form of religion is not only logically inconsistent but also disagrees with the historical evidence and¹⁷ our information about savage beliefs. (Fetishism, by the way, can have a deeper meaning, which the founder of positivism himself came to suspect in the second half of his literary activity.)¹⁸

In order to recognize a stone, a piece of a tree or a shell as a god, i.e., as an entity having great importance and power, one must already have the concept of a higher entity. Mistaking a rope for a snake would be impossible if I did not already have the idea of a snake. However, where is the source of the idea of the deity? The material objects that become fetishes and idols do not in themselves—in their present, sensual reality—have the attributes of a higher entity. Consequently, this idea cannot be derived from them. To claim that it is [108]innate does not constitute an answer to the question. Everything that happens in a person is, in a certain sense, innate, and undoubtedly the human being is by nature capable of having the idea of a higher entity, for otherwise we would not have it. However, the issue is not about our ability, but about that ability's original *application*, which must have an immediate sufficient reason.¹⁹ In order to pass into an *actual* consciousness, every idea, even though it is potentially present in human reason and is in this sense innate, requires certain palpable impressions or perceptions that evoke this potential idea and give it a living, concrete form. This form, then, undergoes a further intellectual process of expansion and deepening, of complicating and refining. However, the actual impressions of a block of wood or of a crudely fashioned dummy do not present a sufficient reason to evoke for the first time in the mind an idea of a higher entity or to serve as the basis of its original formation. In this respect, impressions of the sun or the moon, the starry heaven, a thunderstorm, the sea, rivers, etc. can prove more suitable. However, even before consciousness can dwell on these events and

¹⁶ E] de Brosse 1972. (This work originally appeared in 1760.)

¹⁷ C] also disagrees with the historical evidence and], moreover, unjustified by both historical evidence and by A.

¹⁸ C] which the founder ... his literary activity.)] than de Brosse and Comte thought). **AB.**

¹⁹ E] Although today the principle of sufficient reason is, arguably, most closely associated with Leibniz, Solov'ëv here, most likely, is indebted to Schopenhauer's invocation of it. According to Schopenhauer, "The general meaning of the principle of sufficient reason may [...] be reduced to the fact that always and everywhere each thing exists merely *by virtue of another thing*." Schopenhauer 1974: 232.

evaluate their importance, it was already given impressions of another sort, more familiar and powerful for engendering in it the idea of a higher entity. When it is a matter of the *original formulation* of some fundamental idea in human consciousness, we must have in mind not the grown adult, but the child. However, it is quite certain that the child is far more aware of his dependence on the mother (and later on the father), who feeds and protects him, than on the sun, on thunderstorms or on the river that irrigates the fields of his native land. The child's first impressions of his parents provide a sufficient reason to evoke in him the idea of a higher being and feelings of reverential love as well as fear of an incommensurable power connected with this idea. Such fear forms the basis of the religious attitude. It is factually indubitable and perfectly understandable that children before a certain age *pay no attention at all* to the most important phenomena of nature. In their eyes, the sun is no more remarkable than a simple lamp, and the impression produced on them by celestial thunder is no greater than the rattle of pots and pans. Recollecting on my own experiences, my first impression of the starry sky was when I was 6 years [109]old and there was a special reason for it (the comet of 1859), whereas a series of clear and connected family memories begins from the time when I was four. Neither in life nor in literature have I come across a case of the reverse path of development in children, and I think that if some 3-year-old child showed a special interest in celestial phenomena, we would be openly awe-struck.²⁰

The human being finds the idea of the Deity for the first time in infancy embodied neither in the form of accidental fetishes and hand-made idols, nor even in those of grand or terrible natural phenomena, but in the living image of his *parents*. Therefore, contrary to prevailing opinion, the moral element has a very important, though not exclusive, significance from the very start in religion. By its original conception, the deity has predominantly the character of *Providence*.

At first, the *mother* is the embodiment of Providence. At the lower stages of social development with its disorderly marital relations, the significance of the mother and the cult of motherhood remain predominant. Just as with the individual person, different nations pass²¹ through a *matriarchic*, or *gynecocratic*, epoch, traces of which are preserved in historical artifacts, in surviving customs and also even in the current way of life of certain savages.²² However, with the establishment of the patriarchic and tribal way of life, the mother retains the role of Providence only as long as the children are dependent on her in her role as wet nurse and first teacher. In these capacities, the mother is the sole higher being in the child's eyes. However, upon attaining the age of awareness, the child sees that the mother is herself dependent on another higher being, viz., the father who is the provider and defender of the whole family. He is the genuine providence, and religious worship passes naturally to him.

²⁰ C] It is factually indubitable ... openly awe-struck.] *Absent in AB*.

²¹ C] different nations pass] all of humanity passes A.

²² F] On this topic, there exists special literature that first originated in connection with the field of classical archeology (Ba[c]hofen, *Das Mutterrecht*), and then passed into the field of comparative ethnography and sociology. E] Bachofen 1861.

III

The religious attitude of children towards their parents as their living Providence, an attitude, which naturally arises in primitive [110]humanity, quite clearly and strongly, expresses itself when the children become adults and the parents *die*. The veneration of dead fathers and ancestors undoubtedly occupies a paramount place in the development of human religious, moral and social relations. The enormous Chinese nation has lived up to now by this religion of ancestor veneration, and on it the entire social, governmental and family structure of the Middle Kingdom²³ is based. There is not a single other people in the world—be they savage, barbarian or civilized, including contemporary Parisians—who have not preserved ancestor veneration in one form or another. However, although it is the first foundation of religion, the relationship to one's²⁴ living parents cannot continue to be of a purely religious character: Everyday proximity and interaction prevents this. When children grow up, they learn from their living father of their deceased ancestors who are the object of already established religious veneration. In this way, the religion of their living parents is naturally absorbed into the cult of parents who have departed, have been raised above all the surroundings and invested with a mysterious majesty. During his lifetime, the father stands merely as a candidate for the position of a god, but for the time being he is only a mediator and a priest of an actual god—the dead ancestor. *It is not fear but death that gives humanity²⁵ its first gods*. Just as the feeling of dependence and the idea of Providence are transferred from the mother to the father, so they are then associated with the idea of ancestors when children learn that the parents on whom they depend depend far more on the dead²⁶ whose power is not associated with the conditions of a material, corporeal existence. The idea of Providence and the moral obligations of worship, service and obedience that follow from it for people are therefore transferred to them. One must know the will of the dead in order to obey it. Appearing sometimes in a vision, either in a dream or while awake, the dead impart this knowledge directly; in other cases, we learn of it through fortune telling. At first, the mediators between this higher divine power and ordinary people are the living fathers or the elders of the tribe. Later, with the increasing complexity of social relations, there arises a special class of priests, fortune-tellers, sorcerers and prophets.

Only a subjective, misanthropic mood can reduce filial feelings, even in primitive humanity, [111]to fear alone, to the exclusion of gratitude and an unselfish recognition of superiority. If these moral elements are already undoubtedly observed in the relations of a dog to its master in whom it sees its living Providence, then they must be present even more so in our feelings to our Providence, originally

²³ E] the literal rendering of the Mandarin Chinese word for “China.”

²⁴ C] relationship to one's] relationship of children to their AB.

²⁵ C] *gives humanity*] gives (to the adult) to humanity A.

²⁶ C] Just as the feeling ... more on the dead] At first, children sense their dependence on their parents and see in them their Providence. Soon, however, they recognize that their parents depend far more on dead ancestors A.

embodied for us in our parents. When this sense is transferred to dead ancestors, this cult becomes associated, of course, with the moral elements of filial love, which rises here quite clearly above simple altruism, acquiring a predominantly religious character.

A well-known theory, the chief representative of which is Herbert Spencer, derives all religion from the veneration of dead ancestors.²⁷ Although this theory is not the complete truth, it is much more correct and substantial than both the theory of primitive fetishism and those theories that reduce everything to the deification of the sun, thunder or other phenomena of nature. Active anthropomorphous entities or spirits always were the object of religion. One can hardly doubt that the souls of dead ancestors were the prototypical spirits. (In Lithuania and Poland, the general name for all spirits is *forefathers*—*dziady*; with us Russians the elemental spirits are the *grandfather* water-sprite, the grandfather wood-goblin and also the *master domovoi*.²⁸ Ovid's²⁹ *Metamorphoses*, which is borrowed for the most part from the folk beliefs of the Greeks and Romans, are full of examples of dead or dying people passing into elemental, zoomorphic and phytomorphic (vegetative) deities and spirits.) The most widespread form of fetishism—the worship of *stones*—undoubtedly depends on a cult of the dead. Among the Laps, Buryats and other peoples, we find preserved sometimes the proper names of the forefathers or the sorcerers, who after death were transformed into sacred stones.³⁰ This transformation cannot be understood to mean that the spirit of the dead becomes a stone, i.e., a soulless thing. On the contrary, it retains, even to a substantial extent, the power it had during life. Thus, among the Laps the petrified sorcerers foretell and send forth storms and bad weather to an entire area. Here, the stone is merely the apparent abode of the spirit, the instrument of its actions. Among the Semites, [112]sacred stones were called “*beth-el*” or “*beth-il*,” i.e., houses of god. The same should be said about sacred trees.

It is well known that among Africans and other peoples the chief distinction of sorcerers is supposed to be their power to control atmospheric phenomena. That is, they are supposed to have the ability to produce bad and good weather. These people conceive such a power as belonging even to a greater degree and more directly³¹ to the *spirits* of dead sorcerers. Their living successors serve merely as conjurers and intermediaries. However, in what way is such a powerful spirit of a dead sorcerer, who can produce thunder and storm at will, distinguished from a god

²⁷ E] Cf. “the hypothesis that religions in general are derived from ancestor-worship, finds proofs among all races and in every country.” Spencer 1896: 7.

²⁸ E] In Slavic folklore, a *domovoi* is a house spirit.

²⁹ C] *domovoi*. Ovid's] *domovoi*. Mermaids are the souls of deceased girls. Ovid's **AB**.

³⁰ F] Cf. incidentally Kharuzhin's book on Laplanders and my article “*Ostatki pervobytnogo jazychestva*” (*Russkoe obozrenie*, 1890). C] *This note absent in AB* E] Kharuzhin's book on Laplanders] Kharuzhin 1890. E] my article “*Ostatki pervobytnogo jazychestva*” (*Russkoe obozrenie* 1890)] “Pervobytnoe jazychestvo, ego zhivye i mertvye ostatki” in *SS*, vol. 6: 174–233.

³¹ C] and more directly] *Absent in AB*.

of thunder? Where is the rational necessity to look for another origin of *father Zeus* or *grandfather Perkunas*³²?

Since it is not my intention here to expound and explain the history of religion and its development, I will not attempt to solve the problem of the extent to which³³ we can establish a genetic connection between the cult of the dead and solar, lunar and stellar mythology. I will simply remind the reader of certain facts for the sake of clarification. In Egypt, the solar deity Osiris ruled over the unseen world of the dead. In classical mythology, the moon Hecate belonged to the gods of the nether world. According to an ancient belief preserved in Manicheism, the moon is an intermediate transit station for the souls of the dead. Along with this, I would like to note that the outcome of the theogonic process³⁴ does not violate its principle, that the highest stage of religious consciousness represents only a deepening and expansion of the content that we find at the primitive stages. Its conception of the father, or closest ancestor, first as living, then as dead, determines the religion of the primitive human family. One's *own*, particular parent is the family's highest principle, the source of its life and sense of well-being, the object of worship, gratitude and obedience, in short, its Providence. Through natural historical growth, there arise the communal, tribal, and national gods until finally humanity's religious consciousness, united in thought if not in fact, rises to the idea of a universal heavenly Father with His all-encompassing Providence.

IV

The development of a religious idea is a process that concerns its scope and also the nature of the intellectual concepts and practical [113]instructions connected with it. It does not concern, however, the moral content of religion, i.e., the fundamental attitude of the human being to what is recognized as higher, to what is seen as the human being's Providence. The relation remains unaltered in all the forms and at all stages of religious development. Children's *conceptions* of their parents, tribal members of the spirit of their forefather, the conceptions of entire nations of their national gods, and finally, the general human concept about the one, all-good Father of all that exists are very *different* from each other. The *forms of veneration* are also quite different. The real connection between a father and his children does not need any special institutions and intermediaries. However, the connection with the *unseen* spirit of an ancestor must be supported by extraordinary means. Since the spirit cannot share in an ordinary human meal, but feeds on the evaporation of blood, it must be maintained by sacrifices. Family sacrifices to the tribal spirit are naturally different from nation-wide sacrifices to the national gods. The "god of

³² E] Perkunas] Baltic god of thunder.

³³ C] of the extent to which] whether **AB**.

³⁴ C] I will simply remind ... theogonic process] For me, it is enough to point out that the end of this development **AB**.

battle” requires something other and more than the spiritual protector of the home, and the all-encompassing and ubiquitous Father of the universe requires no material sacrifices, but only worship in spirit and in truth. However, for all that the filial attitude towards the higher being remains in essence one and the same at all of these different stages. The crudest cannibal as well as the perfect saint, insofar as both are religious, agree that both equally want to do not their own will, but *the will of the father*. This permanent and constant filial attitude towards what is higher (regardless of what this higher might supposedly be) forms the principle of true³⁵ *pietism*, which connects religion to morality and can with indifference be called the religious principle in morality or the moral principle in religion.³⁶

Can this principle be affirmed, however, as a universally obligatory moral rule along with the principles of asceticism and altruism? Apparently, the filial relation to the higher will [114] depends on faith in this will, and it is impossible to demand such faith from those who do not have it. If there is no such faith, we must do without it. However, there is a misunderstanding here. The recognition of something higher than us is independent of any specific ideas in the mind and, consequently, of any positive beliefs, but in terms of its *general character* it is undoubtedly obligatory for any rational, moral³⁷ creature. For every such creature, striving to fulfill its purpose in life,³⁸ is necessarily convinced that its attainment or the final satisfaction of the will is not within human power. In other words, every rational entity comes to recognize its³⁹ *dependence* on something unseen and unknown. It is impossible to deny such dependence. The only question to be asked is: Does that upon which I depend have a meaning or not? If it does not, then since my existence is dependent on something meaningless, it too is meaningless. In such a case, it makes no sense to speak of any rational, moral principles and goals at all,⁴⁰ because they can have significance only with the assurance that my existence has meaning, only on the condition that the world is a rational system or that meaning predominates over absurdity in the universe. If the general course of worldly events has no purpose, then the *part* of this process that constitutes human behavior determined by moral rules cannot be purposeful. In that case, these rules cannot stand their ground, for they lead nowhere and receive no justification. If my higher spiritual nature is only a contingent phenomenon, then instead of a strengthening of my spiritual activity the ascetic struggle with the flesh can lead to its destruction. In that case, why should I observe the rules of abstinence and deprive myself of real pleasures in pursuit of an empty phantom? Similarly, if there is no meaningful moral order in the world and

³⁵ C] true] *Absent in AB*.

³⁶ F] I am speaking here of pietism in the direct and general sense of the word, designating the feeling of piety (*pietas*) raised to a principle. Usually, pietism (in a special, historical sense) is the term for a special direction in the religious life of Protestants. C] *Entire note absent in AB*.

³⁷ C] moral] *Absent in AB*.

³⁸ C] creature, striving to . . . purpose in life,] entity wants something in life, having posed for itself some goal, but striving for that goal it **B**.

³⁹ C] For every such . . . to recognize its] In fact, this leads ultimately to a recognition of our **A**.

⁴⁰ C] any rational, moral principles and goals at all,] any moral principles at all **A**.

our work for our neighbors' good can bring them only harm instead of the desired benefit, then the moral principle of altruism is destroyed by an inner contradiction. Let us suppose, for example, along with Schopenhauer, that the essence of the world is a blind and meaningless will and that all existence is essentially suffering. Why, then, should I in fact attempt to help maintain my neighbors' existence, i.e., perpetuate their suffering? Based on such an assumption and a feeling of pity, it is more logical⁴¹ to make every [115]effort to kill the greatest number of living creatures possible.

I can only consciously and rationally do good, when I believe in the moral good, in its objective, independent significance in the world, in other words if I believe in the moral order, in Providence, in God. This faith is logically prior to all positive religious beliefs and institutions as well as to all metaphysical theories.⁴² In this sense, it forms what is called natural religion.

V

All moral demands obtain their rational sanction from natural religion. Let us suppose reason directly tells us that it is good to subordinate the flesh to the spirit, that it is good to help one's neighbors and to recognize the rights of others just like our own. However, in order to obey the suggestions of reason one must believe in reason, believe that the moral good demanded of us is not a subjective illusion, that the good has actual foundations and expresses the truth and that this "truth is great and shall prevail."⁴³ Not to have this faith means not to believe in the meaning of one's own life; it means to reject the dignity of a rational creature.

The absence of natural religion often happens to be a sham. A negative attitude towards one or another form or stage of religious consciousness, dominant at a given time and place is easily taken to be a complete rejection of religion. In this way, the pagans of the Roman Empire thought the Christians were godless (*αθεοι*), and from their point of view they were right, since the Christians actually did reject all of their gods. Apart from this, however, there certainly do exist actual cases of godlessness or unbelief, i.e., of the fundamental rejection of anything higher than oneself—of the moral good, reason and truth. However, the fact of such a rejection, which coincides with a rejection of morality in general, can no more serve as a rejoinder to the obligatory nature of the religio-moral principle than the existence of shameless and hedonistic people, or pitiless and cruel people, speaks against the moral⁴⁴ obligation of abstinence and charity.

⁴¹ C] and a feeling of pity, it is more logical] a natural feeling of pity compels me **AB**.

⁴² C] theories.] systems. **A**.

⁴³ E] 1 Esdras 4: 35.

⁴⁴ C] moral] unconditional **A**.

Religious morality, like morality in general, is not a confirmation of everything that⁴⁵ happens to be, but a prescription of the one thing that⁴⁶ should be. **[116]**Independently of all positive beliefs and unbeliefs, all people, as *rational* creatures, *should* recognize that the life of the world in general and our own lives in particular *have a meaning*. Consequently, we should recognize that everything depends on a higher rational principle, by virtue of which this meaning is upheld and realized. Recognizing this, we should take a filial position with respect to the higher principle of life, i.e., give ourselves up to his providence with gratitude and subordinate all of our actions to the “will of the father,” which speaks through reason and conscience.

Just as our childish ideas of our parents and of our external, practical relations to them change as we grow up, even though our filial love should remain unchanged, so too do our theological ideas and forms of worshipping the Heavenly Father undergo various changes with the spiritual growth of humanity. However, the religious attitude—a free subordination of our will to the demands of the higher principle—should always and everywhere remain unconditionally the same.

VI

In general, higher moral demands do not cancel lower ones but presuppose and include them. It would seem that this simply goes without saying. However, many have not understood and still do not understand this simple and obvious truth. Thus, in the teachings of certain Christian sects, ancient as well as modern, the higher rule of celibacy cancels the seventh commandment as inferior, a consequence of which is that in rejecting marriage these sectarians gladly permit all kinds of fornication. They are obviously going astray. Similarly, many think that the higher rule of pitying all living creatures absolves them of the lower obligation to pity their relatives and all those at home, although it would seem indisputable that the latter also belong to the class of living creatures.

We encounter this sort of error even more often⁴⁷ in the sphere of religious morality. The higher stages of religious consciousness, once attained, override and, as a result, change, but by no means cancel the demands that held sway at the lower stages. Certainly, a person who has a conception of the Heavenly Father cannot regard one’s earthly father in the same way as does an infant, for whom the latter is the sole higher **[117]**entity. It does not follow from this, however, that the first and second commandments cancel the fifth. We cannot now give our dead ancestors the religious veneration that surrounded them during the tribal way of life, but this does not mean that we have no obligations to the dead. Even though we are aware of our dependence on the one Father of the universe, this dependence is surely not immediate. Our existence is undoubtedly determined by heredity and the world

⁴⁵ C] everything that] what **AB**.

⁴⁶ C] the one thing that] what **AB**.

⁴⁷ C] encounter this sort of error even more often] should be careful of this sort of error **AB**.

around us in a directly immediate way. Heredity is a matter of our ancestors, and they created the world around us. The higher will has determined our existence through our ancestors and humbling ourselves before its activity, we cannot remain indifferent towards the instruments of this activity. I know that if I were born among cannibals, I myself would be a cannibal, and I cannot help but feel gratitude and reverence towards those who, through their work and deeds, raised my people out of the state of savagery and brought them to the cultural level that they now enjoy. Providence did this through people who were specially called and who cannot be separated from their providential work. If it is important and dear to me that my fatherland with which my existence is so closely connected is given to be a Christian and European country, then I cannot dismiss the pious memory of the Kievan prince who christened Rus⁴⁸ and of the northern giant⁴⁹ who with powerful blows smashed Moscovy-Mongolian⁵⁰ exclusivity and introduced Russia into the circle of civilized nations. Nor can I forget all those who in various spheres of life and of the spirit moved us along the path opened up by these two historical forefathers of Russia. It is sometimes claimed that the individual alone counts for nothing in history, that what was done by these individuals could have been done by others. In the abstract, we certainly might have been born of other parents instead of our genuine father and mother, but this idle⁵¹ thought of possible parents does not cancel our obligations to our actual ones.

The providential people who provided us with access to higher religion and human enlightenment did not originally create these goods. What they gave us they themselves received from earlier geniuses, heroes and saints in world history whom we should remember with gratitude. We should reestablish as much as possible⁵² the entire line [118] of our spiritual ancestors—people through whom Providence has led humanity along the path to perfection. The pious memory of our ancestors obliges us to serve them actively. An understanding of the essence of this service, which is conditioned by the essence of the universe in general, presupposes both theoretical philosophy and aesthetics. Here, we can only point to the moral basis and principle involved in this matter, viz., pious and grateful veneration of one's ancestors.⁵³

Such a cult⁵⁴ of human ancestors in spirit and in truth does not belittle the religion of the one Heavenly Father. On the contrary, that religion gives it a definite character and reality. We venerate what He poured into these "chosen vessels."⁵⁵

⁴⁸ E] A reference to Vladimir, who in 988 officially ordered the conversion of all Rus to Christianity.

⁴⁹ E] A reference to Peter the Great, who built St. Petersburg as Russia's window on the West and displaced Moscow as the capital.

⁵⁰ C] Moscovy-Mongolian] Moscovy-Tatar **AB**.

⁵¹ C] idle] *Absent in AB*.

⁵² C] as much as possible] *Absent in AB*.

⁵³ C] The pious memory of our ... of one's ancestors.] *Absent in AB*.

⁵⁴ C] Such a cult] This new cult **A**] This cult **B**.

⁵⁵ E] Cf. Acts 9: 15—"But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

In these seen forms of the unseen, the Deity Itself is known and glorified. Those individuals in whom the definite forms of providential action embodied in history fail to arouse gratitude, respect and reverence will be even less responsive to the pure ideas⁵⁶ of Providence. A genuine religious attitude towards what is higher is impossible for someone who has experienced the feelings expressed by the poet:

When, from an intoxication with crime,
The depraved mob sets out in a rage,
And evil genius is glad to drag through the mud
Men with great names.

My knees are bent,
And my head is bowed
I call the commanding shadows
And I read their messages.

In the shadow of the mysterious temple
Learning through waves of incense
To heed the words of mentors

And forgetting the rumble of the people
Trusting the noble thought
They breathe with a mighty sigh.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ C] the pure ideas] the abstract conception **AB**.

⁵⁷ E] Fet 1901, vol. 1: 84.

[119]Chapter 5

On Virtues

I

Each of the moral foundations I have established—shame, pity and religious feeling—can be examined from three sides: as a *virtue*, as a *rule* of action, and as the condition of a certain good.

Thus, with respect to shame we distinguish, above all, people who are by nature modest and shameless,¹ approving the first and censuring the second. Consequently, *modesty* is recognized as a good natural² quality, or a virtue. However, it is thereby abstracted from specific cases and³ elevated into a *norm*, or a general rule of action (and, through this, also serves as a basis for the *evaluation* of actions), independently of this virtue's presence or absence in this or that person. If modesty is not something that can be good in one case yet bad in another (as, for example, a loud voice in a public assembly is good but bad in the room of a sleeping patient), i.e.,⁴ if modesty is in itself a moral good, then reason demands that in every case we⁵ act in accordance with it, namely, that we *abstain* from all shameful actions, i.e., those that express the predominance of the lower nature over the higher, and *practice* actions of the opposite character. Behavior conforming to this rule as a result leads to constant self-control, to freedom of the spirit and to the spirit's power over material existence. That is, it leads to a state that gives us a certain higher *satisfaction* and that is a moral good.

E] The original form of this chapter was first published with the subtitle "From my moral philosophy." In the first edition of the compiled work from 1897, Chap. 5 spans pp. 131–164.

¹ C] with respect to ... modest and shameless,] the ability to feel pity is, above all, the basis for distinguishing between modest and shameless people, **AB**.

² C] natural] *Absent in A*.

³ C] thereby abstracted from specific cases and] *Absent in AB*.

⁴ C] If modesty is ... patient), i.e.,] *Absent in AB*.

⁵ C] reason demands that in every case we] we must in every case **AB**.

Therefore, the ability to feel pity or compassion (as opposed to egoism, cruelty and rage) is, [120]in the first place, a good personal quality or virtue. Insofar as it is recognized, or approved of, as such, this ability serves as the norm, for an altruistic action in accordance with the rules of justice and mercy. Such action leads to the moral good of true social life, or solidarity, with others, and finally with all living creatures.

In the same way, a feeling of gratitude to that which is higher, and upon which we depend, is the natural foundation of that virtue called piety.⁶ It, thereby, also gives a rational⁷ rule for religious behavior, and it leads to the moral good of solidarity with the original causes and bearers of existence, viz., with our ancestors, with the deceased in general and with the entire unseen world that from this point of view⁸ conditions our life.

With an inseparable and intrinsic connection between a given virtue, the rules of action corresponding to it and the moral good resulting from this action, there is no need for us to adopt all of these points of view each time we examine⁹ some ethical content more closely. It is enough to limit ourselves to one, viz., the point of view of virtue, since the other two are logically contained in it. As a consequence of this, it is impossible to carry out a sharp demarcation between them. In fact, it is impossible to deny the virtuosity of a person who invariably acts in accordance with the rules of virtue, even if this person possesses the corresponding natural faculty only to a weak degree or even is noted for the opposite faculty. On the other hand, in contrast to virtue what I call a moral good is also a virtue—though not as an originally given, but as an acquired, state. It is *a norm of activity that has been transformed in us into our second nature*.

II

A virtuous person is a person *as he or she ought to be*. In other words, virtue is the normal, or *proper, relation* of a person to everything (because it is impossible to think of unrelated qualities or properties). A proper relation is not a relation of equality. In distinguishing oneself from another, we necessarily¹⁰ posit or determine this other in three ways: either as *lower* (in essence), or as *similar* to us (of the same kind), or as *higher* than us. [121]Obviously, there cannot be a fourth possibility.¹¹ From this, the three-fold character of the proper, or moral, relation *logically* follows. For clearly to treat that which is lower (let's say, an inclination of one's

⁶ C] natural foundation of that virtue called piety.] foundation of that virtue called piety (*pietas*).
AB.

⁷ C] rational] *Absent in AB.*

⁸ C] from this point of view] *Absent in AB.*

⁹ C] examine] review **AB.**

¹⁰ C] necessarily] *Absent in AB.*

¹¹ C] Obviously, there cannot be a fourth possibility.] *Absent in AB.*

material nature) as if it were higher (say, a prescription of the divine will) would by no means be the *proper* relation. It would be precisely contrary to what is proper if we were to treat a being similar to ourselves (say, a human) either as lower (looking at him as a soulless thing)¹² or as higher (seeing him as a deity).

Thus, we have not one, but three proper, or moral, relations, that is, three kinds of virtue, corresponding to the three spheres into which the totality of objects is¹³ necessarily divided in relation to us. This is *necessarily* the case, because we find ourselves to be neither the unconditionally supreme, or highest, being nor the unconditionally subordinate, or lowest. Nor, finally, are we the only one of our kind. We are aware that we are an *intermediate* being, and, besides, *one of many* intermediate beings. From this, the triplicity of our moral relations follows as a direct logical consequence. By virtue of this, one and the same quality or manifestation can have a completely different or even opposite significance, depending on the kind of object it is a matter of. Thus, when it is a matter of objects of greater dignity, belittling oneself or recognizing one's worthlessness is called *humility* and is a virtue, but in relation to worthless objects it is called meanness and is immoral. In precisely the same way, *enthusiasm* is, without doubt, a virtue when it is aroused by the highest principles and ideals. With respect to unimportant objects, however, it is a ridiculous weakness, and when directed to objects of a lower order it becomes a shameful mania. Thus, virtues, in the proper sense, are always and in everyone the same, because in essence they express a quality that is properly determined, or that corresponds to the very sense of one or another of the three possible spheres of relations in life. From these determinate and determining virtues, we must distinguish qualities of the will and types of action that do not have in themselves a moral determination or do not constantly correspond to a certain sphere of duty. This is why they can at one time be virtues, at another indifferent states, and at yet another time [122]even vices. However, the change in moral significance is not always accompanied by a corresponding change in our designation for the given psychological property.¹⁴

It is clear, therefore, that even should we not find in our psychic experience the three fundamental moral feelings of shame, pity and reverence, it would be necessary on the basis of logic alone to divide the full scope of moral relations¹⁵ into three spheres or accept the three fundamental types of virtue as expressive of our proper human relation to what is lower than us, what is similar or like us and what is above us.

¹² C] a soulless thing]) a slave without any rights) **AB**.

¹³ C] the totality of objects is] all the spheres are **AB**.

¹⁴ C] Thus, virtues, in the proper sense ... given psychological property.] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁵ C] full scope of moral relations] entire moral sphere **AB**.

III

In addition to the moral foundations we have recognized, viz., shame, pity and reverence for the higher, if we look over all the other qualities that have been considered virtuous in antiquity and in modernity, not a single one of them would *in itself* deserve this designation. Each of these various qualities can rightfully be considered a virtue only when it accords with the objective norms of a proper relation, expressed in the three kinds of fundamental moral data we mentioned. Thus, *abstinence*, or *moderation*, has the dignity of a virtue only when it refers to *shameful* states and actions, restricting or pushing them aside. Virtue does not require that we be abstinent or moderate *in general*, or in everything, but only that we abstain from what is *below* our human dignity and that would be shameful for us to accept unhindered. However, if someone is moderate in seeking the truth or abstains from showing kindness to his neighbors, no one would consider or call such a person virtuous for doing this. On the contrary, he or she is condemned for lacking generous aspirations. It follows from this that moderation is not in itself, or fundamentally, a virtue but becomes or does not become one depending on its proper or improper application to these or those objects. In the same way, *bravery*, or *courage*, is a virtue only to the extent that it expresses the proper relation, namely of mastery and power, of a rational human being to one's lower material nature, an elevation of the spirit over the [123]animal instinct of self-preservation.¹⁶ Valiant bravery is shown by a person who does not tremble at accidental disasters, who keeps one's self-control in the face of external dangers and boldly risks one's own life and material goods for the sake of higher and more worthy goods. However, the *bravest* expression of outrageous behavior, the *boldest* aggressiveness and the most *intrepid* blaspheming are not praised as virtues, nor is the dread of sin or the fear of God considered shameful cowardice. This means that the property of being virtuous or vicious depends upon a fitting relation to the object, and not on the psychological quality of emotional and volitional states.¹⁷

The third of the so-called cardinal (fundamental) virtues,¹⁸ *wisdom* is the understanding of the best ways and means for attaining set goals and the skills to apply these means properly. It attains the significance of a virtue as a result of this formal capacity for the most expedient action, but that significance also necessarily depends on the worth of these very goals.¹⁹ Wisdom as a virtue is the ability to attain

¹⁶ F] Concerning this virtue, see above, Chap. 2, pp. 48–49. C] *Entire note absent in A.*

¹⁷ C] quality of emotional and volitional states.] subjective quality of the states. **AB.**

¹⁸ F] From the earliest days of the scholastics, the designation “cardinal” or “*philosophic* virtues” (as opposed to the three *theological* ones of faith, hope and charity) has been reserved for the four virtues Plato mentioned in his *Republic*, namely, abstinence, courage, wisdom and justice. By the way, I understand these four virtues in their general sense, independently of the special sense they can have in Plato's theory. C] *Entire note absent in A*] E] abstinence, courage, wisdom and justice.] See Plato 1963b: 669 (4: 427e) and 675 (4.433b).

¹⁹ C] these very goals.] *Footnote added at this point in A alone:* I take these virtues in their general sense, independent of any special definitions that they may have in some philosophical systems.

the *best* goals in the *best* way, or the skill of applying one's mental powers to objects of the greatest worth in the most expedient way. There could be wisdom without this latter condition, but it would not be a virtue. The biblical "serpent" was certainly justified in being called the wisest of earthly creatures by its understanding of the nature of the human psyche and by the skill with which it used this understanding to achieve its goals.²⁰ However, since the goal itself was not a moral good, all of the serpent's superior²¹ wisdom was not recognized as a virtue, but was cursed as the source of evil. The wisest creature has remained the symbol of the immoral, creeping [124]mind, which quibbles only about what is base and unworthy. In everyday life, the worldly wisdom that goes no further than understanding human weaknesses and the skillful organization of personal matters in accordance with egoistic goals is not²² recognized as a virtue.

The concept of *justice* (the fourth fundamental virtue) is taken in four different senses. In its broadest sense, "just" is a synonym for proper, correct, normal, or right in general—not only in the moral sphere (concerning action and the will), but also in the intellectual sphere (concerning cognition and thinking). We say, for example, "You reason *justly*" or "*Cette solution (d'un problème mathématique ou métaphysique) est juste.*" In such a sense, the concept of justice, approaching that of validity,²³ is wider than the concept of virtue and belongs to theoretical more than to practical philosophy. In a second, more specific sense, justice (*aequitas*) corresponds to the fundamental principle of altruism, which demands that we recognize the right to life and well-being for all others as much as we individually recognize it for ourselves. In this sense, justice is not just another *particular* virtue. Rather, it is merely the logical objective expression of the same moral principle that is subjectively, or psychologically, expressed in the fundamental feeling of pity (compassion, sympathy). A third sense of "justice" arises when we distinguish between degrees of altruism (that is, of a moral relation to those similar to us), and, properly speaking, we reserve the designation "justice" (*justitia*) for the first, negative stage ("harm no one"). The second, positive stage, which demands that we "help everyone," is designated by the word "charity" (*caritas, charité*). As we already pointed out earlier (in the third chapter),²⁴ this distinction is only relative.²⁵ It is, in any case, inadequate to isolate justice as a separate virtue. For no one would call a person "just" who decisively refuses to help anyone or refuses to alleviate anyone's suffering, even if he or she does not directly injure one's neighbors through violence. The *moral* motive in both of these latter cases, i.e., in abstaining from injuring and in not rendering assistance, is one and the same, namely, a recognition of the right of others to life and well-being. Additionally, it is impossible to find any moral motive

²⁰ E] See Genesis 3: 1–5.

²¹ C] since the goal itself was not a moral good, all of the serpent's superior] this superior **AB**.

²² C] goals is not] goals and practical materialism is not **AB**.

²³ C], approaching that of validity,] *Absent in AB*.

²⁴ C] (in the third chapter)] *Absent in AB*.

²⁵ C] is only relative.] *Footnote here only in A*: cf. "Pity and altruism," (*Knizhki nedelja*, March 1895).

that [125] would force someone to stop precisely *here* at this halfway point and be satisfied with merely the negative side of this moral demand. For these reasons, it is clear that such a break, or limitation, cannot in any way correspond to any particular virtue, but merely expresses a *lesser degree* of the general altruistic virtue (namely, the feeling of sympathy). Here, there is no generally obligatory and constant measure for the greater or the lesser. Rather, in each case our evaluation depends on concrete conditions. When the moral awareness of a community reaches a certain level of development, conscience directly condemns the refusal to *help* a person as *wrong*, even if the person is a complete stranger or even an enemy. This is quite logical. For, in general, if I *ought* to help my neighbor, then by not helping him or her I thereby wrong this person. Even at the lower stage of moral awareness, a refusal to help, within certain limits, is equivalent to a wrong and a crime—for example, within a family, a tribe, a military detachment. Among barbarian peoples, where everything is permissible towards enemies in such a way that the very idea of wrong is inapplicable to them, a peaceful traveler or guest has a *right* to the most active help and generous gifts.²⁶ However, if justice prescribes charity or demands mercy (among barbarians only towards some, and with the progress of morality towards all), it is clear that such justice is not a separate virtue, distinct from mercy, but only the direct expression of the general moral principle of altruism, which has different degrees and applicable forms, but which always contains the idea of justice.

Finally, the word “justice” is used in yet a fourth sense. Supposing that *laws* (both governmental and of the church) objectively express moral truth, unswerving adherence to these laws also imposes an absolute moral obligation, and a corresponding inclination to adhere rigorously to laws of all types is regarded as a virtue identical with that of justice. Such a view is applicable only within the limits of our assumption, that is, it is applicable only to laws that proceed from Divine perfection and therefore express the highest truth. To all others, it is applicable only insofar as they agree with this truth. For it is proper that we should listen to God more than to people. Therefore, justice in this sense, i.e., as an aspiration [126] for *legality*, is not in itself a virtue. It may or may not be a virtue depending on the nature and the origin of the laws that demand obedience. For the source of human laws is vague. The transparent stream of moral truth is hardly visible in it under the deposits²⁷ of other, purely historical elements, which express only the factual correlation of forces and interests at one moment or another. This is why justice as a virtue by no means always coincides with legality, or judicial right, and sometimes directly contradicts it, as jurists themselves are aware:²⁸ *summum jus—summa injuria*.²⁹ However, fully recognizing the difference and the possible conflict between inner moral truth and the law, many suppose that such a conflict should always be settled in favor of

²⁶ C] and generous gifts.] help and generous gifts (a classical example—Odysseus in Phaeacia). **AB.**

²⁷ C] deposits] mass **A.**

²⁸ C] it, as jurists themselves are aware:] it. Jurists themselves know well the thesis: **AB.**

²⁹ E] *summum jus—summa injuria*] Latin: “the more Justice, the more injustice”. (That is, laws strictly interpreted yield the height of injustice.) Cicero 1991: 14 (*De officiis*, I, X, 33).

legality, that in every case justice demands submission to the law, even if that law is unjust. In support of such an opinion, they refer to the authority and example of the righteous Socrates from antiquity, who considered it inadmissible to flee from the lawful, albeit unjust, verdict of the Athenian judges against him. However, this famous example, in fact, says something quite different.

As far as we know from Xenophon and Plato, it was chiefly two different motives that led Socrates to his decision. In the first place, he held it would be a shameful act of cowardice to flee and thereby save the small remainder of the life that he, as a 70-year-old man, could expect, particularly since he believed in the immortality of the soul and taught that true wisdom is a continual *dying* (to the material world). In the second place, Socrates held that *for the sake of filial piety* a citizen should sacrifice *his personal welfare* to the laws of his fatherland, even if they are unjust. This is why asceticism and piety as moral motivations, and certainly not some unconditional significance of legality, which he never recognized, guided Socrates. In his case, there was no conflict between the two obligations, but only a conflict between a personal *right* and a civic *obligation*. In principle, we can accept that right must yield. No one is obliged to defend *one's* material life. It is merely one's right, and to sacrifice it is always permissible and sometimes commendable. However, it is a different matter when [127]the civic duty of obedience to law conflicts not with a personal right, but with a moral obligation. For example, there is the famous classical example of Antigone, who had to choose between a religio-moral obligation to give her brother an honorable funeral and her civic obligation to obey a dishonorable and inhuman prohibition to give him one. Since the prohibition stemmed from the legitimate authority of her native city, it was legally just. Here, the rule comes into effect: We should obey God more than men. It clearly turns out that justice, in the sense of legality, i.e., formally legitimate behavior, is not in itself a virtue, but can become such, or not such, depending on the circumstances. This is why the heroism of Socrates, who yielded to an unjust law, and the heroism of Antigone, who violated such a law, are equally commendable. Both cases are commendable not just because there was a sacrifice of life in both, but from the very nature of the concern. Socrates yielded *his* material right for the sake of the higher *ideas*³⁰ of human dignity and patriotic duty. Antigone, however, affirmed *another's* right and thereby fulfilled her obligation, for her brother's funeral was *his* right. She viewed the funeral as an obligation, whereas Socrates was in no way obligated to escape his prison. In general, *pietas erga patriam*,³¹ as well as *pietas erga parentes*,³² can oblige us only to sacrifice a right of our own, but in no way that of another. For example, let us assume that filial piety, carried to the point of heroism, prompts someone not to oppose one's father, who intends to kill him or her. The moral value of such heroism can be disputed, but it would never occur to anyone to justify or consider heroic a person who considers oneself duty-bound to obey one's father and kill one's brother or sister. Precisely the same thing applies to unjust and inhuman

³⁰ C] *ideas*] *considerations* A.

³¹ E] Latin: love for one's fatherland.

³² E] Latin: love for one's parents.

laws. It follows from this that justice in the sense of obedience to laws, as such, according to the motto *fiat justitia, pereat mundas*,³³ is still not a virtue.

IV

The three so-called theological virtues recognized in patristic ethics (that of the Church Fathers) and in scholasticism, viz., faith, [128]hope, and love,³⁴ also have in themselves no unconditional moral worth, but depend on other facts. Not all *faith* is a virtue for theologians. A faith that either has a nonexistent or unworthy object or that treats what is worthy as unworthy is not a virtue. So, in the first case, if someone firmly believes in the philosopher's stone, i.e., in a powder, liquid or gas that transforms all metals into gold, such a faith in an object that by the nature of things is nonexistent is not held to be a virtue, but a self-delusion.³⁵ For a second case, let us assume someone not just recognizes—with good reason—the existence of the power of evil as a fact, but with confidence and devotion makes this power the object of faith and entering into an agreement sells his foul³⁶ soul, etc. Referring to an object that, although it exists, is unworthy and pernicious, such faith is justly considered a terrible moral degradation. Finally, in the third case the faith of the devils themselves, of whom the apostle says that they believe (in God) and tremble,³⁷ is not considered a virtue. For although it refers to an object that exists and that is absolutely worthy, this faith refers to its object in an unworthy manner (instead of joy with horror, and instead of desire with disgust). Thus, only *a faith in a higher being* that regards this being in *a worthy manner*, namely, with free filial piety, can be considered a virtue. Such a faith fully coincides with the religious feeling that we find as one of the three original bases of morality.³⁸

The second theological virtue, *hope*, essentially amounts to the same thing. It is not a virtue when someone relies on his own strength or wisdom, or “on princes, or on the son of man,”³⁹ or on God when it is in the expectation of obtaining material goods from Him. Hope is considered a virtue only if it regards God as the source of

³³ E] Latin: Let justice be done, though the world be destroyed. This motto is commonly ascribed to Ferdinand I (1503–1564), Holy Roman Emperor, King of Bohemia and Hungary.

³⁴ F] On the basis of a well-known text by St. Paul, in which, by the way, the term “virtue” does not occur. E] Cf. “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”—1 Corinthians 13: 13. Note that in the King James version, quoted here, the Greek word *ἀγάπη* is translated “charity,” whereas most more recent versions of the Bible render it as “love.”

³⁵ C] self-delusion.] folly. **AB.**

³⁶ C] foul] *Absent in A.*

³⁷ F] James 2: 19.

³⁸ C] bases of morality.] *Footnote here only in A:* cf. “Religious principle of morality,” *Knizhki nedelja*, April 1895.

³⁹ E] Cf. “in princes, nor in the son of man”—Psalm 146: 3.

the true good to come. This is the same basic religious attitude,⁴⁰ though modified by an idea of the future and a feeling of expectation.

[129] Finally, the moral significance of the third and greatest theological virtue—*love*—depends solely on the given objective determinations. Love in itself, or love in general, is not a virtue, for otherwise all creatures without exception would be virtuous, since all of them necessarily love something⁴¹ and live by their love. However, egoistic love for oneself and for one's own possessions, as well as passionate love for nature and for unnatural pleasures, love for drink and love for horse racing, are not regarded as virtuous.

"*Il faut en ce bas monde aimer beaucoup de choses*,"⁴² suggests a neo-pagan poet. Such "love" was earlier rejected by the apostle of love:

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.⁴³

This is the first, negative part of the commandment of love, and we should not forget about it, as is usually the case. It is nothing other than the expression of the basic principle of asceticism: Protect oneself from one's lower nature and counteract its clutches. For, as we clearly see from the context, the apostle took the world to be neither the collection of our fellow human beings nor the totality of the works that herald the glory of God, but precisely only the dark and nonsensical basis of material nature that escapes its proper, passive and potential state and unlawfully invades the sphere of the human spirit. It is bluntly said here that everything in⁴⁴ the world is a *lust of the flesh*,⁴⁵ i.e., a desire for immeasurable sensuality, *lust of the eyes*⁴⁶, i.e., greed, or self-interest, and *pride of life*, i.e., vanity and ambition.

Biblical ethics adds to the negative prescription, *love not the world*, two positive ones, *love God with all your heart* and *love your neighbor as you love yourself*.⁴⁷ These two loves are correctly distinguished, for the particular nature of the objects necessarily conditions the particular nature of our proper moral relation to them. Love for our neighbors is rooted in pity, whereas our love for God is rooted in reverence. To love one's neighbor as one loves oneself really means to pity him or her just as one does oneself, and love for God with all of one's heart means to be entirely devoted to Him, the complete [130]unification of one's will with the Divine will, i.e., the perfection of the filial, or religious, feeling and relation.

⁴⁰ C] attitude] feeling **AB**.

⁴¹ C] something] *Absent in AB*.

⁴² E] French: "Here below, it is necessary to love many things"—from a sonnet entitled "A. M. V. H." by Alfred de Musset (1810–1857). Solov'ëv's citation is somewhat faulty. The line should read: "Il faut, dans ce bas monde, aimer beaucoup de choses." See de Musset 1867: 129.

⁴³ F] 1 John 2: 15.

⁴⁴ C] everything in] *Absent in A*.

⁴⁵ E] 1 John 2: 15.

⁴⁶ E] 1 John 2: 16.

⁴⁷ E] Cf. Mathew 22: 37–39.

Therefore, the commandment of love is not connected with any individual virtue, but is the ultimate expression of all the fundamental demands of morality in the three necessary spheres: our relations to that which is lower, our relations to that which is higher, and our relations to that which is on the same level.

V

Having shown that the four “cardinal” as well as the three “theological” virtues in one way or another amount to the three original bases of⁴⁸ morality mentioned earlier and do not represent independent sources of moral activity, I can let the morally good will and quick wits of the reader continue the investigation into the use of the other so-called virtues. A generally recognized list of such virtues does not exist, and, by means of scholastic distinctions, their number could be augmented indefinitely. Merely as a sort of “supplementary” addition to the preceding, I would like to say a few words about the five virtues in which a certain interest has been shown in this or that respect, namely, about *magnanimity*, *unselfishness*, *generosity*, *patience* and *truthfulness*.

Magnanimous is what we call a person who finds it *beneath one’s dignity*, or is ashamed, to insist on one’s material rights to the detriment of others, or whose will is decided by *lower* worldly interests (for example, vanity), which he or she, without difficulty, sacrifices for the sake of higher considerations. Magnanimous is also what we call a person who is unperturbed by repeatedly enduring worldly troubles and disasters, because one finds it *shameful* to have the tranquility of one’s spirit depend on material contingencies. The emphasized words point to the fact that this virtue is merely a special expression, or manifested form, of our first moral foundation, viz., the self-assertion of the human spirit against the lower, material side of our being. The entire point here is the feeling of human dignity, which is originally expressed in the simple feeling of shame.

Unselfishness is the spiritual freedom from any attachment to a special [131]sort of material goods, viz., those termed possessions. It is clear that this is a particular expression of that same feeling of human dignity. Corresponding to it, we have the vices of stinginess and greed, which are its opposite and which are recognized as *shameful*.

In its external manifestations, *generosity* coincides with magnanimity and unselfishness but has another, inner foundation—an altruistic one. A virtuous, generous person is one who out of *justice or love for other human beings* shares his or her possessions with others (because, insofar as one does this out of vanity or arrogance it is not a virtue). However, such a person can also be attached to the possession he or she gives away to the point of stinginess. In that case, it is impossible, strictly speaking, to call him or her disinterested. Therefore, we should say simply that in him the altruistic virtue of generosity prevails over the vice of selfishness.

⁴⁸ C] bases of] bases (elements) of A.

Patience (as a virtue) is merely the passive side of the mental quality that in its active manifestation is called magnanimity, or spiritual courage. The distinction between them lies almost entirely in subjective nuances, which cannot be firmly demarcated. One and the same person who calmly endures troubles and suffering may be called by some magnanimous, by others patient, by yet another group courageous, and by yet a fourth group an example of a special virtue—tranquility (*αταραξία*), etc. A dispute over the comparative worth of these definitions can only be of lexical but not ethical interest. On the other hand, the identity of the external attributes here can also conceal (as it did in the previous case with generosity) essential differences in the ethical content. Owing to a low nervous sensitivity, a dull mind and an apathetic temperament, a person can patiently bear physical and mental suffering. In such a case, patience is not a virtue. In another case, owing to an inner spiritual force that does not succumb to external influences, patience is an ascetic virtue (reducible to our first moral foundation). In still yet another case, owing to a gentleness and love for one's neighbor (*caritas*), which does not wish to reward evil with evil and an offense with another offense, patience is an altruistic virtue (reducible to the second foundation, viz., pity, which extends here even to one's enemies and offenders). Finally, patience can arise from [132]obedience to the higher will, on which depends all that takes place. In this case, it is a pietistic, or religious, virtue (reducible to the third foundation).

A special variety of patience is the quality bearing in the Russian language the grammatically incorrect designation “*terpimost*”—tolerance—(*passivum pro activo*).⁴⁹ This term designates the admission of the other person's freedom, even though it is assumed that it leads to theoretical and practical errors. This attribute and attitude is in itself neither a virtue nor a vice but can in various cases be one or the other, depending upon the object. (For example, an exultant crime of the powerful over the weak should not be tolerated. This is why “tolerance” of it is not virtuous, but immoral.) However, it chiefly depends upon inner motives which here can be either magnanimity or cowardice, either respect for the rights of others or disregard for the good of others, either profound confidence in the conquering power of the higher truth or an indifference to this truth.⁵⁰

VI

Among the derivative, or secondary, virtues *truthfulness* should be recognized as the most important, both because of its specifically human character (for, in the precise sense, it is possible only for linguistic beings)⁵¹ and because of its significance

⁴⁹ E] Latin: passive instead of active.

⁵⁰ F] For a more detailed discussion of this cf. the beginning of my article “*Spor o spravedlivosti*” E] See SS, vol. 6: 442–455.

⁵¹ F] Animals can be naive or cunning, but only a person can be truthful or untruthful.

for social morality. At the same time, this virtue has served and is still serving as the subject of particular disputes between moralists of different directions.

Words are an instrument of reason for expressing what is, what can be, and what should be, i.e., for the expression of the real, the formal and the ideal truth. The possession of such an instrument is a part of higher human nature. Therefore, when a person misuses it by expressing something that is not true for the sake of lower, material goods, he does something contrary to human dignity, something that is *shameful*. At the same time, words are the expression of human solidarity. [133] They are the most important means of intercourse between people, but this holds only with respect to truthful words. This is why the use of words by an individual to express an untruth for the sake of egoistic goals (not only individually egoistic, but also collectively egoistic, e.g., concerning solely a particular family, class or party, etc.), is a violation of the rights of others (since words are communal property) and harms the community. A falsehood, therefore, is shameful for the liar and at the same time injurious and harmful to the one who is deceived. Thus, the demand for truthfulness has a dual moral foundation. First, it is based on the human *dignity* of the very subject, and, secondly, on *injustice*, i.e., on the recognition of the rights of others not to be deceived by me to the extent that I myself cannot wish to be deceived by them.

All of this is rationally deduced, and there is nothing doubtful about it. However, scholastic philosophy has abstracted the demand for truthfulness from its moral foundations and converted it into a *special* virtue that, taken *separately*, has an unconditional significance. It has, thereby, created contradictions and bewilderment, which are not an essential part of the matter. If a falsehood is understood to be a contradiction of the truth in the full sense of the word, i.e., not only of real and formal truth, but principally also of the ideal, or purely moral, truth (of what *should* be), then it would be perfectly correct and indisputable to attach unconditional significance to the principle “Do not say something false” such that no exceptions are allowed under any circumstances. For clearly truth ceases to be truth if there is even one case in which a departure from it is permitted. No questions could arise here—at least none between people who understand that $A=A$ and $2 \times 2=4$. However, the fact is that the philosophers who, in particular, insist that the principle “Do not say something false” admits of no exception are themselves guilty of hypocrisy by arbitrarily limiting the significance of truth (in each given case) to the real alone, or, more precisely, to the factual, aspect of the matter, i.e., *taken in isolation*. Adhering to this point of view, they come to the following absurd dilemma (I adduce the following commonly cited example as the simplest and clearest): Let us assume someone with no other means to hinder a murderer in pursuit of an innocent victim hides this intended victim in his house. When the murderer asks whether the intended victim is there, the person gives a negative answer or, to sound more [134]convincing, “throws him off” by pointing to a quite different location. Two possibilities exist here: In lying in this manner, the person acts either in accordance with moral duty or contrary to it. If we take the first possibility seriously, then breaking the moral commandment *not to lie* is permissible and morality is thereby stripped of its unconditional significance. A door is open to justify every kind of evil. If we take the second possibility seriously, i.e., that the person, by saying something false,

has sinned,⁵² then it appears that the moral duty to tell the truth has obliged him in fact to become an undisputable accessory to the murder, which is equally contrary to both reason and our sense of morality. In such a situation, there can be no middle course of action. To refuse to answer the murder or to give an evasive answer would, of course, merely confirm the murder's suspicion and would ultimately give away the victim.⁵³

As is well known, such great moralists as Kant and Fichte insisted on the unconditional and formal character of moral prescriptions thinking that even in such circumstances telling a lie is impermissible, and that, as a consequence, the interrogated person is dutifully obliged to tell the truth without considering the consequences, which (supposedly) are not one's responsibility. Other moralists—those who reduce all of morality to the feeling of sympathy or the principle of altruism—think telling a lie is permissible and is in general even obligatory in order⁵⁴ to save others and for the sake of their well-being. Such a principle, though, is too broad and indefinite. It opens the door to all sorts of abuse.⁵⁵

How are we, however, to answer the question: Should or should not this unfortunate person say something that is false? When the two horns of some dilemma equally lead to an absurdity, it means that the very formulation of the dilemma contains something wrong. In the problem before us, what is wrong is our reliance on the ambiguity of the word “falsehood” (“false, “to lie”), which is taken here as though it had only one sense or as though one of the senses necessarily also contains the other, something which in fact is not the case. Therefore, the main term is *falsely* understood at the very start of the argument, and this is why no conclusions, except false ones, can come from it.

Let us analyze this in detail, and let the reader not complain about a certain punctiliousness in our investigation: The very question before us [135]arose only because of the scholastic pedantry of abstract moralists.

According to its formal definition, a falsehood is a contradiction between someone's assertions⁵⁶ concerning some fact and the actual existence, or manner of existence, of this fact. However, this formal conception of a falsehood has no direct bearing on morality. Sometimes an assertion that contradicts reality is merely *erroneous*, and in that case its falsehood is, in fact, limited merely to the objective (or, more precisely, the phenomenal) sphere, without in the least affecting the moral

⁵² C] , by saying something false, has sinned] had to tell the truth **AB**.

⁵³ E] See Kant 1996b: 612–613.

⁵⁴ C] obligatory in order] obligatory in this and similar cases, i.e., in order **AB**.

⁵⁵ C] Such a principle . . . sorts of abuse.] Such a principle falls under the broad banner of morality on which Orientals inscribe “divinely inspired craftiness” and Westerners “*ad majorem Dei gloriam*.” Instead, these moralists propose merely the practical variant, “*ad majus proximi bonum*.” **AB** E] *ad majorem Dei gloriam*] Latin: for the greater glory of God—Latin motto of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits).

⁵⁶ F] This general definition, obviously, must include both affirmations and denials. This is why I had to resort to the seldom used Russian word for “assertion” (*iz'javlenie*), which encompasses both. The words “*judgment*” and “*proposition*” have nuances that are unacceptable in the present case.

aspect of the subject. Here, in other words, there is no lie in the moral sense: To make a mistake is not an attempt at deceit. Let us start with an extreme case. There is no cessation of truthfulness when⁵⁷ a person, through absent-mindedness, tells a cock-and-bull story or, as in the well-known anecdote about a German who, instead of saying that he prepared a cup of tea, confuses English words with German and says instead “I became a cup of tea.”⁵⁸ However,⁵⁹ aside from linguistic errors, the same should also be said about errors of thought, or mistakes.

Many people have claimed (and are now claiming), both in speech and in letters, things just as *false* (in the objective sense) as the transformation of a person into a cup of tea. However, they did and do this consciously—with the intention of saying precisely what they do say. If they, thereby, sincerely accept a falsehood for the truth, no one will call them liars or see anything immoral in their mistake. So, neither the contradiction between their words and reality nor the contradiction between their thoughts and reality constitutes a lie, a falsehood in the moral sense. Does it consist of a contradiction between the will and reality, as such, i.e., a simple intention to lie? However, we will never find such a simple intention. People (or at least those who can bear moral responsibility) lie for some reason or for something. Some lie to satisfy their vanity, some to announce themselves, to attract attention to themselves, or to be recognized; others, for the sake of some material consideration, deceive someone in order to reap a gain for [136]themselves. These two kinds of lying, the first of which is called boasting and the second cheating,⁶⁰ are subject to moral judging and condemnation, being⁶¹ shameful for the liar himself, and offensive and harmful to others. However, in addition to a vain lie or boast, a selfish lie or cheating,⁶² there is a more subtle sort of lie that has no obvious base goal and yet is subject to moral condemnation as being offensive to one’s neighbors, viz., lying out of contempt for humanity, beginning with the everyday “I am not home” and ending with complex, political, religious, and literary hoaxes. Strictly speaking, there is nothing shameful, in the narrow sense of the word, in such lying (of course, provided such a hoax is not done for material gain). However, it is immoral from the altruistic point of view as a violation of the rights of the deceived. The person who plays the hoax, obviously, does not like to be deceived and would consider a hoax played against him or her as an offensive violation of one’s own human rights. Consequently, one should respect the same right in others.

The example of a person who deceives the murderer in order to prevent a murder, obviously does not fall into the first types of immoral lying (i.e., it is neither a case

⁵⁷ C] There is no cessation of truthfulness when] This happens, for example, when **A**.

⁵⁸ E] “I became a cup of tea.”] *In English in the original.*

⁵⁹ C] However,] Objectively, such a claim should be seen as indubitably false in the highest degree, for it contradicts not only an individual fact about reality, but also the very nature of things. Nevertheless, no one would think to find here the slightest hint of a moral lie. However, **AB**.

⁶⁰ C] cheating] dishonest **A**.

⁶¹ C] condemnation, being] condemnation, as contrary to the demand to be truthful, being **AB**.

⁶² C] cheating,] dishonesty, **A**.

of boasting nor of selfish deceit).⁶³ Is there any chance of ascribing it to the last type, i.e., to an immoral hoax in the sense of seeing it as an offense against one's neighbors?⁶⁴ Are we not faced with a case of despising humanity in the person of the murderer, who, after all, is a person and should not be stripped of any⁶⁵ human rights? However, a right of the murderer to my complicity in the carrying out of a murder cannot be counted among these human rights. It is precisely such complicity and *it alone* that the murderer has in mind when asking about the whereabouts of his victim. Is it permissible for a moral person to create deliberate fabrications, particularly when it is matter of a person's life?⁶⁶ It would be nothing other than a deliberate fabrication⁶⁷ to suppose that with this question the murderer is at all concerned with the truth, that he is interested in knowing the truth and that, consequently, he *has a right*, like any other person, to a correct answer from those who know the truth. *In fact, the murderer's inquiry is surely nothing of the kind.* This inquiry does⁶⁸ not exist as a separate and independent act, expressing his curiosity concerning the factual whereabouts of his victim. It is merely an inseparable moment within a whole series of acts [137] that, as a whole, form an attempt to murder. An affirmative answer would⁶⁹ not be a fulfillment of a general obligation to tell the truth, but only a case of criminal *complicity*, thanks to which the attempt would be converted into an actual murder.

If our concern is truthfulness, then truthfulness demands, above all, that we take each case *as it is*, in its real integrity and its proper intrinsic sense. However, in our example, the words and actions of the murderer are combined, and they obtain their actual sense only from his intention to kill this person. Consequently, it is only in connection with this intention that we can truthfully appraise both his words and actions, as well as the relation of another person to them. Since we know the criminal intention, we have neither a theoretical basis nor any moral right to separate this person's question (and, consequently, our answer to it) from the object to which it *actually* refers.⁷⁰ This is *the uniquely truthful* point of view, and from it the murderer's question simply means: *Help me accomplish the murder.* If we disregard the real meaning of the question and attach to it—despite the evidence to the contrary—some relation to the truth, the precise answer would in fact simply be *false* from a theoretical perspective, and from the practical perspective it would mean *fulfilling the criminal demand*. “Throwing him off the scent” is the only possible way to *refuse* this demand. It is morally obligatory not only with respect to the victim, whose life it saves, but also with respect to the criminal, since it gives time for him to change his mind and give

⁶³ C] of immoral lying (i.e., ... of selfish deceit).] of lying. **A.**

⁶⁴ C] i.e., to an immoral ... one's neighbors?] *Absent in A.*

⁶⁵ C] any] all **AB.**

⁶⁶ C] Is it permissible ... a person's life?] Our conscience does not permit us to create a deliberate fiction (invention), particularly when it is a matter of a person's life. **AB.**

⁶⁷ C] fabrication] fiction **AB.**

⁶⁸ C] inquiry does] inquiry directed at me does **AB.**

⁶⁹ C] answer would] answer to his inquiry would **AB.**

⁷⁰ C] Since we know ... *actually* refers.] *Absent in A.*

up his criminal intention. We can speak even less here about a violation of rights. It would be too crude a mistake to confuse the request for criminal complicity with the right to hear the truth from someone who knows. It would be equally mistaken to insist that a person who, owing to moral obligation, prevented a murder by the only means possible, nevertheless lied and consequently acted wrongly. This would be to confuse the two senses of saying a “falsehood”—the formal and the moral—the essential distinction between which we indicated⁷¹ above.

Supporters of a pseudo-moral rigorism can still find a supposed shelter on a religious basis. Although no human right is violated by putting the murderer on the wrong track, is a divine right violated by doing this? If there exists a commandment [138] given from above “Do not tell falsehoods,” we are unconditionally obliged to obey it, leaving the consequences to the will of God. However, the fact is that the word of God contains no abstract commandment that forbids telling a falsehood in general or in the formal sense,⁷² whereas it undoubtedly does contain and does demand obedience to the commandment to sacrifice our own soul for our neighbor—and not just that our words be formally true. Is it possible, however, (from a mystical point of view) to find a means to obey the chief commandment to love, while avoiding a formal falsehood? Having surrendered the victim to the murderer, is it truly impossible then to turn to God with a prayer that He prevent the murder through some miraculous means? Although, contrary to all human probability, there are well-known cases of prayer producing just such a desired effect, this has happened only in extreme cases where no natural means remained. However, it would be a *profanity* of the highest degree to demand a miracle from God when you yourself can, by a simple and *harmless* means, prevent a disaster. It would be a different matter if the only human course of action left were immoral, but to mention here the immoral nature of telling a formal falsehood, as such would be to suppose precisely what must be proven and which logically cannot be proven. For such a supposition is again based on a confusion of two completely different concepts: a *falsehood* and a *lie*.⁷³ In the example before us, the answer to the murderer’s question is, undoubtedly, false. Nevertheless, we do not condemn it as a lie, since the fact that certain words *by themselves* formally express a *falsehood* is something that has nothing to do with morality and cannot be condemned by it. On the other hand, a lie can be morally condemned as the expression of an, in some sense, *immoral* intention. After all, how else could we distinguish it from a simple falsehood? In any case, in the present example, it is impossible to find any immoral intention, *in any sense*, and consequently,⁷⁴ any lie whatever.⁷⁵

⁷¹ C] indicated] have shown **AB**.

⁷² F] The commandment not to bear false witness against another, i.e., not to slander, does not concern us here, since it does not forbid telling falsehoods in general, but only an entirely definite type of lying that is always immoral. C] always] indisputably **AB**.

⁷³ C] is again based ... and a *lie*.] is again based on a confusion of concepts. **A**] is again based on a confusion of two completely different concepts: a *falsehood* in the formal sense and a *lie* in the moral sense. **B**.

⁷⁴ C] and consequently,] *Absent in B*.

⁷⁵ C] In the example ... any lie whatever.] *Absent in A*.

To conclude in a concise fashion, we can express our long argumentation in the following form. A formally false declaration, i.e., one that contradicts the facts pertaining to it, is not always a falsehood, in the moral sense, i.e., a lie,⁷⁶ [139]but becomes one only when it arises from an evil will that intentionally *misuses* words for its own ends. The evil nature of the will lies in its contradiction not with some fact, but with *what should be*. What should be is necessarily and fully determined in three respects: in relation to what is below us, what is similar to us, and what is above us. And it amounts to three demands: to subordinate our lower nature to the spirit, to respect the rights of those similar to us, and to be totally devoted to the Highest principle of the world. An expression of our will can be evil or immoral *only* when it violates one of these three obligations, i.e., when the will affirms or accepts something shameful (the first relation), something offensive (the second relation), or something profane (the third relation). However, the will of the person who puts the murderer off the track of his intended victim does not violate any of these three obligations. There is nothing shameful, offensive or profane in such a will. Thus, there is no falsehood here in the moral sense, no lie, no transgression of any commandment. In allowing evil to be prevented by such a means, we make no exceptions to the moral rule. For the reasons mentioned, we deny that the given case falls under the moral rule under which, contrary to the evidence, some want to subordinate it.

One of the sides in this dispute asserts that *since* what we have here is a falsehood, we should not use this *evil* means *even though* it would save someone's life. The other side replies that *although* we do have a falsehood here, the obligation to save another person's life is more important than that to tell the truth. Consequently, it is permissible to employ this means, albeit evil, to save a life. Both of these false solutions are equally eliminated by a third truth: *Since it is not here a matter of a falsehood* (in the moral sense), i.e., a lie, the use of this *innocent* means, which is necessary in order to prevent the murder, is, in the given example, *fully*⁷⁷ *obligatorily*.⁷⁸

[140]VII

Thus, the erection of truthfulness into a special formal virtue involves an internal contradiction and is rationally unacceptable.⁷⁹ Like all other "virtues," the moral quality of truthfulness is not contained within itself, but, rather, is obtained from its

⁷⁶ C] i.e., a lie] *Absent in AB.*

⁷⁷ C] fully] *unconditionally AB.*

⁷⁸ F] Although in examining this question Kant sides with the rigorists, his stance is inconsistent with his own principle, which demands that an act be capable of being raised to the level of a universal rule in order for its moral worth to be recognized. Clearly, in deceiving a murderer as to the location of the intended victim I can intelligently and honestly affirm my manner of action as a universal rule: Everyone should always hide in this way a murderer from his intended victim, and, putting myself in the murderer's shoes, I, as a moral being, can only wish that I be prevented in this way from committing murder.

⁷⁹ C] Thus, the erection ... rationally unacceptable.] *Absent in A.*

agreement with the fundamental norms of morality. Separated from them, a pseudo-truthfulness can be the source of falsehood, i.e., of false evaluations. It can stop with the demand that our words merely be an exact reflection of the external reality of individual facts, but that leads to patent absurdities.⁸⁰ From this point of view, a priest who tells exactly what was said in confession would satisfy the demand to be truthful. However, a genuine truthfulness demands that our words correspond to the inner *truth*, or sense, of a given situation, to which our will applies moral norms.

An analysis of the so-called virtues shows us that all of them have moral significance only to the extent that they are determined by the three norms of what should be. Although they themselves *rest psychologically* on the respective primary feelings of shame, pity and reverence, these norms do not have their ultimate factual⁸¹ foundation in these feelings, but are developed logically from the idea of *what should be*, or *truth* (in the broad sense). Such truth, moral truth, demands that we treat our lower nature as lower, i.e., that we subordinate it to our rational goals. If, on the contrary, we subordinate ourselves to our lower nature, we recognize it not as it is, in fact, but as something higher. In other words, we distort the true order of things. We violate the moral truth and treat this lower sphere improperly, i.e., immorally. In the same way, moral truth demands that we treat those similar to ourselves in the same fashion, namely, that we recognize their equality with us, that we place ourselves in their shoes. If, in recognizing ourselves as individuals with equal rights, we see others only as empty masks, then obviously we step back from the truth and our relationship is not [141]what it should be. Finally, if we are aware of a higher universal principle than ourselves, then moral truth demands that we treat it as higher, i.e., with religious respect. Any other attitude would contradict the true order of things and, consequently, would not be as it should.

Such an awareness of moral truth, or of what should be, certainly could not arise if the feelings of shame, pity, and reverence, which immediately determine our correct attitude to the three basic conditions of life, were not already inherent in human nature. However, after reason has deduced from these natural data their intrinsic ethical content and affirmed⁸² this content as *that which should be*, it becomes a principle of moral activity on its own, independent of its psychological bases.⁸³ One can picture to oneself a person who by nature has only a very poorly developed sense of modesty but who is rationally convinced that one's duty is to oppose the clutches of one's lower nature and conscientiously fulfill one's duty. In fact, such a person turns out, in this respect, to be more moral than the person who is modest by nature but whose mind is defenseless against the sensuous temptations that prevail over his or her modesty. The same is true concerning natural compassionateness (on which Kant dwelled) and natural religious feeling. Without a consciousness of duty, all natural inducements to moral action are precarious and lack decisive significance in the conflict between opposing motives.

⁸⁰ C] , but that leads to patent absurdities] *Absent in A.*

⁸¹ C] factual] *Absent in AB.*

⁸² C] affirmed] *decreed A.*

⁸³ F] Cf. *Critique of Abstract Principles*, p. 70. E] See PSS, vol. 3: 69.

However, does an awareness of what should be, i.e., of moral truth, have such a decisive power? If righteousness from natural inclinations is a *precarious* phenomenon, then righteousness from rational duty is the *rarest* of phenomena.⁸⁴ Therefore, the idea of *what should be* turns out, in the factual⁸⁵ sense, to lack the attributes of universality and necessity. The vital interest of moral philosophy, as well as the formal demand of reason, cannot be reconciled with this fact, and from this a new task for reason arises. This task is to find a practical principle that is not only something that should be, but is also something *desirable* to the highest degree both in itself and for everyone. It⁸⁶ would have in its essence the power [142]to determine human behavior with necessity, independently both of the natural⁸⁷ inclinations of the soul and of the degree of one's spiritual development—a principle that all people equally have and is understandable to and real for everyone.

When reason dwells exclusively or primarily on this aspect of the matter, then the moral good is understood as the highest good⁸⁸ (*summum bonum*), and the question takes the following form: Does the highest good exist, and what is involved in it, i.e., the one to which, as the absolute standard (criterion) of the *desirable in general*, all other goods are necessarily subordinate?

⁸⁴ C] If righteousness from ... of phenomena.] In fact, it does not. The dutifully righteous perhaps even less so than those naturally inclined towards righteousness. A] In fact, it does not. If righteousness from ... of phenomena. **B.**

⁸⁵ C] factual] real A] certain **B.**

⁸⁶ C] is not only something ... for everyone. It] *Absent in A.*

⁸⁷ C] the natural] the various natural **A.**

⁸⁸ C] understood as the highest good] understood not as what unconditionally ought to be, but as what unconditionally is desired or as the highest good **A.**

[143]Chapter 6

Pseudo Principles of Practical Philosophy

(A Critique of Abstract Eudaemonism in Its Various Forms)

I

Reason defines the moral good as truth (in the broad sense), i.e., as the proper relation to everything. This intrinsically all-encompassing and logically necessary idea of the moral good may turn out to be, in the concrete sense, i.e., in practice, devoid of universality and necessity. The moral good, as the ideal norm of the will, then does not in fact coincide with the (real) good, that is, with the object of an actual desire. The moral good is what should be, but (1) not everyone desires what should be; (2) among those who do desire the moral good, not all happen to be able to overcome the bad urges stemming from their own nature; and finally, (3) the few who have achieved within themselves a victory of the moral good over evil—the virtuous, righteous people or saints—are unable by means of their goodness to vanquish the evil in which the whole world lies.¹ To the extent that someone does not desire the moral good, however, it *is not a good* for him or her. Even though rational consciousness claims to desire something, if this something does not act on the will it is only a conceptual but not a *real* good. Finally, if the moral good does not give a person the power to realize what should be in the entire world, even though it affects this person's will and thereby makes him or her inwardly better, it *is not a sufficient good*.

This threefold divergence of the (moral) good from the (real) good, apparently, renders the idea of the moral good intrinsically self-contradictory. [144]In addition to its ideal content, the very definition of the moral good, as what should be the case, involves a real demand, viz., that its moral content should be not merely theoretical but *realized* in practice. By its very concept, what should be the case *should be real-*

E] The original form of this chapter was first published with the subtitle “The pseudo principles of correct behavior (A critique of the various forms of eudaemonism).” In the first edition of the compiled work from 1897, Chap. 6 spans pp. 165–192.

¹ E] the evil in which the whole world lies.] Cf. “...the whole world lieth in wickedness.” 1 John 5: 19. However, it should be recalled that Kant too opens his work *Religion within the boundaries of mere reason* quoting these words. Kant 1996d: 69.

ized. A moral good that is impotent is not a moral good. Moreover, it is impossible to acknowledge as proper, as the way it should be, the fact that only a *part* of humanity desires what should be, that very *few* live as they should and that *no one* can lead the world to the proper state of affairs. Conceptually, the moral good and the real good ought to coincide with each other. The latter ought to be the direct, universal and necessary outcome of the former and ought to represent the unconditional desirability and reality of the moral good. In fact, though, they do not coincide. The real good is distinguished from the moral good and, taken in isolation from the latter, is understood to be a *sense of well-being*. The real inadequacy of the idea of the moral good leads us to turn to this principle of well-being, a principle which, apparently, has, as an inducement to act, the factual universality and necessity that purely moral demands lack. The goal of any action that someone sets for oneself certainly has, either directly or indirectly, the characteristic that the attainment of the goal will satisfy the one who acts or will improve one's sense of well-being. On the other hand, it is certainly not the case that the goal of every action bears either directly or even only indirectly an indication of the moral good. Every desire, as such, is apparently only a desire for satisfaction, i.e., for a sense of well-being. To desire a calamity or dissatisfaction would be the same as to desire deliberately the undesirable, which is a straightforward absurdity. If it is the case that in order to be actually realized the moral good must itself become something desired, then the ethical principle depends on the practical (in the narrow sense) idea of the real good or a sense of well-being, which is set as the supreme principle of human action.

This eudaemonistic principle (from the Greek *ευδαιμονία*—state of bliss, a sense of well-being) has the obvious advantage that it does not raise the question: *Why?* We can ask why I should strive for the moral good when such striving conflicts with my natural inclinations and causes only pain in me. However, it is impossible to ask why I should desire my own well-being, because by my nature I cannot help but desire it. [145]Such a desire is inseparably a part of my existence and is a direct expression of it. I exist as someone who desires, and I certainly desire only what satisfies me or what pleases me. All of us think our sense of well-being is to be found either in what immediately provides satisfaction or in what leads to it, i.e., what serves as a means for achieving pleasing states. Therefore, the sense of well-being is best defined through the concept of *pleasure* (from the Greek *ἡδονή*, hence the doctrine of *hedonism*).

II

When what morally should be the case is replaced by what is desired, the goal of life or the highest good is reduced to pleasure. Although it has apparent clarity, simplicity and reality, this concept meets insuperable difficulties when applied in real situations. From the general fact that all of us want what is pleasing to us, no general principle or rule of action can be deduced. The fact is that the universality in the concept of pleasure is only of a formally logical or abstract nature and does not express any actual unity. The assertion that the ultimate goal of all actions (directly

or indirectly) is pleasure, i.e., the satisfaction of the person who acts, is indisputable. However, it is also as empty as, for example, the assertion that all actions end in something or that all actions are directed to something. In today's world, it is impossible to find a single universal pleasure,² but only an indeterminate number of all sorts of pleasures, which have nothing in common between themselves. One person finds the greatest delight in drinking vodka, while another seeks "the bliss for which there is neither name nor measure."³ However, even the latter forgets about all ulterior goods and wants food and drink above all else when he feels the pangs of extreme hunger or thirst. On the other hand, under certain conditions everything that once gave pleasure or seemed pleasant ceases to be attractive and even life itself loses all value.

In reality, the idea of pleasure has to do with a vast chaos of contingent inclinations, which differ depending on the characters and tastes of the individuals, their degrees of personal development, their [146]ages, social standings and present moods. What specific expression can be given to pleasure as a general practical principle? Could it be, perhaps, "Let everyone act in order to attain for himself as far as possible what is agreeable at the moment?" Generally speaking, although firmly established and more or less successfully employed in the animal kingdom, such a rule is awkward in human practice thanks to two circumstances: (1) the presence in humans of unnatural urges, which when satisfied yield the desired pleasure but also lead to clear and certain ruin, which for everyone is highly undesirable, and (2) the presence of human reason, which compares various (natural) inclinations and pleasures to each other and evaluates them with respect to their subsequent consequences. We find, by the way, such an evaluation in a rudimentary form in animals, which act or refrain from acting not only based on the incentive of an immediate pleasure or displeasure but also by considering further pleasing or displeasing consequences, which follow from this or that conduct. In animals, however, this consideration extends no further than simple associations. For example, the idea of a morsel of beef taken without permission is associated with the idea of a whipping, etc. Despite such quite simple considerations, owing to its more abstract character human reason can make general comparisons between the immediate motives of pleasure and its remote consequences. Following this train of thought, the most courageous representative of pure hedonism in ancient philosophy, Hegesias of Cyrenae, concluded that from the viewpoint of pleasure life in general is not worth living. He reasoned that seeking enjoyment is either unsuccessful, and thus painful, or having attained the goal the situation proves to be deceptive, since after a momentary feeling of satisfaction boredom and a new pursuit for deception inevitably follows. Since it is impossible to attain genuine pleasure, we should strive to free ourselves of displea-

² C] universal pleasure,] thing that everyone finds pleasurable, **AB**.

³ E] Fet 1901, vol. 2: 148. The poem is entitled "O, ne zovi!" Solov'ev provided the same quotation from Fet in the second of his *Lectures on Divine Humanity*. See PSS, vol. 4: 24, and cf. Solovyov 1995: 17.

sure, and the surest way to do this is to die. Such is Hegesias's conclusion,⁴ and for it he was nicknamed "*the advocate of death*" (*πεισιθνατος*). Even apart from such extreme conclusions, however, the inadequacy of "pleasure," as a principle, is clear from an analysis of the concept itself.

[147]III

Simply seeking pleasure cannot be a principle of action, because by itself it is indefinite and lacks content. What real content it does have lies only in the contingent objects that arouse it and thus is quite unstable. The only universal and necessary element in the infinite variety of possible pleasant states⁵ happens to be that the attainment of any goal or object of desire whatever is certainly felt and presented beforehand to be a pleasure, i.e., to be a satisfied or fulfilled desire. This extremely elementary psychological truth, however,⁶ contains neither the slightest indication of the nature of the object desired nor of the means to attain it. Both retain all of their empirical diversity and contingency, and the point of view of pleasure does not by itself give us any actual definition of the *highest good* to which all others should be subordinate. Consequently, it provides us with neither a principle nor a rule for action. We can clarify this matter even further if we look at pleasure not in its general sense as a satisfied desire, but in concrete instances, i.e., at particular pleasant sensations. Being merely the consequence of an urge, of an attained goal, and not the goal itself, these states do not happen to be desired in themselves. What is desired are certain, specific realities and not the pleasant sensations that arise from them. For someone who is hungry and thirsty, bread and water are the immediately desired objects, and not a means to obtain gustatory pleasures. Certainly, we know from experience that it is very pleasant to eat when hungry, but a baby craves to suck before having any experience of it. And even after having reached a certain age there arises in him a very powerful desire for objects, whose actual pleasantness he has not yet come to know. It is quite useless to resort in this case to "heredity," because we would then have to go as far back as chemical molecules. Yet hardly anyone would dare to claim that such molecules crave to form specific combinations simply because these molecules remember the pleasantness of similar combinations earlier.

Let us remember another reason why we cannot identify the good with the fact of pleasure. Everyone knows from experience [148]that by no means does the degree of the desirability of certain objects or states always correspond to the real degree of sensual pleasure we attain from them. Thus, in the case of a strong erotic attraction

⁴ E] Hegesias's conclusion] Eduard von Hartmann briefly discussed Hegesias's ideas in Hartmann 1879: 35–36, a work with which Solov'ev was certainly familiar. The latter authored a short entry on Hegesias for the *Brockhaus-Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary*. See Solov'ev 1997: 56.

⁵ C] pleasant states] pleasant objects and states **AB**.

⁶ C] truth, however.] truth, that we sense the fulfilled desire or attained goal as pleasure, however, **AB**.

to a specific person of the opposite sex, possessing this particular person is seen as the highest bliss, and in comparison the desire to possess any other person vanishes. However, the real pleasure to be derived from an infinitely desired fact certainly has nothing to do with infinity and is approximately equal to the pleasure from any other satisfaction of the given instincts. In general, the desirability of particular objects, or of their significance as goods, is determined not by the subjective states of pleasure that subsequently follow, but by the objective interrelations of these objects with our corporeal or psychic nature. For the most part, we are not aware of the source and the character of these relations with sufficient clarity, and they manifest their activity only in the form of a blind inclination.

However, if pleasure is not the essence of the good, of the desired as such, it is in any case a constant feature of the latter. Whatever may be the fundamental causes of the desirability of the given objects or states that appear to us as goods, it is indubitable that the attained good or the fulfilled desire is always accompanied by a sensation of pleasure. Therefore, being inseparably connected with a real good in general, as its necessary consequence, pleasure can serve to determine the highest good, at least in the sense of a practical principle.

From this point of view, the highest good is the state that offers the greatest amount of satisfaction. This amount is determined not just directly through the addition of pleasant states, but also indirectly through the subtraction of unpleasant states. In other words, the highest sense of well-being lies in the possession of those goods which on the whole, or as the final result, deliver the maximum enjoyment and the minimum amount of pain.⁷ The principle of action here is not simply the seeking of [149]immediate pleasure, but *prudence*, which evaluates different pleasures and selects from among them those that are the most lasting and free of pain. The person who is recognized as having a sense of well-being or is happy is not the one who, at a given moment, experiences the most intense enjoyment, but the one whose life as a whole presents a constant preponderance of pleasant states over painful ones, in other words, one who in the end enjoys himself more than suffers. “A man of practical wisdom,” says Aristotle, “pursues what is free from pain, not what is pleasant.”⁸ This is the point of view of eudaemonism, in the proper sense, or *prudent eudaemonism*. Those who follow this doctrine will not “wallow in the mire of sensual pleasures,” which destroy the soul and the body. Rather, they find a sense of well-being chiefly in higher intellectual and aesthetic enjoyments, which, being the most enduring, are connected with the least amount of pain.

⁷ F] Independently of any pessimistic theory in principle, the eudaemonistic viewpoint attaches more importance to freedom from pain than to the positive fact of pleasure. The pain of an unsatisfied and powerfully individualized sexual passion, which not infrequently drives people to suicide, is incomparably more significant than the pleasure of its satisfaction. The latter can be recognized as a great good only insofar as it provides relief from these great pains.

⁸ E] Aristotle 1941: 1152b, 16–17.

IV

Despite its comparative plausibility, prudent eudaemonism shares the same fate as any form of eudaemonism: It too turns out to be only a pseudo principle. When the real good is defined as a sense of well-being, all that matters is attaining and securing it. No amount of prudence, however can either attain or secure it.

Our life and fate depend on causes and figures, which and who are independent of the decisions and measures taken by our worldly wisdom. Moreover, for the most part, the prudent egoist simply loses all opportunity for real, though fleeting, pleasure, without thereby acquiring any lasting sense of well-being. The precarious nature of all goods is all the more fatal because, in contrast to animals, humans know about it in advance. The inevitable collapse of every instance of happiness casts a shadow even over moments of genuine enjoyment. However, even in those rare cases when a prudent life-style actually does lead to a quantitative surplus of painless⁹ [150]states over sad and painful ones, the triumph of eudaemonism is merely illusory. For it is based upon an arbitrary exclusion of a *qualitative* character of our mental states (taking “quality” not in the moral sense—which for now can be questioned—but simply in the psychological or, more precisely, psychophysical sense, viz., the intensity of the pleasant sensations). Undoubtedly, the strongest, most captivating enjoyments, are, nevertheless, not those that prudence recommends but those connected with savage passions. Granted that here too in many cases the pleasure of satisfaction is disproportionate to the strength of the desire, but, nevertheless, it is incomparably more intense than all the sensations that a moderate and orderly life-style can yield. When prudence tells us that passions will lead us to ruin, we can, without disputing this truth in any way, simply recall another:

All, all that is threatened by fate,
Is for the heart of mortal weight
Full of inexplicable delight...¹⁰

From the eudaemonistic viewpoint, it is impossible to say anything against this. Why should I renounce “inexplicable delights” for the sake of some dull prosperity? Passions will lead to our ruin, but does prudence really save us from it? Where is the person who, by means of prudent behavior alone, has conquered death?

The voice of the passions can prove to be wrong only in the presence of something higher. It is silenced in the presence of heavenly thunder, but the dull speeches of prudence are powerless to drown it.

Certainly a satisfaction of the passions, which leads to ruin, cannot be the highest good. However, from the general point of view of eudaemonism, it can have a decisive advantage over the innocent pleasures of good behavior, *which do not save*

⁹ C] surplus of painless] surplus of pleasant or at least painless **AB**.

¹⁰ E] From Pushkin’s “Feast in a time of plague.” Cf. Pushkin 2000: 101, where the work is entitled “A Feast During the Plague.”

us from ruin. Let us assume that intellectual and aesthetic pleasures are not just innocent, but also noble. Their value, however, is connected with limitations that preclude these goods from being recognized as the highest good.

1. These “spiritual” pleasures essentially¹¹ are attainable only by people with a high degree of aesthetic and intellectual [151]development, or in any case only¹² to a few, whereas the highest real good necessarily should be universal. No progress in democratic institutions can give an ass the ability to enjoy Beethoven’s symphonies or enable a pig, which cannot even appreciate the taste of oranges, to enjoy the sonnets of Dante and Petrarch or the poems of Shelley.¹³
2. Even those to whom intellectual and aesthetic enjoyments are attainable find them to be insufficient. Since such enjoyments affect only specific mental faculties and powers and not the others, they cannot fill one’s whole life. Only the theoretical, contemplative side of human nature turns out to be more or less satisfied, while the active, practical life is left without any firm guidance.¹⁴ As objects of pure contemplation, the intellectual and aesthetic goods exert no influence on the practical will.

The stars we never long to clasp,
We revel in their light¹⁵

When, from the eudaemonistic viewpoint, people put science and art (i.e., the enjoyment derived from them) above everything, the practical will remains without a dominant determination¹⁶ and blind passions seize it unhindered. This shows the inadequacy of prudent eudaemonism as a guiding principle of life.

3. This inadequacy is demonstrated even by its impotence against theoretical skepticism, which undermines the value of the objects of intellectual and cultural activity. Let us suppose I genuinely enjoy¹⁷ contemplating beauty and investigating truth. However, my understanding—the highest authority for “prudent” eudaemonism—tells me that beauty is a subjective apparition¹⁸ and that truth is unattainable by human cognition. My enjoyment is poisoned by these considerations and simply becomes impossible for anyone who thinks consistently. However, even without such logic it is clear that enjoyment obtained through some notorious deception cannot rationally be held to be the highest good.

¹¹ C] essentially] *Absent in AB.*

¹² C] by people with ... any case only] *Absent in AB.*

¹³ C] No progress in ... poems of Shelley.] *Absent in AB.*

¹⁴ C] is left without any firm guidance.] remains without any guidance based in principle. **AB.**

¹⁵ E] Although unattributed, Solov’ëv most likely is here quoting lines from Goethe’s “Comfort in Tears.” See Goethe 2004: 91.

¹⁶ C] determination] motive **AB.**

¹⁷ C] I genuinely enjoy] I find the greatest enjoyment in **A.**

¹⁸ C] apparition] illusion **AB.**

4. However, let us suppose that our epicurean is free of such skepticism and instinctively indulges in the enjoyments of thought and creative work without asking about the ultimate significance of these objects. For him these “spiritual goods” may seem eternal, but, in any case, his own ability to enjoy them is far from being so. [152]At most, it can last only a little longer than his ability to enjoy sensual delights.

Nonetheless, the *endurance*, or longevity, of pleasures is precisely the fundamental claim of *prudent* eudaemonism. It is supposedly its chief advantage over simply seeking what is immediately pleasing. Certainly, if our pleasures were enduring realities that could be amassed like property, the prudent eudaemonist in his decrepit old age might still consider himself richer than some reckless profligate who died prematurely. However, *past* delights are, in fact, only memories. Thus, if our wise epicurean simply remains true to the eudaemonist viewpoint to his death, he definitely will regret that for the sake of faint memories of innocent intellectual and aesthetic joys he sacrificed opportunities for far more intense delights. *Since* he never *experienced* them, these opportunities arouse in him at this moment an unfulfilled and painful desire. Only the logically inadmissible confusion of two viewpoints supports the supposed superiority of prudent eudaemonism over simple profligacy. It must be one of these two: Either we have in mind the *present* moment of enjoyment—and in that case we have to give up the prudence that even animals share—or we consider the *future* consequences of our actions. In the latter case, one can ask: What precise moment in the future must we put as the basis of our calculation? Obviously, it would be absurd to take any moment other than the *last*, which expresses the *sum total* of the whole life. However, at the last moment before death the entire eudaemonistic calculation reduces to zero, and every possible advantage of prudent enjoyments over reckless ones (from the eudaemonistic viewpoint) completely disappears. Once they are over, all enjoyments cease to be enjoyments, but this we *knew beforehand*. Hence, the idea of “the sum of enjoyments” lacks real meaning: a sum of zeros is no greater than a simple zero.

V

The possession of *material* goods—both in the form of an enjoyment at the present minute as well as in the form of a more enduring happiness [153]supposedly guaranteed by prudence—proves to be deceptive and inadequate. Therefore, does not a true sense of well-being, the highest real good, consist in *freedom* from the superficial desires and affections that deceive and enslave and make us miserable? All material goods either turn out to be not worth desiring or even before their essential unsatisfactory nature is discovered, these pseudo goods, being dependent on external factors beyond human control, are taken away from us, making us doubly miserable. Consequently, no one can escape misery and be happy, as long as the human will is attracted to objects, the possession of which is for us contingent. If the true state of well-being is one of enduring satisfaction, then the truly happy person can only be one who finds satisfaction in what cannot be taken away, viz. oneself.

Let a person simply be free within from any attachment to external and contingent objects, and this person will be permanently satisfied and enjoy a sense of well-being. Not yielding to anything extraneous, fully in possession of oneself, such a person has everything and even more than everything. If I have no desire for a certain thing, then I am a master of it to a greater degree than the person who wants and owns it. If I am indifferent to power, I am more powerful than the ruler who craves it; if I am indifferent to the whole world, I am above the master of the universe.

This principle of *self-sufficiency* (*αυτάρκεια*), expressing as it does an unconditional demand, is in fact merely negative and conditional. In the first place, its force is dependent on the same superficial goods that it rejects. As long as someone is attached to such goods, freedom from this attachment is *desirable* for the sake of one's higher consciousness and gives meaning to one's activity. In the same way, as long as the human being is sensitive to the contingent sufferings of external life, a triumph over them and remaining steadfast in the face of adversity can give the greatest satisfaction. However, when one rises above an attachment to external goods and above the fear of external misfortune, what will be the positive meaning of life? Can a sense of delight in this victory alone really be enough? However, in such a case the principle of self-sufficiency becomes a vain self-complacency and acquires a comical rather than a majestic character. [154] The dissatisfaction with the final result makes it unnecessary to insist that the spiritual force needed to attain it is not given to everyone, and even when it is given it is not always preserved to the end. Thus, the principle of self-sufficiency does not inherently possess sufficient power to realize itself, showing itself in this respect to be only a pseudo-principle. Freedom from enslavement to lower, contingent goods can only be a *condition* for the attainment of the highest good but cannot itself be this good. A temple cleared of idols that had once filled it does not alone become more holy to God. By itself, it remains simply an empty place.¹⁹

VI

The human individual finds final satisfaction or a sense of well-being neither in worldly material goods nor within oneself (i.e., in the empty form of self-consciousness). The only conclusion one can draw from this seems to be that a person is not just a particular individual, but is also part of a collective whole and that one's true well-being, i.e., the positive interest of one's life, lies in serving the common good or what is to the common benefit.

¹⁹ F] When applied in practice, the principle of self-sufficiency coincides partly with the moral principle of asceticism. However, the essential difference between them lies in their respective starting points or original motives. Asceticism is the desire to have the spirit prevail over the flesh in the sense of the *proper* human attitude towards what is lower. On the other hand, the demand for self-sufficiency arises from a desire for happiness. In this way, the principle of *αυτάρκεια* can be correctly designated as *eudaemonistic asceticism*.

Such is the principle of *utilitarianism*, which obviously corresponds to the moral principle of altruism. It demands that we live for others, help everyone as much as possible and work for the good of others as if it were our own. According to the representatives of utilitarianism, their ideas and teaching, in practice, should coincide with altruistic morality or with the commandments of justice and mercy. Mill, for example, writes, “I must [155]again repeat what the assailants of utilitarianism seldom have the justice to acknowledge, that the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct is not the agent’s own happiness but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. ‘To do as you would be done by,’ and ‘to love your neighbor as yourself,’ constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality.” (J.S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*, 5th ed. Lond., 1874, pp. 24–25).²⁰

Mill does not appreciate that²¹ the distinction between these two principles—the utilitarian and the altruistic—lies in the fact that altruism holds the rule to live for others to be the expression of the *proper* relation of human beings to those similar to us, or as a moral duty that follows from the pure idea of the moral good. On the other hand, according to utilitarianism, human beings should serve the common good and impartially judge between their own interests and those of others ultimately only because²² such an attitude (allegedly)²³ is the most beneficial or advantageous to us. In this way, moral activity has no need of a special independent principle opposed to egoism but, rather, is a consequence of the same egoism, though correctly understood. And since there is egoism in all of us, utilitarian morality is fit for everyone without exception. Therefore, in the eyes of its followers²⁴ it has an advantage over the morality of pure altruism, regardless of whether the latter is maintained because of a simple sympathetic feeling or maintained in the name of pure duty. In this connection, another advantage of utilitarianism, according to its supporters, is that the utilitarian principle corresponds completely to the actual historical origin of moral feelings and ideas. All of these appear to be simply the result of consistently expanded and developed considerations of what is one’s own benefit. Thus, the highest system of morality is simply the most complex transformation of original egoistic motives. Even if this assertion were [156]correct, the advantage for utilitarianism that follows from it would still be merely illusory. From the fact that an oak tree originates from an acorn and acorns serve as feed for pigs, it does not follow that oak trees can serve as food for pigs. Likewise, from the supposition that the highest moral doctrine is *genetically* connected to egoism, i.e., that it originated from it through a succession of alterations in the past, we have no right to conclude that this highest morality in its present, perfect form can also rest on self-interest or

²⁰ E] Mill 1874.

²¹ C] Mill does not appreciate that] *Absent in AB*.

²² C] ultimately only because] because **AB**.

²³ C] (allegedly)] *Absent in AB*.

²⁴ C] in the eyes of its followers] *Absent in AB*.

is useful for egoists. Experience provides an obvious example that contradicts this conclusion: the *majority* of people—both in the present as well as in the past—have found it more *beneficial to divorce their own benefit from the common benefit*.²⁵ On the other hand, the very²⁶ assumption that the original significance of selfishness is the *sole* basis of all activity contradicts the truth of the matter.

The view that the origin of morality lies in individualistic egoism is adequately refuted by the simple fact that *originally* a generic and not an individualistic self-assertion plays the predominant role in life. In particular individuals, this generic self-assertion takes the form of *self-sacrifice*. What benefit can there be in it for a bird to give its life for its nestlings or for a worker bee to die for its queen? How is its individual egoism satisfied?²⁷ A decisive predominance of individual motives over generic ones and, at the same time, the possibility of a fundamental and consistent selfishness appears in humanity only at a certain stage in the development of personal consciousness. Therefore, since it demands self-renunciation and self-sacrifice from a person not in the name of higher principles but only for the sake of its own properly understood selfishness, utilitarianism makes sense as a practical doctrine only for individuals at a given stage of human development. It is from this point of view alone that we should look at utilitarianism here, especially since questions concerning the empirical origin of any set [157] of feelings and concepts have nothing directly to do with the object of moral philosophy.

VII

“Everyone desires what is to his own benefit; but it is to everyone’s benefit to work for the common benefit. Consequently, everyone should work for the common benefit.” Only the conclusion is true in this formula of pure utilitarianism, but its real bases are not contained in the two premises from which that conclusion is deduced. By themselves these two premises are incorrect and are therefore falsely juxtaposed to each other.

It is not true that everyone desires his own benefit. For a great many desire only what brings them immediate pleasure and find this pleasure in things that are quite useless and even harmful, e.g., in drinking, gambling, pornography, etc. Certainly we could lecture these people on the common good, but it has to be based on something other than their own²⁸ desires.

²⁵ C] Experience provides an ... *common benefit*.] *Absent in AB*.

²⁶ C] On the other hand, the very] However, the **AB**.

²⁷ F] On the original character of self-sacrifice, or the “struggle for the life of others,” cf. in particular Henry Drummond, *Ascent of Man*. From the fact that real generic solidarity is the basis of the self-sacrifice of an individual for the benefit of the species, it does not follow that self-sacrifice is the same as egoism. E] See, for example, Drummond 1895: 30—“In other words without the Struggle for the Life of Others there can be no Struggle for Life, and therefore no Evolution.” C] From the fact ... same as egoism.] *Absent in A*.

²⁸ C] own] factual **AB**.

Furthermore, even those who recognize the advantage of utility or of lasting satisfaction over momentary enjoyments do not think their benefit lies where utilitarianism indicates it to be. A miser understands perfectly well that all fleeting satisfactions are dust and decay in comparison to the real lasting goods that he locks up in a durable, fireproof trunk, and the utilitarians have no arguments at their disposal that would make him empty this trunk for philanthropic goals. Do they say to him that his own benefit demands that he coordinate his own advantages with those of others? But he has met this demand. In fact, let us suppose that he acquired his wealth by lending money at interest. This means that he rendered a service to his neighbors and helped those in need, by lending them money. He risked his capital and for doing so received a certain profit. They, on the other hand, lost their profit but used his capital when they had none of their own. Everything was arranged for mutual advantage, and both sides judged impartially their own and the other's respective interests. Why, then, will neither Mill nor any of his followers recognize the behavior of this prudent money-lender to be a true example of utilitarian [158]morality? Is it because he made no use of the money he accumulated? This is not correct. He did use it to the utmost, getting the greatest satisfaction in possessing his treasures and in an awareness of his power (cf. Pushkin's "The Covetous Knight").²⁹ Besides, the more wealth accumulated, the more benefit it can bring afterward to other people. Thus, from this perspective too one's own advantage and that of others turn out to be evenly balanced.

If utilitarians will not agree to accept the activity of the prudent money-lender as a normal human activity, it can only be explained by the fact that their demands essentially amount to much more than for the simple *harmonizing* of what is in one's own benefit with that of another's. They demand that a person *sacrifice* one's personal advantage for the sake of the common good and one's true benefit is to be found in this. Directly contradicting the concept of "one's own benefit," such a demand depends on metaphysical presuppositions quite foreign to the doctrine of pure utilitarianism and is, in spite of them, completely arbitrary.

Actual cases of self-sacrifice arise owing either to (1) an immediate stirring of a sympathetic feeling, when, for example, someone without hesitation³⁰ risks one's own life to save another who is dying; or (2) a compassionate nature as the constant dominant character trait, for example, in people who are personally inclined to devote their lives to serving the suffering; or (3) a highly developed sense of moral *duty*; or, finally, (4) a religious inspiration through some idea. None of these motives depends in the least on considerations of benefit. Those individuals whose wills can be sufficiently influenced by these motives, whether separately or as a group, will sacrifice themselves for the good of others, without the need for motives of any other sort.³¹

²⁹ E] Pushkin's "The Covetous Knight"] For an English translation under the title "The Miserly Knight," see Pushkin 2000: 37–54.

³⁰ C] without hesitation] *Absent in AB*.

³¹ F] There is still a fifth possible motive—an interest in life beyond the grave, the desire to obtain eternal heavenly bliss. Although this motive is utilitarian in the broad sense, it is repeatedly con-

However, there are many people who are not naturally kind, who are morally and religiously indifferent, who lack a clear sense of duty and who lack a sensitivity to the voice of conscience. These are precisely those to whom utilitarianism would have to show [159] its power, convincing them that it is truly to their own benefit to serve the common good, even to the point of self-sacrifice. However, this is obviously impossible, because these people distinguish themselves by finding that their own benefit lies not in the good of others, but exclusively in their egoistic well-being.

By *benefit*, as distinct from pleasure, is meant *enduring* or secure satisfaction. It would be quite absurd to try to prove to the practical materialist that by putting the lives of others or even an idea ahead of one's own life he or she thereby secures for oneself the enduring satisfaction of *one's own* interests, i.e., one's material interests.

Clearly, the connection claimed by utilitarianism between the benefit everyone desires *for himself* and that which this ethical system considers genuine or true is only a crude sophism, based on the ambiguity of the word "benefit." First, we have the axiom³² that everyone wants what satisfies him or her; then the general term "benefit" is used to designate the entire factual gamut of objects and the means of satisfaction that in fact exist. Next, this term is replaced by the completely new concept of *common* good, which is also given the designation "*benefit*." On the basis of this one single term covering distinct and even opposed concepts, the conclusion is made that since everyone desires one's own benefit and the benefit lies in the common good or the greatest happiness of all, everyone must desire the common good and work for it. In fact, however, the benefit that *everyone* wants for oneself has no *necessary* relation to a universal sense of well-being, and the benefit that lies in general happiness is not what everyone wants. A mere substitution of concepts is not enough to dissuade someone from wanting what he or she in fact does want or to find one's benefit some place other than where it actually is found.

The various modifications made to the utilitarian formula do not make it more convincing. Thus, taking the concept of benefit as *enduring* satisfaction, one could claim that personal happiness does not provide enduring satisfaction. For such happiness is connected with contingent and transitory objects. On the other hand, to the extent that it relates to all future generations the common good of humanity is a permanently abiding object. This is why working for it can provide enduring satisfaction. If the argument is directed to just [160] "anyone," then anyone can reply by saying: "Let us assume that although my personal happiness does not provide me with a sense of *enduring* satisfaction, a concern for the happiness of future generations does not provide me with *any* satisfaction whatsoever. For there is no way such a good can satisfy me. If it would someday exist, it would, in any case, *not* be *my* good, since I definitely will not exist. Therefore, if there is no benefit for me in a personal sense of well-being, then there is all the less for me in a universal sense of well-being. How can I find *benefit* in something that will certainly never *benefit* me?"

nected with assumptions of a different order, which are fundamentally rejected by the contemporary doctrine of utility.

³² C] axiom] indisputable fact AB.

The best representatives of utilitarianism have gravitated to the true idea of human *solidarity*, a consequence of which is that each individual's personal sense of well-being is connected with a universal sense of well-being. However, the roots of this idea are not planted in utilitarianism, and as a practical principle this idea has no place within the utilitarian or the eudaemonistic way of thinking in general. One can fully recognize even the truth of universal solidarity and the consequences that follow from it in the natural order of things without, however, concluding from it any moral³³ rule for one's conduct. So, for example, the licentious rich man who lives solely for his own pleasure and never makes the good of others the goal of his actions can, nevertheless, correctly point to the fact that because of the natural order of things³⁴ his refined indulgence promotes the growth of industry and commerce, of the sciences and the arts, and provides jobs for a number of poor people.

Universal solidarity exists as a natural law and acts through separate individuals independently of their will and conduct. And if I, concerned only with personal benefit, unintentionally contribute to the common benefit, what more³⁵ is demanded of me from the utilitarian viewpoint? On the other hand, universal solidarity is by no means the same as a universal sense of well-being. It does not follow from the fact that humanity is united in solidarity that humanity must certainly be happy. It may be united in distress and disaster. Let us assume I make the idea of universal solidarity a practical rule of my conduct and, as a consequence, sacrifice any personal advantage³⁶ for the sake of the common good. However, if humanity is doomed to destruction and its [161]"good" turns out to be illusory, what *benefit* will my self-sacrifice prove to be either to me or to humanity? Therefore, even if the idea of universal solidarity were possible in the sense of a practical rule, intimately connected with the principle of utilitarianism, this idea would be quite *useless* to the latter.

Utilitarianism is the highest form of eudaemonism, and its insolvency is a condemnation of all practical philosophies that posit the good, taken as a sense of well-being or self-interested satisfaction, as their highest principle. The apparent real universality and necessity of this principle, which lies in the fact that everyone certainly desires a sense of well-being, turns out to be completely illusory, because: (1) the general designation "the good" or "well-being" refers in reality to an infinite number of different objects that are irreducible to any inner³⁷ unity, and (2) such a universal aspiration for one's own well-being (whatever sense we ascribe to this word)³⁸ contains, in any case, neither a guarantee that the goal can be attained nor even the conditions for that attainment. Therefore, the principle of well-being remains only a *demand* and consequently has no advantage over the principle of what should be, or the moral good. Surely, the sole deficiency of the latter is the fact that it remains only a demand, itself lacking the power necessary for its realization. On the other hand, despite this general deficiency the moral principle has over the

³³ C] concluding from it any moral] making this truth a **AB**.

³⁴ C] order of things] solidarity **AB**.

³⁵ C] more] *Absent in A*.

³⁶ C] advantages] interests **AB**.

³⁷ C] inner] fundamental **AB**.

³⁸ C] word)] last term) **AB**.

eudaemonistic principle the enormous advantage of an *intrinsic* dignity, an *ideal* universality and necessity. For whereas everyone has a right to understand “well-being” as anything that one pleases, the moral good, defined not as an arbitrary personal choice but as universal reason and conscience, is necessarily one and the same for everyone.

Thus, for now we have only two demands: the rational *demand* of duty and the natural *demand* for a sense of well-being—(1) *all people must be virtuous*, and (2) *all people want to be happy*. Both of these demands have natural footholds in the human essence, but neither contains in itself sufficient grounds or conditions for its realization. Additionally, they are in fact unconnected and usually contradict each other. And the attempt (in utilitarianism) to harmonize the two fundamentally does not stand up under criticism.

[162] These demands are of unequal value. However, if we had to choose a principle of practical philosophy between either the clear, definite and exalted idea of the moral good, though insufficiently powerful, and the equally impotent but unclear, indefinite and lowly idea of well-being, then certainly all rational arguments would be in favor of the former.

However, before claiming the sad necessity of such a choice, we must have³⁹ a deeper understanding of the general moral basis of human nature. Up to now, we have examined this moral basis primarily only with respect to the separate development of its three particular manifestations.⁴⁰

³⁹ C] must have] will attempt to gain **AB**.

⁴⁰ C] the separate development ... manifestations.] their formal development. **AB**.

[163]Part II
The Moral Good from God¹

¹ C] Part II ... from God] *Absent in B*

Chapter 7

The Unity of Moral Foundations

I

When we do something wrong in some way, for example, when we actively, or even only passively, harm our neighbors by refusing to extend a helping hand to someone in need, we feel *ashamed* afterwards. Here lies the genuine psychic¹ root of all human moral goodness and the distinctive characteristic of the human being as a moral creature.

Properly speaking, what is experienced here? In the first place, we have a feeling of pity for the injured party, something that was not felt at the moment of the injury itself. Among other things, this proves that the inner impulses of our psychic nature can stir us more deeply, as well as more forcefully, than can material motives. A purely mental reflection can evoke a feeling that would be deaf to external impressions. The invisible distress of another proves² to be more real than a visible one.

Secondly, a new variation (even more vigorous) is joined here to this simple feeling (although it is already refined as a result of the absence of a visible object), since we not only pity those who we did not pity earlier but even pity the fact that we did not pity them at the time. We regret that we were pitiless. In addition to the regret for the injured party, there is now also regret for oneself as the injurer.

[164] However, these two psychological aspects by no means exhaust the matter. The feeling under investigation receives its entire psychic acuity and moral significance from a third aspect, which lies in the fact that the thought of our pitiless

E] As the contents of this chapter reveal, it was written subsequent to many of the other chapters. It is absent from B. §§I—X appeared in *Knizhki Nedeli*, 1898, #2 with the subtitle “From a newly written additional chapter in the second edition of my ‘Moral Philosophy’, now being printed”. §§XI and XII of this chapter appeared for the first time in the second edition of 1899. For the most part, the entirety of §XIII and §XIV up to the paragraph beginning with the words “The fact that the moral good” appeared as part of an article under the title “The Reality of the Moral Order” in *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii*, vol. 31 (1).

¹ C] psychic] *Absent in A.*

² C] The invisible distress of another proves] An invisible distress proves A.

behavior arouses in us, in addition to the singular reaction of the corresponding feeling, viz., pity, the even more powerful reaction of another, apparently quite irrelevant feeling, viz., shame: Not only do we regret our cruel behavior, but we are also ashamed of it, even though there might be nothing specifically *shameful* about it. This third aspect is so important that it colors our entire psychic state so that instead of “my conscience bothers me” we simply say “I am ashamed,”³ “*J’ai honte*,” “*Ich schäme mich*,” “*mne stydno*.” In the classical languages, words corresponding to “conscience” were not used in ordinary discourse. Instead, they substituted words⁴ corresponding to “shame,”—a clear indication of the fact that the original root of conscience lies precisely in that feeling. What does this mean?

II

Besides a corresponding reaction from the injured moral element, the thought of admittedly violating any moral demand arouses shame.⁵ This takes place even when there are no demands for shame within one’s own sphere (the relation of the human being to one’s lower or carnal nature). The given action, however, may not have been contrary to modesty or to a feeling of human superiority over material nature. That is, the *distinction* between the three fundamental foundations⁶ of human moral nature clearly must not become a *division* between them. These three roots to a certain degree are knitted⁷ together in one, and the moral order, viewed in its formative essence, is with respect to the totality of its norms only the separation and development of one and the same principle from this or that side. The feeling of shame, connected in the most down-to-earth manner with the fact of the sexual sphere, transcends material life and as an expression of a formal disapproval accompanies any violation of a moral norm to whatever sphere of relations it belongs. In all languages, as far as I know, the word corresponding to our word “shame” is noted invariably for two distinctive features: (1) [165] a connection with objects belonging to the sexual sphere (*αἰδώς—αἰδοία*, *pudor—pudenda*, *honte—parties honteuses*, *Scham—Schamtheile*), and (2) the application of these words to all cases expressing disapproval of a violation of moral demands *in general*. In order to deny the unique sexual meaning of shame (or the special shamefulness of carnal relations between the sexes) and equally in order to limit shame to *this* meaning *alone*, it is necessary above all to disavow the word, having recognized it as a senseless contingency.

³ E] In English in the original.

⁴ C] words corresponding to “conscience” were not used in ordinary discourse. Instead, they substituted words] although they could form words corresponding to “conscience,” they were not used and always substituted words A.

⁵ C] the thought of admittedly violating any moral demand arouses shame.] the thought of violating any demand for pity (and also other moral demands) arouses shame. A.

⁶ C] Footnote added in A: cf. *Justification of the Moral Good*, Chap. 1.

⁷ C] knitted] fused A.

The general moral sense of shame is only a further inner development of what is already contained in its unique original manifestation concerning the facts of sexual life.

III

The essence or chief concern of life—for animals—undoubtedly lies in the perpetuation through reproduction of new individuals of that unique form of organic being represented by this or that animal. I say that this is the essence of life *for* them and not merely *in* them, because the most important sexual interest, and which is unique of its kind, is experienced and sensed by them internally, though certainly only passively and involuntarily. When we see a dog, waiting for a dainty morsel, its pose, the expression in its eyes and its entire being indicate, as it were, that the chief nerve of its subjective existence lies in its stomach. However, the most voracious dog completely forgets about food when it is sexually aroused, and if this dog is female, she will voluntarily give up her food and even her very life for her puppies. Here, the individual animal recognizes conscientiously, as it were, that its own life by itself is unimportant, that what matters is only the preservation of a given type of organic life that was passed on through an infinite series of fleeting individuals. This is the sole form of infinity that an animal can comprehend. However, we can understand from this the enormous and fundamental significance the sexual sphere has for human life. If human beings are essentially more than animals, then in order to isolate them from the animal kingdom this intrinsic self-determination as persons must begin precisely here with this source, in this focus of organic being. Any other point would be [166] comparatively superficial. Only *here* does the individual animal sense the infinity of its species-life, see itself (as indeed it is) *as only a finite phenomenon*, as only a means or instrument of a generic process and without struggle and delay surrender itself to this infinite genus, which completely devours its individual existence. It is *here* in this focus of life that a person is aware of the *inadequacy* of the generic infinity in which the animal finds its highest goal. Our generic essence asserts its rights on us too, and through us this essence wants to be immortalized. However, our inner being answers such a demand: “We are not what you are. We are above you. We are *not a genus*, although we are *of a genus*. We are not a genus, but we are geniuses. We can and want to be infinite and immortal not in you alone, but in ourselves. You drag us into the abyss of your evil, an empty infinity in order to devour and destroy us, but we seek for ourselves the true and full infinity, which we could share with you too. What we have from you wants to be mingled with you and pull us down into your abyss above which we have climbed, but⁸ our own being, which is not from you, is ashamed of this mingling and is opposed to it. Our being wants as the only thing worthy of it that true unification in which both of the united members are immortalized.”

⁸ C] with you and pull us down ... have climbed, but] with you, but A.

In the feeling of sexual shame, which establishes its enormous fundamental importance as the basis not only of material but also of formal morality, a person recognizes as shameful, and consequently as evil and wrong, not some particular or contingent deviation from a certain moral norm, but the very essence of the natural law to which the entire organic world is subordinate. What is important here is not so much that a person in general *is ashamed* as *what* he is ashamed of. Possessing this faculty of shame, which we do not observe in other animals, a human being could be defined as the animal that *is ashamed*. This definition, which is better than many others, would not, however, distinguish human beings as bearers of a unique world or of a new order of being. However, the fact that human beings above all and most of all are ashamed precisely of the very essence of animal life or of the highest fundamental manifestation of natural being directly shows that we are supernatural and super-animal beings. Therefore, in *this* shame the human being becomes a human being in the full sense.⁹

[167]IV

The sexual act embodies the infinity of a natural process, and a person, being ashamed of this act, denies this very infinity as unworthy of a human being. It is unworthy of a person to be merely a means or an instrument of a natural process in which the blind force of life perpetuates itself at the expense of individuals who are born and perish, *replacing* in turn one another. As moral entities, human beings do not want to submit to this natural law of *replacing* generations, to the law of *eternal death*.¹⁰ Human beings do not want to replace or to be replaced. We sense, at first vaguely, both the need and the ability to include within ourselves the full scope of *eternal life*. Ideally, we already include it within ourselves in the very act of human consciousness. However, this is not enough. We need to implement the ideal in reality, without which the idea is only a phantasy and a higher self-consciousness is only a form of conceit. The *power* of eternal life as a fact exists: Nature lives eternally and shines with eternal beauty. However, this is an indifferent nature—indifferent to individual creatures, which by their succession preserve its eternity. However, among these creatures there is one which does not accept such a passive role. It finds its involuntary service to nature shameful for itself and its reward, namely, personal death and the immortality of the species, to be inadequate. This creature does not want to be an instrument, but the possessor of eternal life. For this, it does not need to create a new life-force from nothing, but only to possess what nature gives and employ it for its personal use.

⁹ C] the highest fundamental ... in the full sense.] the chief and highest manifestation of natural being, directly shows that we are supernatural and super-animal beings. Therefore, in the feeling of shame the human being becomes a human being. A.

¹⁰ C] , to the law of *eternal death*] *Absent in A.*

We call those people “geniuses” in whom the vital creative force is not fully spent on the external concern of carnal reproduction but who concern themselves also with the inner matter of spiritual creation in this or that sphere. A genius is a person who apart from the life of the species perpetuates him or herself and is preserved in the general posterity even though this person produces none of his or her own. However, if such perpetuation is taken as final, it turns out to be illusory. For it takes place on the basis of generations that come and go, replacing one another so that neither those who are remembered nor those who remember have a genuine life. The generally accepted sense of being a genius is only [168] a *hint* of the actual case. The true “genius” within us, which speaks loudest of all in sexual shame, does not demand that we have the highest gift for the arts and the sciences and become a famous name for posterity. No, it demands much more. As a genuine genius, i.e., connected with the entire genus, though standing above it, it appeals not to the chosen alone, but to each and everyone, cautioning each and everyone against this entire process of bad infinity through which mundane nature eternally builds life on dead bones, but to no avail.

V

The object of sexual shame is not the external fact of the animalistic uniting of two human individuals, but the deep and universal sense of this fact. This sense is expressed, above all, but by no means exhausted by the fact that in such an act a person submits to the blind impulse of a basic force. If the path that carries us were in itself good, then we should resign ourselves to the dark character of this impulse in the hope of, in time, seeing the reason for it and freely accepting what at first was an involuntarily submission. However, the genuine force of sexual shame is that in general we are ashamed not only of our submission to nature, but of our submission to it as something *bad, entirely bad*. For the path to which the carnal instinct draws us and against which the feeling of shame warns is one that is shameful from the start and turns out ultimately to be pitiless and profane. This clearly reveals the inner connection of all three moral norms that are already contained in the first. Sexual abstinence is not only an ascetic but also at the same time an altruistic and a religious demand.

The law of animalistic reproduction that we are ashamed of is the law of the elimination or supplanting of one generation with another, a law running directly contrary to the principle of human solidarity. Directing our life’s energies to the procreation of children, we are averted from our fathers, who are left simply to die. We cannot create anything from ourselves—what we give to the future, we take from the past, and through us our descendants live at the expense of their ancestors. They live by the death of the latter. So it happens in nature, which is indifferent and [169] pitiless, and we certainly do not answer for it. However, our own participation in this indifferent and pitiless natural concern is our fault, even though it be passive. We have a vague sense of this guilt already beforehand in sexual shame. We are all

the more guilty in that our participation in this pitiless business of nature, which supplants earlier generations with new ones, immediately concerns those to whom we are especially and most of all indebted, to our fathers and ancestors. This matter, thus, turns out to be contrary not only to pity, but also to piety.

VI

Here we have something like a great contradiction, a fatal antinomy, which in any case we must recognize even if we have no hope at all of resolving it. *Bearing children is a good*. It is good for the mother, who, in the words of the Apostle, is saved by it. It certainly is also good for the father, who participates in this saving business. Finally, it is good for those who receive the gift of life. Yet at the same time it is also indubitable that there is evil in carnal reproduction, not that contingent and external evil of any of the various disasters which the newborn inherit along with life, but the essential moral evil of the carnal act itself through which by our own agreement we affirm the dark path of nature. Its blindness makes it a *shameful* path for us. It is *pitiless* to the departing generation, and it is *profane*, because this generation is that of our fathers. However, only we can correct this evil of the natural way for humanity, and what we of the present generation do not do can be done by a future generation, who, being born by the same animalistic means can renounce it and change the law of life. Here is the resolution of the fatal contradiction: the evil of bearing children can be eliminated by this act of bearing children, which in this way becomes a good. However, the saving character of bearing children will be illusory if those who are born continue to do the same as those who give birth and likewise sin and die. Surely, all of the charm that children present to us, their special human charm is inseparably connected with the assumption and the hope that they will not be like us, but will be better than us—not quantitatively better by one or two degrees but essentially better, that they will be people of another life, that our actual salvation lies in them—ours and that of all our ancestors. *Human* love for children must contain [170] something in itself above what is in a hen's love for its chicks. It must have a rational meaning. However what is the rational meaning of holding someone with delight and affection if the goal in life of this person is to be a future scoundrel, while we condemn an actual scoundrel now?¹¹ If the future presented by children differs from the present only in the temporal order, then where lies their charm? If a poisonous plant or weed grows from this seed, where is the delight in this seed? However, there is the possibility of a better way of life that would lift us above nature with its dark and impotent desire, revealing to us and in us the completeness¹² of power and light. This *possibility* lies in us as well as in children, but it is *fuller* in them than in us, because it is still retained intact, and not wasted as it is in us in

¹¹ C] of holding someone ... an actual scoundrel now?] of loving a future scoundrel more than an actual one? A.

¹² C] that would lift us ... us the completeness], of some higher law that elevates us above nature with its dark and impotent desire, towards the completeness A

a stream of empty and bad reality. These creatures have not yet sold their souls and their spiritual birthright to evil powers. Everyone agrees that the special charm of children lies in their innocence, but this factual birthright could not give us joy and delight if we were certain that it will certainly be lost. The idea that their angels directly see the face of the Heavenly Father would not itself provide any comfort and instruction if it were connected with the conviction that these angels now will inevitably go blind.

If the special moral charm of children (on which their aesthetic attractiveness is based) depends¹³ on a greater possibility for them of another way of life, then before giving birth to children for the sake of this *possibility*, should we not ourselves *actually* change our evil ways? To the extent that we do not have the power to do this, giving birth to children *can be* for us a good and our salvation. However, on what basis will we decide in advance that we cannot? Is our confidence in our impotence a guarantee of the future power of those to whom we hand over our lives?

VII

Sexual shame does not concern a physiological fact in isolation and in its isolation with indifference. Nor does such shame concern sexual love in general, which can be unashamed and the highest good. The warning and later the condemning voice of sexual shame concerns only that path of animal [171] nature which is essentially bad for human beings, although at the present stage of human life it may be a lesser, necessary, evil, i.e., a relative moral good.

However, the genuine unconditional moral good lies not on this path, which at least in human beings begins with abuse. There is a positive side to human sexual love that for purposes of clarity and brevity I call "falling in love." Certainly, this phenomenon is analogous to sexual desire in animals and arises on that basis, but it clearly cannot be reduced to this desire, if only not to reduce in general the human being to an animal. Its individual super-generic character *essentially* distinguishes falling in love from the sexual passion of animals: The object of "falling in love" is a *specific* individual, and the subject aspires to immortalize not the genus but the two individuals concerned. Apart from the other types of individual human love, e.g., parental, filial, sibling, etc.,¹⁴ falling in love is different owing particularly to the indivisible unity of its spiritual and its physical side. It concerns primarily the entire person. For the one who falls in love, the mental and the corporeal being of the loved one are both interesting, significant and dear to *an equal extent*, though in different ways. He is attached to them with the same intensity of feeling.¹⁵ What does this mean from the moral point of view? At that time when all human faculties

¹³ C] the special moral ... is based) depends] the special charm of children depends A.

¹⁴ C] e.g., parental, filial, sibling, etc.,] *Absent in A.*

¹⁵ F] Concerning this and more, see my articles "Smysl ljubvi." E] For an English translation of these originally separate articles, see Solovyov 1985.

are in blossom, a new spiritual-physical faculty emerges in him. It fills him with enthusiasm and heroic aspirations, and a higher voice tells him that it is not without reason that this faculty is given to him, that he can use it for something great. This voice tells him that the true and eternal union with another person, which the pathos of his love demands, can restore in him the image of a perfect human being and can serve as the basis for the same re-creation in all humanity. Certainly, the ecstasy of love does not say the same thing to everyone who falls in love, but the sense of what it tells is the same and represents merely from the other, the positive, side the very thing that sexual shame says. Shame restrains a person from following the improper, animalistic path, and the pathos of love points to the proper path and the highest goal for the positive, excess force that lies in this very [172] pathos. When a person directs this higher force there, namely, to the animalistic business of reproduction, he clearly expends it on an empty pursuit. The business of procreation in humans, just like in animals, does not demand that force. Procreation can be carried out quite successfully through an ordinary organic practice¹⁶ without any of the higher pathos of personal¹⁷ love. When a simple action b is sufficient to obtain the result¹⁸ c , but meanwhile a complex action $a + b$ is used, then obviously the entire force of a is spent in vain.

VIII

The feeling of shame serves as the natural basis for the principle of asceticism, but the negative rules of abstinence do not exhaust the content of this feeling. The formal principle of duty is inherent in shame and forbids shameful or unworthy actions. It condemns us for doing such actions, but shame also has a positive side (in the sexual sphere connected with “falling in love”), which indicates the good things in life that are protected by our abstinence and¹⁹ endangered or even perish with our succumbing to “things of the flesh.”^{20, 21} In the feeling of shame, the desires of the carnal, animal path are opposed not only to the formal level of human dignity or of the rational super-animal faculty of infinite understanding and aspiration, but also to²² the essential *integrity* of human life, which may be hidden though not destroyed in this given state.

¹⁶ C] practice] accommodation A.

¹⁷ C] personal] individual A.

¹⁸ C] result] effect A.

¹⁹ C] by our abstinence and] by our abstinence from the path of nature A.

²⁰ E] Romans 8: 5.

²¹ C] even perish with our succumbing to “things of the flesh.”] even perish by our intemperance. A.

²² C] the desires of the ... but also to] the carnal, animal path is set against the formal level of human dignity or of the rational super-animal faculty of infinite understanding and aspiration, but also against A.

We face here the borders of metaphysics but without crossing over into them, without leaving the ground of moral philosophy. We can and must point to this positive side of the fundamental moral feeling, which is both factually and logically indubitable. Shame in its primary manifestation would not have that unique, vital character, would not be a *localized* spiritual and *organic* feeling, if it expressed only the formal primacy of human reason over the irrational inclinations of our animal nature. Surely, a person does *not lose this* primacy of the mental faculties when following the path against which shame warns. Something else is lost, something that is really and essentially connected with the direct object of shame. It is not without reason that *sexual* modesty is also called *chastity*.

[173] We have been deprived of the *integrity* of our being and of our lives, and in true, *chaste* love for the other sex we strive, hope and dream to re-establish this integrity. Such aspirations, hopes and dreams are destroyed by an act of momentary, external and illusory union, which nature, suppressing its shame, substitutes for the desired integrity. Instead, the spiritual and corporeal interpenetration and intercourse of two human beings is here only a contiguity of organic membranes and the mixing of organic secretions (discharges). This superficial, though secret, union only confirms, strengthens and perpetuates the profound factual division²³ or fragmentation of the human being. Following the fundamental division into two sexes, or in half, the external union of the sexes results in a split into successive generations that replace and displace one another and whose coexistence leads to the creation of a multitude of separate, independent individuals, who on meeting are hostile to one another. Human integrity or solidarity is broken in depth, breadth and extent. However, this aspiration to fragment, this centrifugal force of life, is a tendency that can never be fully realized, although it is partially realized everywhere. In the human being, where it has the intrinsic character of an intended wrong, or sin, it resists and reacts against our intrinsic abiding integrity. In the first place, the fundamental feeling of shame, or chastity, opposes the mixing and splitting tendency of nature in our real or sensuous life. It rests also in the positive manifestation of shame, viz., in the pathos of chaste love, which does not reconcile itself either with the division of the sexes or with their external, deceptive union. In the sphere of the social life in which humans have already multiplied, the centrifugal force of nature manifests itself as *the egoism of each and an antagonism of all*. It provokes opposition to the same human integrity that expresses itself here as the intrinsic solidarity of externally disparate individuals mentally sensed in the feeling of *pity*.

IX

The centrifugal force of nature that works against unity and tends to shatter human unity in both our psycho-physical life and our social [174] life also acts in the same sense against the connection that unites us with the absolute principle of our being.

²³ C] the profound factual division] the profound division A.

Just as in us there is a natural materialism—a tendency to surrender with groveling delight to the blind forces of our animal nature; just as in us there is a natural egoism—a tendency to stand apart intrinsically from everything else and to place everything that is ours above everything that is someone else’s, so there is in us a natural atheism. (I mean this in a practical sense, since theoretical atheism sometimes has a purely cerebral character and is only a mental mistake, which is morally innocent.) This is a practical atheism or a proud tendency to relinquish absolute perfection, to posit ourselves as the unconditionally independent principle of our own lives. This is the most fundamental and important form of the centrifugal force (for this is the source of our separation from the *absolute* center of the universe). This force strips from the human being not only the possibility but also the desire for a fully integrated being. (For we can become everything only through our intrinsic unity with what essentially is everything.) It evokes a powerful opposition from our innermost integrity, which is reflected here in our religious feeling of piety. This feeling provides us with direct and inescapable evidence of our private and general dependence on the highest principle in its various manifestations starting with our own parents and ending with the universal Providential Heavenly Father. The exceptional importance of *this* (religious and moral) relationship conforms to that special variation which a consciousness of what should not be experiences when it is aroused by a breach of a religious obligation. Here, we already speak not of being “ashamed” or of having “pangs of conscience,” but of being “scared.” Our human spiritual essence responds with special concentration and intensity in that feeling of “fear of God”²⁴ which with a transgression, even if unwittingly, of the highest will, amounts to panic terror (*horror sacrilegii*), something that was so well known in antiquity.

Horror sacrilegii (as understood by the ancients) passes with human spiritual growth, but the fear of God remains as the necessary negative aspect of piety—as “religious shame.” To have a fear of God or to be pious certainly does not mean to be *scared* of the Deity but means to be afraid of contradicting the Deity or of an improper relationship to Him. It is a feeling [175] of a real discrepancy²⁵ with the absolute Good or perfection. Similarly, in the positive feeling of reverence or piety we assert our proper or fitting²⁶ connection with the higher principle, namely our aspiration to participate in its perfection, preserving and realizing the integrity of our essence.

²⁴ E] “fear of God”] See, for example, 2 Corinthians 7: 1, but also many other passages in both the Old and New Testaments.

²⁵ C] of a real discrepancy] of our factual inadequacy A.

²⁶ C] fitting] adequate A.

X

Understanding shame, as a manifestation of human integrity and which is rooted in the realm of sex, we will not be surprised that this feeling overflows into other moral spheres.

In general, we must distinguish the intrinsic essence of morality both from its formal principle, or the moral law, and from its real manifestations.²⁷ The essence of morality in itself is *one*. It is human *integrity*, inherent in our nature as the abiding *norm* and realized in life and in history through a struggle with the centrifugal and dismembering forces of being,²⁸ as a moral *doing*. The formal principle, or law, of this doing in its purely rational expression as *what should be done* is also unique in itself: You must adhere to the entire norm of human existence, protect the integrity of the human being, or, putting it negatively: You must not allow anything that contradicts this norm, any transgression of this integrity. However, the unique essence of morality and its single law manifest themselves in various ways in accordance with the real, factual relations that arise in the lives of people. There are an indefinite number of these relations, though logical necessity and the facts of experience equally force us, as we know, to distinguish three chief types that are all subject to moral evaluation. These are: relations dealing with the world below us, relations dealing with the world of creatures similar to us and lastly those dealing with what is higher.

The roots of the whole of reality are hidden in terrestrial darkness, and morality does not belong to that kingdom where the roots of trees grow upward. Indeed, the roots of morality are hidden in the lower sphere. All of morality stems from the feeling of shame. Its intrinsic essence, its real manifestation and its formal principle, or the law of the moral order, are contained here fused like a plant in a seed and are distinguished only in the mind's reflection. We sense in the feeling of shame [176] the human moral essence itself defending its integrity, and we sense a special type of this integrity in the given relation (chastity). We also sense, indivisibly with the other two, the moral imperative, which prohibits us from yielding to the powerful encroachments on our integrity from our lower nature and which blames us for the concessions already made. These commands and these reproaches of shame do not have only a negative and conservative sense. There is a positive *goal* in them. We must preserve our intrinsic potential integrity in order to be able to realize it in reality, in order actually to create the whole person in a better and more lasting way than nature presents it to us. The feeling of shame tells us, "No, that's not it!" thereby promising "*something*" *genuine and proper* for which it is worthwhile to forsake the carnal path.. This path, which shame condemns, is that of psycho-physical fragmentation, not only spiritual but also corporeal, and to this fragmentation is opposed not just human spiritual but also human corporeal integrity—psycho-physical integrity.

²⁷ C] both from its formal principle ... from its real manifestations.] both its real manifestations and its formal principle, or moral law. A.

²⁸ C] of being,] of blind nature A.

The realization of such a *complete* integrity for which chastity is only the beginning, however, demands a complete set of conditions encompassing all of human life. This realization is complicated and delayed but not eliminated by the accomplished fact of human reproduction, by the division of a single being into numerous individuals. Thanks to this new condition that creates a *society of human beings*, the abiding integrity of the human essence is manifested not in chastity alone, which protects us from natural fragmentation, but also in social solidarity, which restores through the feeling of pity the moral unity of the physically shattered human being. The difference between the moral elements fused together in the original feeling of shame appears more clearly at this point. Our feeling of pity expresses the intrinsic solidarity of living creatures, though it is not identical with that solidarity, preserving its psychological distinctiveness in comparison with shame, which is involuntary. Fused with its psycho-physical foundation, the element of shame in formal morality stands out here as the more subtle and abstract feeling that is called “*conscience*” (in the precise sense of the word). The transformation of our carnal instinct into egoism corresponds to the transformation of shame into conscience. However, we see here the original and fundamental sense of shame, for, as we already pointed out, instead²⁹ of “my conscience is bothering me” we can say “I am ashamed” [177] in those instances where it is a matter of purely egoistic actions that have nothing to do with the sexual sphere. Morality is one, and its complete manifestation in shame in response to matters of the flesh thereby is (implicitly) a response to the bad consequences of this matter and incidentally to the egoism of the human being, who has reproduced. However, a special, specific moral reaction against this new evil is psychologically expressed as pity, and its expression in terms of formal morality is the conscience, or “social shame.”

However, neither the moral purity of chastity protected by shame nor the comprehensive nature of moral solidarity, which forces our heart to pity equally all living creatures, gives us sufficient strength to realize what chaste love and an all-encompassing pity requires. Yet our conscience clearly tells us, “You ought, therefore you can.”³⁰

The human being is ashamed of the carnal path, for it is the path of fragmentation, of the *scattering* of the life-force, that then leads to death and decay. If someone is actually ashamed of this, feels it to be improper, this means this person must proceed along the opposite path of integrity and concentration, to immortality and imperishability. If, furthermore, one actually pities all those similar to oneself, then the *goal* of this path is to obtain immortality and imperishability *for all*. Our conscience tells us that we ought to do this, therefore we can.

At the same time the evidence shows that the task of creating immortality and an imperishable life for all is greater than the human being. However, are we re-

²⁹ C] for, as we already pointed out, instead] for instead A.

³⁰ E] “You ought, therefore you can.”] This exact slogan does not stem from Kant but has a long tradition in Kant-interpretation. For example, Schopenhauer writes regarding Kant’s ethics, “Yet in spite of his convictions, freedom is assumed, although only idealiter and as a postulate, through the famous conclusion “You can, for you ought.” Schopenhauer 1965: 76.

ally separated by some impenetrable wall from what is above us? Surely, our hidden normal human essence responds in religious feeling just as clearly to human impotence as we react in shame to carnal desires and in pity to egoism. The same conscience, having adopted the fear of God in a new form, tells us: All you should be and all you can be lies in God. You ought, therefore you can entirely surrender to Him and through Him attain the real perfection of your integrity, attaining the ultimate satisfaction of your chaste love and your pity, obtaining for yourself and for everyone immortal and imperishable life. Your *impotence* is essentially the same *anomaly* that you saw for yourself in shamelessness and pitilessness. This anomaly arises from your disconnection with the unconditional principle of all that should be and all [178] that can be. Through a reunification with Him, you can and should correct this anomaly.^{31, 32}

Religious feeling connects us to the highest principle, but this principle is not only an *ideal* perfection. As an idea, perfection is attainable for the human being. However, we are powerless to make our perfection real, to make our moral good a genuine and real happiness. This is the most profound basis of our dependence on the one whose absolute perfection is given as the eternal reality and who is the indivisible and invariable identity of the Moral Good, Happiness and Bliss. To the extent that we unite with it through the purity and completeness of our morally good aspirations, we obtain the power to fulfill and the force to realize the potential integrity of our panhuman essence.

This is why we are ashamed or feel the pangs of conscience with every bad deed, even if only conceived. No abstract principle or arbitrary rule is violated here. A false step has been taken, and a delay occurred for us and for others on the one true path to the one worthwhile and dear goal—the restoration of an immortal and imperishable life for all.

Shame, conscience and a fear of God are only negative expressions for the necessary conditions of our real concerns as much as of our higher, divine-human one.³³

XI

Thus, the moral *good* by its very essence is the means actually to attain a genuine *real good*, i.e., *happiness*, or bliss, i.e., the bliss that can give us lasting final satisfaction. *Happiness* (and bliss) in this sense are only another side of the good or another point of view on it. Between these two ideas, there is the same inner connec-

³¹ F] In the church prayer, the impotence of humanity is placed alongside sins and lawlessness: “O Lord, cleanse our sins. O Master, forgive our transgressions. Visit us, O Holy One, and heal our infirmities.” These *infirmities* are contrasted in particular here with *holiness*. E] “O Lord, cleanse ... our infirmities.” [Anon.] 1964: 14. C] *This entire footnote absent in A.*

³² C] essentially the same ... correct this anomaly.] anomaly. A.

³³ C] for the necessary ... higher, divine-human one.] for the very real and, moreover, perfect divine-human one. A.

tion and the same impossibility of contradiction as between cause and effect, a goal and the means to attain it, etc. We *should* desire the moral good for *itself*, [179] but such a pure will is not violated by our awareness that the moral good is *itself* necessarily also an element of happiness for those who fulfill its demands. On the other hand, it is *natural* to desire happiness for oneself, but this in no way prevents us from understanding and taking into consideration the empirical fact that any happiness that is not imaginary or illusory must be conditioned by the moral good, i.e., by the fulfillment of moral demands.

If the law of happiness, or genuine eudaemonia, is determined by the moral good, there can be no contradiction between the ethics of pure duty and eudaemonism in general. The morally good will must be autonomous. In fact the opposite is the case: the recognition that proper behavior leads to a genuine sense of well-being certainly does not involve the heteronomous will. Such a recognition, which makes happiness dependent on the moral good, subordinating happiness to the moral good, is completely in accordance with moral autonomy. Heteronomy, on the contrary, consists in separating eudaemonia from the morally obligatory, in subordinating the desirable not to the moral but to another law *extraneous* to morality. Thus, the fundamental contradiction in the field of ethics concerns not eudaemonia in general, but only abstract eudaemonia, or more precisely a eudaemonia that *abstracts* or separates happiness and a sense of well-being from its *real*, purely moral conditions without which only a pseudo or illusory happiness is possible.

However, why is it that doing one's duty seldom brings *complete* satisfaction? I have so little desire to evade this objection that I will even reinforce it: human virtue *never* gives complete satisfaction. However, when is this virtue itself ever *complete* and who born between *εκ θεληματος σαρκος* and *εκ θεληματος ανδρος*³⁴ has ever completely fulfilled one's duty? Clearly, the complete moral good is not realized by any single human individual, and it is just as clear that a super-human individual capable of realizing the complete moral good will find complete satisfaction in doing so. It follows from this too that the autonomous (self-legislating) will, i.e., the ability to want *only* the pure moral good is only a formal and subjective trait of the human being. In order to realize this objectively, a person must still acquire the ability in fact to *accomplish* the *entire* moral good and in that way give the human being [180] complete satisfaction. Without this, virtue has only a negative and inadequate character, which does not follow from the essence of the moral principle. So, first of all when this principle demands that the spirit have power over the flesh, this demand in itself involves no external constraints on such power. The norm here is the complete and unconditional power of the spirit over the flesh, its full and real autonomy, the consequence of which is that it must not be subordinate to the extraneous law of corporeal existence—death and decay. That is, in this sphere only the immortal and imperishable life is a perfect moral good, but it is also a perfect sense of well-being. So, a morality that does not lead to real immortality and imperishability cannot, strictly speaking, be called autonomous, because it obviously is subject to a law of material life from without. Similarly, in the altruistic sphere the moral

³⁴ E] John 1: 13—of the will of the flesh and of the will of man.

principle, which prescribes that we help everyone, does not place any fundamental limitations on this help. Obviously, the *complete* moral good demands here that we procure for all our neighbors complete happiness, or absolute bliss. If our altruism does not yield this, the deficiency of our moral good has its basis not in the moral law, which demands the greatest, but in the law *from without* of limited material existence. Consequently, altruism, which is subject to this law from without, cannot be recognized in the strict sense as an autonomous morality but turns out to be in essence heteronomous.

XII

Therefore, the moral good can be connected with dissatisfaction or the absence of happiness only if and insofar as this moral good itself is incomplete or imperfect or the moral law is not fully fulfilled and still concedes its place to another law at its expense. The perfect moral good, i.e., one that is free of any law from without, provides complete satisfaction. In other words, the moral good is separated from happiness not by the inner character of its demands but only by external obstacles to their fulfillment. The moral principle, consistently implemented to the end, a completely fulfilled duty, invariably leads to the highest good, or bliss. Consequently, if there is a contradiction between eudaemonia and pure morality, [181] it is only accidental and arises from the empirical imperfection of the human moral good or a false understanding of both the moral good and of happiness. In the first case, the discrepancy between the moral good and happiness (“afflictions of the righteous”)³⁵ testifies only to the inadequacies or imperfections—the *incomplete nature* of the given moral state. In the second case, i.e., with a false understanding, a moral concern is completely absent. It is all the same whether or not the incorrectly understood moral good coincides with the incorrectly understood happiness. So, for example, when someone fervently prays to God to find a purse with money on the street or win the lottery, the *failure* of such a prayer has nothing to do with the question of a disparity between virtue (in the mentioned case, religious virtue) and eudaemonia, or between the moral good and happiness. For here we have an incorrect understanding of both: A prayer contrary to both Divine and human virtue as the means to a selfish and base end is not a real moral good and getting undeserved money does not yield happiness or actual bliss. On the other hand, let us suppose a person engages in philanthropy not out of pity nor from an altruistic principle but only in order to be honored with a decoration, which he in fact does get. The *coincidence* between the incorrectly understood moral good and incorrectly understood bliss is of as little significance to ethics as their lack of coincidence is in the first example. Although such philanthropy can prove useful in some of its social and practical forms, there is no need, however, to prove either that it is not a virtue nor that a decoration is merely an illusory form of happiness. Clearly, *real* happiness can arise only from

³⁵ E] See Psalms 34: 19.

noble feelings and actions, i.e., those that have moral worth, that agree with the moral good and in turn the real moral good cannot lead ultimately to disaster, i.e., to evil. In fact, it is quite common that one and the same concept of “evil” equally expresses the opposition to both virtue and a sense of well-being. That villainy and ill-fortune are both recognized equally as evil clearly shows the inner affinity between the moral good and happiness, both of which are in themselves often identified in general discourse, one substituting for another.

Thus, we come to the conclusion that the dichotomy between the moral good and happiness (or a sense of well-being) is only a contingent phenomenon [182] and that the unconditional essence of the moral good includes complete happiness.

The original question of the meaning of life, then, is ultimately not answered by the fact of morally good feelings, inherent in human nature nor by the principles of proper behavior that reason deduces from a moral awareness of those feelings. Moral feelings and principles are themselves a certain relative moral good, but they do not give complete satisfaction. Both feeling and reason compel us to pass to the Moral Good in its unconditional essence, which has no trace of contingency and no external limitations. This is why it gives real satisfaction, the true and complete meaning of our lives.

XIII

That the pure moral good must ultimately be experienced as the highest good, i.e., as complete satisfaction, or bliss, was recognized by the strict preacher of the categorical imperative himself. However, the path by which he intended to unite³⁶ these two supreme ideas cannot at all be recognized as leading to this goal.³⁷

The great German philosopher,³⁸ who irreproachably determined the formal essence of morality to be the unconditionally independent, or autonomous, activity of a free will did not avoid in the ethical sphere that one-sided subjective idealism³⁹ which constitutes the general character of all his views. On this basis, only a pseudo-synthesis of the moral good and happiness, only a pseudo-realization, of the perfect⁴⁰ moral order is possible.

Subjectivism in its crude, elementary sense is certainly eliminated by the very idea of a *pure will*, i.e., a will free from all empirical, contingent⁴¹ motives and determined only by the unconditional idea of what should be (*das Sollen*), i.e., the universal and necessary norm of practical reason by virtue of which the moral principle

³⁶ C] the path by which he intended to unite] the means by which he established the connection between A.

³⁷ C] leading to this goal.] satisfactory. A.

³⁸ C] philosopher,] thinker, A.

³⁹ C] subjective idealism] subjectivism AB.

⁴⁰ C] perfect] *Absent in A.*

⁴¹ C] empirical, contingent] external and contingent AB.

of our activity (and of each of our actions) can only be what we can assert without inner contradiction as an unconditionally universal law, applicable, consequently, to us in the same way as to everyone else.

This formula is in itself (i.e., logically) perfectly **[183]** objective. However,⁴² where is its actual force? Providing a demand for a moral order in an unconditional form Kant vouches only for the *possibility* of *fulfilling* it: That you should means you can. However, this possibility⁴³ in no way vouches for its reality, and, consequently, the perfect⁴⁴ moral order can, in general, remain unrealized. Indeed, from this point of view the ultimate inner foundation of this very⁴⁵ moral demand is not obvious. In order for our will to be pure, or (formally)⁴⁶ autonomous, it must be determined exclusively by a respect for the moral order. This is as clear as that A is equal to A. However, in general why demand this A? What is the basis of this demand for a “pure” will?⁴⁷ If I want to get pure hydrogen from water, I must certainly extract the oxygen from it. However, if I want to drink or to wash, I have no need of pure hydrogen. Instead, I require only that specific combination of it with oxygen, H₂O,⁴⁸ which is called water.

Without doubt, Kant should be recognized as the Lavoisier of moral philosophy. His analysis of morality into autonomous and heteronomous elements and his formulation of the moral law represent one of the greatest achievements of the human mind. However, our concern here surely cannot be limited to a theoretical scholarly interest alone. Kant speaks of practical reason as an unconditional principle of actual human behavior, and here his assertions are similar to the way a chemist would demand or consider it possible for people to make use of pure hydrogen instead of water.

Kant refers to the conscience as the real support for his ethical point of view. Certainly, the conscience is more than a demand; it is a fact. However, despite all of the sincere respect of the philosopher for this evidence of our higher nature, it serves no use to him. In the first place, the voice of conscience does not quite say what it should say according to Kant’s conception, and in the second place the objective significance of this voice in spite of everything remains problematic from our philosopher’s point of view.

As is well known, Kant recognizes every motive except pure respect for the moral law to be alien to true morality. All other motives including those motives stemming from a self-interested calculation, which prompt us to do good for the sake of some personal advantage, he considers to be morally illegitimate. (In this, he is unconditionally correct.) **[184]** Thus, a person who from a simple feeling of

⁴² C] objective. However,] objective. It is an unobjectionably precise expression for the abstract concept of moral truth. However, A.

⁴³ C] this possibility] this very possibility A

⁴⁴ C] perfect] *Absent in A*

⁴⁵ C] very] *Absent in A*.

⁴⁶ C] (formally)] *Absent in AB*.

⁴⁷ C] “pure” will?] “pure,” or “autonomous,” will? **AB**.

⁴⁸ C] H₂O,] *Absent in A*.

pity assists a neighbor in need of help does not thereby display a “pure will,” and in Kant’s⁴⁹ view this action is devoid of moral worth. In this case, he is indeed correct from the standpoint of his moral chemistry, but the fact is that the highest court to which he himself appeals—the conscience—does *not* take this standpoint. One can imagine only in jest—as Schiller does in a famous epigram—a person whose conscience bothers him for pitying his neighbors and helping them with profound sympathy.

Willingly serve I my friends; but, alas, I do it with pleasure;
Therefore I often am vexed that no true virtue I have
As there is no other means, thou hadst better begin to despise them;
And with aversion, then, do that which thy duty commands.⁵⁰

Our real conscience obliges us to treat everyone in the proper way, and whether this proper treatment takes the form of an abstract consciousness of general principles or directly acts as an immediate feeling or, best of all, unites both is a question of degrees and of forms of moral development. This in itself is a very important question. However, it is extraneous to conscience and therefore has no decisive significance for the general evaluation of human actions in terms of their moral essence.

However, in spite of the disagreement between Kant’s ethical demands and what the conscience he alludes to tells us, what significance can the very fact of conscience have for “transcendental idealism”? The voice of conscience, which testifies to the moral order, filled Kant’s soul with reverence. However, we know that the sight of the starry sky filled him with the same reverence.⁵¹ From Kant’s point of view, what is this starry sky? Perhaps it still represented some kind of reality for the author of the *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*,⁵² but the author of the *Critique of Pure Reason* destroyed the delusions of simple-minded⁵³ realism. The starry sky, like the entire universe, is only a representation, an appearance in our consciousness. Although evoked in us by the unknown influence of something [185] independent of us, this appearance in its actual form and properties has nothing in common with those unconditionally mysterious entities and does not express in any way the genuine being of things. The appearance is completely created by the forms of our sense intuition and the faculty of imagination, which act in accordance with the categories of the understanding. And if Kant revered the grandeur of the starry sky, then the genuine object of this feeling could only be the grandeur of the human mind or, more precisely, of the intellectual activity that creates the order of the universe in order that we may then cognize it.

However, Kant’s “idealism” has removed genuine reality from not only the visible world but also from the psychic world. In his critique of rational psychology,

⁴⁹ C] Kant’s] our philosopher’s A.

⁵⁰ E] Schiller 1902: 281.

⁵¹ E] “Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and reverence, the more often and more steadily one reflects on them: *the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me.*” Kant 1996a: 269.

⁵² F] Kant’s chief work in his pre-Critical period.

⁵³ C] simple-minded] naïve AB.

he has shown that the psyche has no existence of its own, that⁵⁴ in fact there is only a complex aggregate of appearances and a series of appearances of inner sense that have no more reality than do the appearances of the so-called external world. The connection between inner appearances (as well as those of “outer” ones) does not arise from the fact that they are experienced by the same⁵⁵ creature who suffers and acts in them. This connection, or unity of psychic life, depends entirely on certain laws or general correlations, forming a specific order or established mechanism of psychic appearances.⁵⁶

If we find in this mechanism an important driving force that is called “conscience,” then in spite of all the specific features of this appearance we are no farther away from the sphere of subjective representations than does the one of its kind ring of Saturn, which we can see through a telescope.

XIV

Kant, who labored as much under the burden of subjectivism in the moral sphere as he was proud of it in the theoretical, well understood that the fact of conscience by itself still does not liberate him from this subjectivism. If conscience is only a psychic phenomenon, then what is its obligatory force? And if it is more than this, then this means that the moral law has its foundation not only in us, but is also independent of us. In other words, this unconditional law presupposes an absolute legislator.

[186] Despite the influence of Rousseau, Kant, who was without any moral optimism, at the same time clearly saw the abyss between what should be according to the unconditional moral law and what there is in reality. He understood well that this abyss cannot be filled in, that the moral good cannot be fully triumphant and that the ideal cannot be completely realized given the conditions⁵⁷ of our empirical existence and of our mortal life. Here he “postulated” the immortality of the soul—the same soul the existence of which he had ruled out in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

Therefore, contrary to his critique Kant wanted to find⁵⁸ God behind the starry sky above us and the immortal soul in the image and likeness of God behind the voice of conscience within us.

He called these *postulates of practical reason and objects of rational belief*.^{59, 60} However, there is no belief at all here, since belief cannot be deduced. And there is

⁵⁴ C] of its own, that] of its own (is not a substance), that **AB**.

⁵⁵ C] by the same] by one and the same **AB**.

⁵⁶ C] of psychic appearances] *Absent in A*.

⁵⁷ C] given the conditions] within the bounds **AB**.

⁵⁸ C] wanted to find] found **A**.

⁵⁹ F] We will restrict ourselves here only to these two, since the question of free will lies on another intellectual plane.

⁶⁰ E] *postulates of practical reason*] See Kant 1996a: 238–247 E] *rational belief*] See Kant 1996a: 255–257.

little rationality, since the entire argument moves in a vicious circle: God and the immortal soul are deduced from morality, but morality itself is dependent upon God and the immortality of the soul.

By themselves, these two metaphysical⁶¹ ideas have no validity from Kant's point of view. However, since the reality of God and of the immortal soul is demanded in order for the moral law to have real significance, it follows that we recognize these ideas as valid truths. However, any skeptic or "critical philosopher" has every right to turn this argument directly against Kant: Since the existence of God and of the immortal soul is necessary to establish pure morality and the validity of these ideas cannot be proven, it follows that the pure morality depending on them, remains a presupposition without validity.

If the moral law actually has unconditional significance, it must be grounded on itself, and there is no need to connect it with these "postulates," the object of which was so systematically disgraced in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. If the moral law needs foundations for it to have real force, these foundations, in any case, must have an independent validity, which does not rest on it. The moral law [187] cannot depend in any way on something that depends on the moral law.

Morality actually is autonomous, and in this Kant was not mistaken. This great intellectual achievement, connected with his name, will not be lost to humanity. However, morality is autonomous, precisely because its essence is not an abstract formula, hanging in the air. It *has within itself all the conditions to make it real*. What moral life necessarily presupposes—the existence of God and of the immortal soul—is not a demand for something else that accompanies morality. They are its own, intrinsic foundation. God and the soul are not postulates of the moral law, but the direct, constituting forces of moral reality.⁶²

The fact that the moral good is not universally and definitively realized, that virtue does not always happen to be efficacious and *never* (in our present life) happens to be *fully* efficacious, obviously does not eliminate the other fact that the moral good still exists and the third fact that the degree of the moral good in humanity in general is *increasing*. This is to be understood not in the sense that individual people are becoming more virtuous or that the number of virtuous people is increasing, but in the sense that the average level of the *obligatory* moral demands that *are being met* is increasing. This is an historical fact that cannot honestly be disputed. What is the source of this increase in the moral good in humanity, taken as a collective whole, independently of the moral state of human individuals, *taken separately*? We know that the growth of the physical organism takes place through a surplus of nutrition that it obtains from the surrounding physico-organic environment, which *precedes* a given organism. Turning to moral growth, it is logically inexplicable from the physical, because such an explanation would ultimately amount to deducing something greater from that which is less or of something from nothing, which is absurd. Just as with physical growth, moral growth can be explained only from a surplus of nutrition, i.e., in general from the positive influence of the actual moral

⁶¹ C] metaphysical] *Absent in A.*

⁶² C] but the direct, constituting forces of moral reality.] but the direct content of moral experience—what is actually given in such experience. **A.**

or spiritual environment. In addition to the unsteady and for the most part doubtful moral growth of separate individuals, which is explicable by the educational activity of the social environment, there *is* the steady and indubitable spiritual growth of humanity or of the social environment itself (which is the entire sense of history). In order to explain this fact [188] logically, we need to accept the reality of a super-human environment, which feeds the collective life of humanity and the surplus of this feeding, which is responsible for its moral progress. And since the reality of this super-human Moral Good must be accepted, there is no basis to reject the spiritual influence of this Moral Good on the individual moral life of a person. Clearly, this highest activity extends to everyone capable of perceiving it. The influence of the social environment must be understood not as the source but only as one of the necessary conditions of the moral life of every person. Furthermore, once the moral life (understood both collectively and individually) is understood as the interaction of a person (and humanity) with the perfect super-human Moral Good, this life is essentially removed from the sphere of transient material appearances. That is, both the individual as well as the collective soul are recognized as immortal. This immortality does not presuppose in the least the substantiality of souls in themselves. It is possible to conceive each soul not as a separate independent substance, but only as one of many, inseparably linked, constant and, consequently, immortal *relations* of the Deity to some *universal* substrate of worldly life. However, a clearer determination of this is not of direct interest to moral philosophy. We know nothing *yet* (i.e., prior to a theoretical investigation of metaphysical questions) of the substantiality of the soul as well as of the substantiality of the Deity. We do know firmly, though, something: *God is alive—My soul is alive.*⁶³ If we would reject this fundamental principle, we would cease to understand and affirm ourselves as moral beings. That is, we would deny the very meaning of our existence.⁶⁴

⁶³ E] *God is alive—My soul is alive.*] Derzhavin 2005: 30. This poem dates from 1797.

⁶⁴ C] The fact that ... of existence.] *This entire long paragraph absent in AB.*

[189]Chapter 8

The Unconditional Principle of Morality

I

Neither a natural inclination to the moral good in particular individuals nor a rational awareness of one's duty is sufficient by itself to realize the moral good. However, our moral nature actually contains the principle of something greater than itself.¹

In terms of its content, the first two moral foundations—shame and pity—cannot be reduced either to the given psychic *state* of this or that person or to the universal rational *demand* of what should be. When a person is ashamed of certain desires and actions that spring from one's material nature, that person does more than express one's personal opinion or mental state at a particular moment. He *in fact cognizes a certain reality* that is independent of his opinions and contingent states, viz., the reality of the human spiritual, supermaterial essence. In feeling shame, we actually² *reject* fundamental material inclinations as foreign and hostile. Clearly, the person who rejects and the thing rejected cannot be one and the same. Those who are ashamed of a material fact cannot themselves be *merely* a material fact. What is a material fact that is ashamed of and rejects itself, that judges itself and acknowledges itself as unworthy? Would this not be a direct absurdity, an example of the logically impossible?

Thus, the feeling of shame, which is the basis of our proper relation to material nature, is something more than a simple psychological phenomenon. In an obvious manner, we find within it a certain general truth, namely, that the human being has a spiritual, supermaterial essence. This spiritual essence in a person appears in the form of shame, and in the ascetic morality based on it, [190]not just as a possibility but also as a *reality*, not just as a demand but even to a certain degree also as a

E] In the first edition of the compiled book (B), this chapter appeared as Chap. 7 and contained an additional nine sections (§§XI–XIX, pp. 220–249 in the first edition), which were moved to Chap. 9 in the second edition.

¹ C] contains the principle of something greater than itself.] contains something greater. AB.

² C] actually] *Absent in AB.*

realization. Those whose spirit dominates their material nature have actually existed and do exist. If there are comparatively few of them, this means only that the moral demand has not yet been finally and completely realized. It does not mean that there has been no realization at all of such a demand or that it is just a demand. It is impossible to say that the moral principle of shame wholly lacks realization, but only that it has not been *perfectly* realized, or, in other words, that it has not achieved real perfection.

In a similar way, the feeling of pity, or compassion, which is the basis of a person's proper relation to one's fellow humans, expresses not only the mental state of a given person, but also a certain universal objective truth, viz., the truth of the unity of existents, or the real solidarity of all creatures. In fact, if the lives of all were not connected by this fundamental unity, if they were foreign and external to one another, one could not actually put oneself into another's shoes, could not transfer the states of others to oneself or internally³ experience them together with others. For commiseration is an actual state and not merely an imaginary one, nor is it an abstract conception. The bond of sympathy between beings, expressed in the fundamental feeling of pity and developed in the morality of altruism, is not just a demand but also the actual start of this fulfillment. The real and historically increasing solidarity within human communities testifies to this fact.⁴ The defect in this morality lies not in that this morality has by no means been realized, but only that it has not yet been fully and wholly realized. Although it provides no *theoretical conception* of the spiritual principle in human beings, the feeling of shame does prove beyond doubt the *existence* of that principle. Likewise, although it tells us nothing specific about the metaphysical essence of the universal unity, the feeling of pity shows *in fact* the existence of a certain fundamental *pre-experiential* connection between distinct individuals, who although empirically separate are yet becoming all the more united in the same empirical reality.⁵

II

In the two moral spheres indicated by shame and pity, the moral good is already known to be the truth and is realized in reality, [191]albeit only imperfectly. In the third sphere of moral relations, viz., the one determined by a religious feeling, or reverence, the true object of such a feeling reveals itself to be the highest or perfect moral good, not just being realized but unconditionally and fully realized, i.e., the eternal existent.

The inner foundation of religion consists of more than a mere awareness⁶ of our dependence upon a power immeasurably greater than ourselves. In its pure form,

³ C] internally] really **AB**.

⁴ C] The real and ... testifies to this fact.] *Absent in AB*.

⁵ C] who although empirically ... same empirical reality.] who are empirically separate. **AB**.

⁶ C] a mere awareness] an awareness **AB**.

the religious state ultimately amounts to the joyous *feeling* that there *is* an entity infinitely better than ourselves and that our life and our destiny, like everything that exists, depends upon it—not upon an absurd fate, but upon the real and perfect Moral Good—the *indivisible, which includes everything within itself*.⁷

The reality of what is experienced is given in a genuine religious experience. We do, in fact, perceive the real presence of the Deity and experience within ourselves his influence. Abstract arguments are powerless against such an experienced reality. If a person is ashamed of his or her animal desires, is it possible to prove to this person that he or she is merely an animal? *In the very fact of shame*, one senses and proves oneself to be in fact something more and higher than an animal. When, through feeling pity, the other person's suffering arouses in us the corresponding state and forces us to be aware of this other person as a being like ourselves, what force could theoretical arguments have that the other, for whom my heart aches, is merely my representation without perhaps existing on its own? If I sense an inner connection between myself and another person, such a feeling testifies to the real existence of this other person no less than it does to my own. This conclusion, however, holds not only with respect to compassion or pity but also with respect to a religious feeling. The only difference is that the object of the latter is sensed not as something equal to⁸ us, but as something unconditionally superior, all-embracing and perfect. If I cannot accept the idea that a creature, which stirs in me a lively sense of compassion, itself does not live and suffer, even less can I accept that the highest, who instills reverence in us and fills our soul with unspeakable bliss, does not exist. We cannot doubt the reality [192] of what palpably acts on us and whose activity is given in the very fact of our experience. That I do not always have this experience and that others may not experience it at all no more disproves the reality of my experience and of its object than the fact that I do not see daylight at night and that the blind never see it at all disproves the existence of the sun and of sight. In addition, many people presently have, and earlier all people had, a wrong conception of the Sun, taking it to be small and revolving around the Earth. However, neither the existence of the Sun nor my certainty in it is in the least altered by this fact. In precisely the same way, theoretical contradictions and errors in religious matters have nothing to do with the real object of religion. Theological systems, like astronomical ones, are a concern of the human mind and depend upon the level of its development and on the amount of our positive knowledge. Correct theology, like correct astronomy, is an important and necessary business. However, it is not necessarily our *first* concern. The epicycles of the Alexandrian astronomers and Tycho Brahe's division of the solar system did not prevent anyone from enjoying the light and warmth of the Sun, and, for all practical purposes, the error of these astronomers, once discovered, did not lead anyone to doubt the real existence of the Sun and the planets. In the same way, the most erroneous and absurd theological doctrine cannot prevent anyone from experiencing the Deity, nor can it cause anyone to doubt the reality of what is given in such an experience.

⁷ C] —*the indivisible, which includes everything within itself*.] Absent in A.

⁸ C] something equal to] something homogeneous with A.

Abstract theoretical doubts have risen and continue to rise not only concerning the existence of God, but also concerning the existence of every other thing. Only people quite unaccustomed to philosophical thought can think that the existence of the physical world or even of our neighbors is obvious *to the mind*. In fact, such a doubt is the first foundation of all speculative philosophy worthy of the name. In one way or another, these theoretical doubts are resolved by various epistemological and metaphysical theories. However interesting and important these theories may be, they have no direct significance for life and human activity. Yet moral philosophy, the object of which is actually given in our spiritual nature and the guiding, practical truths which follow with logical necessity from that what is given, has such significance.

[193]The correlation mentioned between spiritual and physical blindness is further reinforced by the following fact. It is well known that those who are blind from birth happen to be not only quite healthy in other respects, but even have a distinct advantage over those with sight in that their other senses, e.g., hearing and touch, are more highly developed. Similarly, people who lack a receptivity to the divine light happen to be in other respects, both practical and theoretical, not only completely normal but also usually prove to have a superior ability to others in other pursuits, including the sciences. It is understandable that a person particularly attracted to the absolute center of life cannot pay equal attention to relative objects. This is why one cannot possibly be surprised that in the special mundane tasks of humanity, a great share of the work and of the successes belongs to those who are blind to the higher light. Even though such a “division of labor” is natural, it provides a certain teleological explanation of atheism, which, on the whole, must perform some positive, good purpose, whatever the particular negative causes may be in each case. If an historical event is necessary, if a real union of humanity is necessary, if it is necessary that in a given epoch people invent and construct all kinds of machines, dig the Suez Canal, discover unknown lands, etc., then it is also necessary for the successful fulfillment of these tasks that not everyone be a mystic and not even a serious believer. Of course, the highest will does not intentionally make anyone an atheist to fulfill its own historical purposes. However, a complex chain of events, conclusively affirmed by this or that voluntary decision on the person’s part, can render that person spiritually blind. Once that has happened, it is the business of Providence to direct this “harm” so that it would “not be without good,” in other words, so that the subjective wrong would have an objective justification.⁹

III

The reality of the deity is not *deduced* from religious experience, but is the *content* of such an experience. *It is the very thing that is experienced*. If you take away this experienced reality of a higher principle, nothing remains in the religious experi-

⁹ C] The correlation mentioned . . . have an objective justification.] *Entire paragraph absent in AB.*

ence. There will be nothing left. [194] However, such experience does indeed *exist*, and this means what is given in it, what is experienced in it, also exists. *God does exist within us; He exists.*

However complete the experience of our inner unity with God, it never becomes an awareness of a single, undifferentiated identity or merger. The experience of this unity is always accompanied by¹⁰ an inseparable experience that the deity, which acts and reveals itself in us and with which we are united, is something distinct and independent of us, that it is before, higher and greater than us. Thus, God is an in-itself. The object of experience is logically prior to any given experience. The reality of an object does not depend on any of its actions. When we have to say to someone, “*God is not within you,*”¹¹ each of us understands that this is not a denial of the deity, but only a recognition of the moral worthlessness of that person in whom there is no room for God, i.e., no inner receptivity to God’s action. Certainly, this conclusion would not change even if we recognize¹² that all people have such an inability to receive¹³ the deity.

It does not follow from my feeling of compassion for another person that both of us are one and the same (the very same subject), but only that I am similar to and have a sense of solidarity with this other person. Likewise, just because in a religious feeling we experience God in ourselves or ourselves in God it does not follow that we are one and the same with Him, but only that we are internally connected with Him, “for we are also His offspring.”¹⁴ Unlike in the case of our neighbors, this connection is not fraternal, but filial. It is not a solidarity of equality, but of dependence. Furthermore, this dependence is not external and contingent, but essential and intrinsic. In a genuine religious feeling, the deity is conceived as the completeness of all the conditions of our life, as that without which life would be for us absurd and impossible.¹⁵ The deity is conceived as the *first principle*, the true *medium* and the final *goal* of existence. Since everything is already in God, we cannot add anything, any new content, from ourselves. We cannot make absolute perfection more perfect. However, we can assimilate it more and more; we can unite ourselves more and more closely with it. Therefore, our relation to the deity is that of *form to content*.¹⁶

Upon further analysis of what in religious feeling is given [195] as a living experience of the reality of the deity, we find ourselves in a threefold relation to this perfect reality, to the absolute Moral Good or supreme Good: (1) We are aware that we are different from Him. Since there is in Him the full scope of perfection, we can distinguish ourselves from Him only in terms of negative qualities or

¹⁰ C] by] along with A.

¹¹ E] Cf. Luke 17: 21—“The Kingdom of God is within you.” Leo Tolstoy had published in 1894 a work with that title urging non-resistance. See Tolstoy 1894.

¹² C] recognize] find AB.

¹³ C] inability to receive] aversion towards receiving AB.

¹⁴ E] Acts 17: 28.

¹⁵ C] as that without which life would be for us absurd and impossible] *Absent in A.*

¹⁶ E] Clearly, an allusion to Kant’s “transcendental” or “formal idealism”.

determinations, i.e., in terms of our imperfection, impotence, maliciousness, and suffering. We are, in this respect, the opposite of the deity, its *negative other*. Such is the lower, earthly principle, *from which* humanity was created (his *υλη*, or *causa materialis*),¹⁷ which in the Bible is called “soil from the ground” (*kaphar aadam*).¹⁸ (2) However, although we are merely a combination of all possible imperfections, we are aware of the absolute perfection as that which truly is, and in this awareness we are ideally united with Him. We reflect Him in ourselves. This idea of all-unity, as forming¹⁹ the principle of our life (*ειδος, causa formalis*),²⁰ is, in biblical terms, the “image of God”²¹ in us (to put it more precisely, a reflection, *zelem* from *zel*, or shadow). (3) In God, however, the ideal perfection is fully realized, and being aware of the deity as an idea or a reflection of him in us, we are not satisfied. Rather, like God, we want to be *really* perfect. Additionally, since our factual being is opposed to this, we strive to transform, or perfect, our being; we strive to liken (to assimilate) our bad reality to this absolute ideal. Therefore, although our given (or inherited) condition sets us against the deity, we are becoming similar to it in what we aspire to. The goal of our life, that for which we exist (*οἰ ενεκα, causa finalis*)²² is this “likeness of God” (*d’mut*).²³

The religious attitude certainly includes discrimination and comparison. We can stand in a religious relation to what is higher only if we are aware of it in this capacity, i.e., as higher, or if we are aware of its superiority to us and, consequently, of our unworthiness. However, we cannot be aware of our unworthiness or imperfection, if we have no idea of the opposite, i.e., of perfection. Besides, if an awareness of our own imperfection and of the divine perfection is to have real efficacy, it cannot stop with this opposition but certainly must evoke a desire to eliminate it through the transformation of our reality into the highest ideal, i.e., into the image and likeness of God. Thus, [196] the full religious attitude is logically composed of three moral categories: (1) *imperfection* (in us), (2) *perfection* (in God), and (3) *the process of becoming perfect* (or the process whereby the first comes to agree with the second) as our life’s task.²⁴

¹⁷ E] his *υλη*, or *causa materialis*] In his *Physics*, Aristotle writes of four causes. One of these, *υλη*, or *causa materialis*, is the material out of which something is made.

¹⁸ E] Genesis 2: 7. The original Hebrew is today commonly rendered as “*apar adamah*.”

¹⁹ C] This idea of all-unity, as forming] This highest consciousness, as forming **AB**.

²⁰ E] Another of Aristotle’s four causes. The formal cause of something is its essence, or what makes something what it essentially is.

²¹ E] Genesis 1: 27.

²² E] The “final cause,” the last of Aristotle’s four causes, is the purpose or function that a thing is made to serve.

²³ E] “likeness of God” (*d’mut*)] See, for example, Genesis 5:1.

²⁴ C] as our life’s task] *Absent in A*.

IV

The psychological point of view as well as that of formal morality confirms a logical analysis of the religious attitude and of its threefold structure.

Psychologically, i.e., as a subjective state, the fundamental religious attitude is manifested²⁵ in the feeling of reverence, or, more precisely, reverential love.²⁶ This feeling necessarily involves: (1) self-deprecation of the one who experiences it, or disapproval of his or her present reality; (2) a positive²⁷ feeling of the higher ideal as another reality, or as what truly exists (after all, to revere an indubitable falsehood or a personal phantasy is psychologically impossible); (3) an aspiration for a real change in oneself and in one's reality in the sense of approaching a higher perfection. Without this aspiration, a religious feeling is transformed into an abstract thought. On the contrary, a real aspiration for the deity is already the beginning of a unification with Him. In religious love, we sense our inner connection with God at the same time as we distinguish ourselves from Him. Experiencing His reality in ourselves, we find ourselves united with this higher reality and make an (inner, subjective) start to the coming full unification of the entire world with God. Here is the feeling of inner enthusiasm and bliss, peculiar to the true religious frame of mind, a feeling that the apostle calls the "joy of the Holy Ghost"²⁸ and "the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."²⁹ This is the prophetic spirit, which anticipates the full scope of our definitive assimilation and unification with the Deity. It is not yet complete but is already actually beginning and has begun, and we already have a foretaste of the joy of this fulfillment.

[197] From the side of formal morality, an awareness (in religious feeling) of the higher ideal as actually existing and of our discrepancy with it *obliges* us to move towards real perfection. What arouses the feeling of reverence in us, thereby asserts its *right* to our devotion, and if we are aware of the actual and unconditional superiority of the deity over us, then our devotion to it *should* be real and unlimited. That is, it should form the unconditional rule of our life.

This religious feeling, expressed in the form of the imperative mood (the categorical imperative), tells us not only *to desire perfection*, but *to be perfect*. This means not only to have a good will, to be honest, good tempered³⁰ and virtuous, but even to be free from pain, be immortal,³¹ imperishable. Not only this, but we should

²⁵ C] manifested] expressed A.

²⁶ F] Of other languages, German best expresses this subjective basis of religion with the words "Ehrfurcht, ehrfurchtsvolle Liebe." This can even be called an ascending love, *amor ascendens*. Cf. the conclusion to this book. C] *Entire note absent in A* C] Cf. the conclusion of this book.] *Absent in B* E] "Ehrfurcht, ehrfurchtsvolle Liebe." German: reverence, reverent love E] *amor ascendens*] Cf. "In this way true love is both ascending and descending (*amor ascendens et amor descendens*) ... Solovyov 1985: 92.

²⁷ C] positive] *Absent in A*.

²⁸ E] 1 Thessalonians 1: 6.

²⁹ E] 2 Corinthians 1: 22.

³⁰ C] , good tempered] *Absent in AB*.

³¹ C] be immortal] be corporeally immortal A.

even do so in order that all our neighbors become morally perfect and at the same time³² free from pain, immortal and their bodies imperishable. In fact, genuine perfection should grasp the entirety of every person; it³³ should extend to our entire reality, and other creatures should enter into this reality too. If, in addition to moral perfection,³⁴ we *do not want* them to be free from pain, immortal and imperishable, then we have no pity for them, i.e., we are internally imperfect, and if we want, but *cannot*, make it so, then we are feeble, i.e., our inner perfection is inadequate to manifest itself objectively. That is, it is only subjective, half perfect, or, in other words,³⁵ imperfect. In both cases, we have not fulfilled the unconditional command: Be perfect.

However, what does this command mean? It is quite clear that by the action of our will alone, however pure and intense it may be, we not only cannot serve the dead but, contrary to the claims of the doctrine of “mental healing,”³⁶ cannot even always save ourselves or our neighbors from a toothache or from gout.

This clearly means that the command “Be perfect” demands not individual acts of the will, but poses to us a *life-long task*. A simple act of the pure will is necessary in order to *accept* this task, but that alone is still not enough for it to be fulfilled. *The process of [198]becoming³⁷ perfect* is the necessary and unavoidable path to perfection. In this way, the unconditional command “Be perfect,” in fact, means *become perfect*.

V

Perfection, i.e., the full scope of the good, the unity of the moral good and the real good, is expressed in three forms: (1) as unconditionally existing, eternally real perfection, in God; (2) as a potential perfection in human consciousness, which involves the absolute full scope of being as an idea and in the human will, which takes it as an ideal and a norm for itself; and finally (3) in the actual realization of perfection, i.e., in the historical process of *becoming perfect*.

Here from the point of view of abstract *moralism*,³⁸ the question is posed (and answered in advance): Why is this third form, viz., perfection as something actively realized, necessary? Why is historical *action*, with its political and cultural tasks,

³² C] become morally perfect and at the same time] be **AB**.

³³ C] genuine perfection should grasp the entirety of every person; it] actual perfection **AB**.

³⁴ C] , in addition to moral perfection,] *Absent in AB*.

³⁵ C] our inner perfection is ... or, in other words,] physically **AB**.

³⁶ E] “mental healing”] Solov’ev provides the English expression in parenthesis immediately after rendering it in Russian.

³⁷ C] *The process of becoming*] The moral process of becoming **AB**.

³⁸ C] abstract *moralism*,] view of an immature consciousness, which its superficial subjectivity softens, **A**.

necessary? If we have the light of truth and a pure will within us, what is there still to worry about?

However, the goal of historical action lies precisely in the definitive *justification* of the moral good, given in our true³⁹ consciousness and with the best intention. The entire historical process produces the real⁴⁰ conditions under which the moral good can actually become common property and without which it cannot be realized. All historical development—not only of humanity but also of the physical world—is the necessary path to perfection. No one will take to prove that a mollusk or a sponge can know the truth and freely coordinate its will with the absolute good. Consequently, it was necessary to introduce into the world⁴¹ more and more complex and refined organic forms until a form was created in which consciousness and the desire for perfection could be revealed. However, this consciousness and desire are only the *possibility* of perfection, and once a person is aware of and desires what one does not have, then it is clear that⁴² this consciousness and will in no way can be the *completion*. They are only the *beginning* of one's life and activity. A speck of living protoplasm, the creation of which also demanded significant creative power, contains the possibility of the human organism, but the realization of this possibility demanded a very⁴³ complex and protracted biological process.⁴⁴ However, no formless lump of organic substance, nor even [199]an insufficiently formed living body, such as a sponge, polyp, or a cuttle fish can by itself give rise to the human being, though they potentially contain a human being. In precisely the same way, a formless horde of savages or even an inadequately formed organization of barbarian states cannot directly⁴⁵ give birth to the kingdom of God, i.e., to the perfect image of the human and world-wide communion of life, even though the remote⁴⁶ possibility of such a communion is contained in the feelings and thoughts of these savages and barbarians.

Just as the human spirit in nature necessarily requires the most perfect of physical organisms in order really to manifest itself, so the Divine Spirit in humanity or the Kingdom of God requires for its actual manifestation the most perfect social organization, which is also being produced by world history. Just as the simplest element of this historical process—the individual human being—is more capable of conscious and free activity than the simplest element in the biological process, viz., the organic cell, so the very creation of a collective, world body has a more conscious and volitional character than the organic processes that determine⁴⁷ the

³⁹ C] *justification* of the moral good, given in our true] realization of our moral A] *justification* of our true B.

⁴⁰ C] real] *Absent in A*.

⁴¹ C] into the world] *Absent in A*.

⁴² C] it is clear that] *Absent in A*.

⁴³ C] demanded a very] demanded not only a very AB.

⁴⁴ C] biological process.] biological process, but one that is also painful. AB.

⁴⁵ C] directly] *Absent in AB*.

⁴⁶ C] remote] *Absent in AB*.

⁴⁷ C] determine] condition AB.

lineage of our corporeal being. However, there is no unconditional opposition here. For, on the one hand, the rudiments of consciousness and the will are undoubtedly peculiar to all living beings, even though they do not have a decisive significance in the general process of perfecting the organic forms. On the other hand, the course and the outcome of world history are by no means exhausted by the conscious and intentional activity of historical figures. In any case, however, at a certain point in the intellectual and moral development of a particular person, the question of how one is to treat historical tasks becomes unavoidable.

The significance⁴⁸ of the historical (as opposed to the cosmic) process lies in the fact that it takes place with the ever increasing participation of individual agents. At the present time, when this characteristic of history has become sufficiently clear, is it not strange to assert that a person should reject all historical action and that the perfect state of humanity and of the entire universe will be achieved *by itself*? This “by itself” certainly does not mean through the play of blind physical forces that neither aspire to nor have the ability in any way to create from themselves the Kingdom of God. [200]Here “by itself” means by the immediate action of God. However, how do we explain, from this point of view, that God has not up to now acted immediately? If only two principles are necessary for the realization of the perfect life, or Kingdom of God, namely, God and the human soul, which (potentially) perceives Him, then the Kingdom of God could have been established with the appearance of the first human being. What was the need for all these long centuries and millennia of human history? And if this process is necessary, because the Kingdom of God could be revealed no more to savage cannibals than to savage beasts, if it was necessary for humanity to work up from a brutal, formless and individual state to a definite organization and unity, then it is clear as day that this process has not yet ended. Just as historical action was necessary yesterday, so it is necessary today and will be necessary tomorrow too as long as all the conditions for the actual and complete realization of the Kingdom of God have not been created.

VI

The historical process is a long and difficult *transition* from *bestial humanity* to *divine humanity*. Who will seriously assert that the final step has already been taken, that the image and the likeness of the beast has been internally abolished in humanity and replaced by the image and likeness of God, that there are no more historical tasks that demand the organized activity of social groups and that the only thing left for us is to recognize this fact, to attest to this truth and then rest reassured? However, in spite of the absurdity of this view, expressed simply and directly, it chiefly amounts to today’s rather widespread⁴⁹ advocacy of social decay and individual quietism that passes itself off as the creed of an unconditional moral principle.

⁴⁸ C] The significance] The entire significance **AB**.

⁴⁹ C] rather widespread] fashionable **AB**.

However, the unconditional principle of morality cannot be an illusion. Is it not really an illusion when an individual claims that his own inability to realize in practice the ideal of universal perfection shows such a realization is *unnecessary*? This is a patent illusion. The truth that conscience and reason tell on the basis of actual religious feeling is the following.

In practice, I cannot alone realize what should be. I alone [201] can do nothing. Thank God, however, I do not exist alone, my impotent loneliness is only a subjective state that depends upon myself. In my thoughts and my will, I can separate myself from everything, but this is only a self-delusion. Apart from these false thoughts and this bad will, nothing exists in isolation. Everything is connected both intrinsically and externally.

I am not alone. God Almighty is with me and so is the world, i.e., everything contained in God. And if they exist, then between them there is also a positive interaction. From the very idea of the deity, it follows that that to which God stands in an unequivocally negative relation, or what He unconditionally does not want, could not exist at all. However, the world does exist. Consequently, there is also positive Divine activity in it. Nevertheless, the world cannot be the end of this activity, because the world is imperfect. If it cannot be the end, then it must be the means. The world is the system of conditions for the realization of the kingdom of ends. That which is capable of perceiving the perfection in it will enter with full legitimacy into this Kingdom.⁵⁰ The rest serve as the material and the instruments for creating it. Everything that exists exists only by virtue of its approval by God. However, God approves in two ways: Some things are good as instruments, while others as an end and a cessation (*shabbat*). Each step in the act of creating the world was approved from above, but the Scriptures distinguish between simple and substantial approval. Concerning all the things created in six worldly days, it says that they are good (*tob, καλά*),⁵¹ but only concerning the last of these creations—the human being—does it say very good (*tob meod, καλά λίαν*).⁵² In another holy book, it is said that Divine Wisdom attends to all creation but that her joy is in her human sons. In⁵³ their consciousness and freedom, there is the inner possibility for each of them to relate to God independently and, consequently, to be His direct end, to be a citizen with full rights in the kingdom of ends. The realization of this possibility for all is world history. A person who participates in it through his own experience, through his interaction with others, attains real perfection. The perfection that a person attains, i.e., a full, conscious and free unity with the Deity is precisely what God ultimately wants. This is the unconditional good. Inner freedom, i.e., a voluntary and conscious preference for good over evil in everything [202] is the chief and fundamental condition of this perfection, or the complete moral good (*tob meod*).

⁵⁰ C] That which is capable ... into this Kingdom.] That which corresponds to perfection enters into this Kingdom. **AB**.

⁵¹ E] Genesis 1: 25.

⁵² E] Genesis 1: 31.

⁵³ C] In] This is so, for in **AB**.

The human being is dear to God not as a passive instrument of His will—there are enough of such instruments in the physical world—but as a voluntary ally and accomplice of His world-wide concerns. This human complicity certainly enters into the very goal of God’s activity in the world. For if this goal were conceivable without human activity, then it would have been already attained centuries ago. After all, in God himself there can be no process of increasing perfection, but only one eternal and unattainable plenitude of all goods. And just as it is inconceivable for an absolute being to increase⁵⁴ in goodness and perfection, so conversely it is inconceivable for a human being to obtain perfection at once without the process of becoming perfect. Surely, this is not a thing that one person can give to another. It is an inner state, attainable only through one’s own experience. Without doubt, every human being receives all the positive content of life and, even more, its perfection from God. However, in order to be able to receive it, in order to become a receptive form of the divine content (and human perfection consists merely in this), it is necessary that the human being, by real experience, get rid of and be cleared of everything that is not combined with this perfect state. The human race as a whole attains this state in the historical process. It is, therefore, through the latter that the will of God is realized in the world.

This will is revealed to us individual human beings—though certainly not as a deception, but as our truth. Human truth lies not in being isolated from the whole, but in being together with the whole.

VII

The moral duty of religion demands that we unite our will with that of God. However, the will of God is all-encompassing, and by uniting or really harmonizing with it we thereby obtain an unconditional and universal rule of action. The concept of God, which reason deduces from the data of real religious experience is so clear and definite that we can always, if we so desire, know what God wants from us. Above all, God wants us to conform and be similar [203]to Him. We should manifest our inner affinity with the deity, our ability and determination⁵⁵ to achieve free perfection. This can be expressed in the form of a rule: *Have God within you.*

Whoever has God within oneself, relates to everything according to God’s thought or “from the standpoint of the absolute.” Thus, *relate to everything as God would.*

However, God’s relation to everything is not one of indifference. God is above the contradiction between good and evil, but this is not a matter of indifference. Inanimate objects are indifferent to good and evil, but this lower state cannot be ascribed to the deity. If, according to the scriptures, God raises the sun above good and evil, then surely this single light, illuminating different people and concerns,

⁵⁴ C] increase] progress A.

⁵⁵ C] and determination] *Absent in A.*

shows their difference. And if according to the same words, God sends His rain to the righteous and to sinners, then surely this same moisture of God's grace produces different fruits from different soil and from different seeds. It is impossible to suppose that God allows evil or that He rejects it unconditionally: the former, because evil would then be good, and the latter, because evil then could not exist. However, evil does exist. God rejects evil as final or abiding and by virtue of this rejection it perishes, but He allows it as *a transient condition of freedom, i.e., of a higher moral good*. God allows evil, because, on the one hand, its direct rejection or annihilation would be a violation of human freedom. To do so would be a greater evil, since it would make perfect (free) moral goodness in the world *impossible*. On the other hand, God allows evil, since He in his Wisdom has the *possibility* of deriving a greater good from evil or the greatest possible perfection.⁵⁶ This is the cause of the existence of evil.⁵⁷ Therefore, evil is something secondary and to reject it unconditionally would mean to treat it unjustly. We should treat evil in a Godly manner, i.e., without being indifferent to it. We must remain, however, above unconditional opposition to it and accept it—when it does not [204]originate from us—as⁵⁸ an instrument for becoming perfect insofar as we can derive a greater good from it. In all that exists, we must recognize the *possibility* (potentiality) of the good and assist this possibility to become a reality. The direct possibility of the perfect moral good is given in rational, free creatures like ourselves. Recognizing our own unconditional significance by virtue of our inherent *awareness* of the absolute ideal (the image of God) and of our *aspiration* to realize it fully (likeness of God), we, in fairness, should recognize the same in all others and understand our obligation to become perfect not only as a task in our personal lives, but also as an inseparable part of the world historical process.⁵⁹ Thus, we can state the unconditional principle of morality fully in the following form:

In perfect inner agreement with the higher will, and recognizing the unconditional significance or value of all others—since the image and likeness of God is in them too—participate as much as possible in your own affairs and in those of the general process of increasing perfection for the sake of the final revelation of the Kingdom of God in the world.

⁵⁶ C] God allows evil ... greatest possible perfection.] God maintains evil, since He extracts from it the greatest possible perfection. A] God maintains evil, since, on the one hand, its direct rejection or annihilation would be a violation of human freedom and consequently would make the perfect (free) moral good in the world *impossible*. On the other hand, God has in His Wisdom the possibility of deriving a greater good from evil or the greatest possible perfection. B.

⁵⁷ F] I certainly should limit myself here to general logical remarks. The real solution to the problem is possible only on the basis of a metaphysical investigation into the essence of God and into the origin of evil in the world.

⁵⁸ C] it—when it does not originate from us—as] it as **AB**.

⁵⁹ C] The direct possibility ... world historical process.] *Absent in A*.

VIII

We can easily see that all positive moral principles are combined and realized in the unconditional principle of morality, and that at the same time it fully satisfies the natural demand for bliss understood as the possibility of possessing the highest real good.

Demanding that the human being be a friend and assistant to God, the unconditional moral principle does not cancel the particular demands of morality, but, on the contrary, affirms and shines a brighter light on them and provides them sanctification.

Above all, it regards itself as the direct development and final expression of the religious basis of morality. This higher demand presupposes a lower one. Just as the nursing infant in essence cannot be a friend and assistant to his or her father, so a spiritually immature person has an inner essential obstacle to standing in a relation of immediate, free solidarity with God. [205] Authoritative guidance and education are at first equally necessary in both instances. Herein lies the complete justification of external religious institutions—of sacrifices, hierarchy, etc. Aside from their deep mystical sense, which makes them an abiding connection between heaven and earth, they, undoubtedly, have a paramount pedagogical significance for humanity. There never was and never could be a time when all people were spiritually equal to one another. Using this unavoidable inequality, Providence has, from the start, selected the best to be⁶⁰ the spiritual teachers of the mob. Of course, the inequality here was only relative—the mentors of the savages were semi-savage themselves. This is why the very character of religious institutions changes, becoming more perfect in accordance with the general course of history. However, as long as the historical process is not complete,⁶¹ there certainly will be no person who can in all conscience consider the mediation of religious institutions to be quite unnecessary for others, and, of course, for oneself. It is these institutions that connect us with the activity of God that has already been realized in history. Even if we could find such a person, then, in any case, he or she would not treat such religious “externality” negatively. For such a person, it would not be *merely an externality*, since he or she would understand the full scope of the inner sense within it and its real connection with the future realization of that sense.⁶² A person who is older than school age and has achieved the summit of education certainly has no reason to go to school. However, this person has even less reason to reject it and to suggest to schoolchildren that all of their teachers are parasites and frauds and that they themselves are perfect people or that academic establishments are the root of all evil and therefore should be wiped from the face of the Earth.

⁶⁰ C] the best to be] *Absent in AB*.

⁶¹ C] complete,] finished A.

⁶² C] For such a person, it would ... of that sense.] *Absent in AB*.

The true “friend of God”⁶³ understands and holds dear all manifestations of the divine both in the physical world and even more so in human history. If he stands on one of the upper rungs of the ladder leading to divine humanity, he certainly will not hack the lower rungs on which his brothers stand and which still support him too.

Religious feeling raised to an unconditional and all-encompassing principle of life raises to the same height the two other basic moral feelings with the obligations that follow from them, namely the feeling of pity, which determines our proper [206]relation to those like ourselves and the feeling of shame, upon which our proper relation to lower, material nature is based.

IX

The pity that we feel towards other creatures similar to ourselves receives another meaning when we see the image and likeness of God in them. Here, we recognize these creatures as having *unconditional* dignity. We recognize that God sees them as an end, and the more so should they too be an end for us. We recognize that God does not treat these creatures *merely* as an instrument of His activity, and the less so have we the right to treat them as an instrument for ourselves. *We respect them, since God respects them*, or more precisely: *We should take them into consideration*,⁶⁴ *since God takes them into consideration*. With this higher point of view, pity does not vanish in those instances where it would in itself be natural. On the contrary, it is only strengthened and extended. I pity not only their sufferings, but also the cause of those sufferings. I pity the fact that his reality is so incommensurable with his essential dignity and possible perfection. The *obligation* that follows from this sense of altruism is also elevated. We cannot be content with refraining from offensive actions against our neighbors or be satisfied with helping them with their troubles. We should help them to become more perfect so that the image and likeness of God that we recognize in them can be realized. No one alone can realize either in himself or in someone else the infinite and full scope of perfection, the aspiration for which likens us to God. Therefore, altruism at its highest religious stage obliges us to accept active participation in the general historical process, which creates the conditions for the appearance of the Kingdom of God. Consequently, it also obliges us to participate actively in those collective organizations (particularly governmental ones, since they embrace all others), by means of which the historical process is carried out according to the will of Providence. Not everyone is called to political activity or to state service in the narrow sense, but everyone is obliged to serve in one’s own way the same end, viz., the general good, which the state itself should serve.⁶⁵

⁶³ E] James 2: 23.

⁶⁴ C] or more precisely: *We should take him into consideration.*] *Absent in AB.*

⁶⁵ C] Not everyone is called ... itself should serve.] *Absent in AB.*

In the religious sphere, the unconditional moral principle [207] suggests to us a positive attitude towards church institutions and traditions as educational means, which lead humanity to the goal of higher perfection. Likewise, in the sphere of purely human relations governed by pity and altruism the same unconditional moral principle prescribes active service to collective organizations (such as the state), through which the same Providence protects humanity from material disintegration, unites it and makes possible its progressive perfection. We know that relying merely on what the historical forms of religion have given and are giving to humanity, we can actually attain a free and perfect union with the Deity, the possibility and promise of which is given in our inner religious feeling. Likewise, we know that without the concentrated and organized social force that the state represents we cannot actually extend to all our neighbors the help that we are persistently prompted to give by the simple moral feeling of pity for their distresses and by the higher religious principle of respect for their unconditional dignity, which demands to be realized.

In both instances, in connecting our submission to church and state forms of social life with the unconditional principle of morality we recognize thereby this submission as *conditional*, inasmuch as it is determined by this higher meaning of life and depends on it. The institutions that should serve the good in humanity can more or less deviate from their purpose and even betray it. In such a case, the obligation of a person, true to the Good, cannot lie either in absolutely rejecting these institutions because of the abuses—this would be unfair—nor in blindly submitting to them in both good and evil, which would be profane and unworthy. Our obligation becomes an active pursuit to correct these institutions, insisting on their proper task.⁶⁶ If we know why and in the name of what we should submit to a certain institution, then we thereby know the means and extent of our submission. For us, it will never be unlimited, blind and slavish. We will never become spineless and foolish instruments of external forces. We will never put the church in the place of the deity or the state [208] in that of humanity. We will not take transient forms and the instruments of providential work in history to be the essence and goal of this work. Subordinating our personal impotence and inadequacy to historical forces, our higher awareness regards these forces as God does. We use them as the instruments and the conditions of the perfect good. In this way, we certainly do not renounce our human dignity but, on the contrary, affirm and realize it as unconditional.

I can use material power and move my arms to save someone who is drowning or give food to the hungry. In this way, far from belittling myself I increase my moral dignity. Why, then, is the use of the spiritual and material powers of government for the good of entire nations and all of humanity a belittling and not an enhancement of our morality? This unconditional contempt for material power is called forth by a dualism, equally opposed to reason and morality. If it is shameful to submit to the material elements, then it is unfair⁶⁷ and pernicious to deny their right to exist. In any case, the *unconditional* principle of morality extends also to the material sphere.

⁶⁶ C] The institutions that should ... their proper task.] *Absent in AB.*

⁶⁷ C] unfair] bad A.

X

The feeling of shame alone testifies to the independence of our being and protects its integrity from the destructive incursion of foreign powers. At the lower stages of development, where the sensual sphere exclusively predominates, corporeal chastity has special significance and the feeling of shame is originally connected with this side of life. However, with the further development of moral feelings and relations, we human beings begin to have a more all-round understanding of our dignity. We are ashamed not only of concessions to our lower, material nature, but also of any violation of what is *proper* with respect to people and to the gods. Here the involuntary instinct of shame is transformed, as we saw,⁶⁸ into the clear voice of *conscience*, which blames people not for carnal sins alone, but also for any moral falsehood—for all unfair and pitiless⁶⁹ feelings and actions. At the same time, a unique feeling of fear of God also develops, a feeling that restrains us from entering into a conflict with that which expresses for us the holiness of God.⁷⁰ When the connection between the deity and ourselves is raised to absolute consciousness, then the feeling that protects human integrity is also [209]raised to a new and final stage. What is protected here is our unconditional and not merely relative human dignity. It is this ideal perfection that should be realized. The negative voice of shame, conscience and the fear of God becomes at this level in the human being a direct and positive awareness of our own divinity or an awareness of God within us. If this awareness still reproaches us, then it is not⁷¹ for doing evil and harmful acts but for the fact that we sense and act as imperfect creatures, whereas perfection is our purpose and duty. Instead of the demon that restrained Socrates from wrong behavior,⁷² we hear the divine voice: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”⁷³

However, in order for perfection to be perfectly realized, it must be extended to the sphere of material life. From the point of view of the unconditional principle, materially ascetic morality also receives a new⁷⁴ meaning. Here, we no longer refrain from carnal sins because of the instinct of spiritual self-preservation or in order to strengthen our inner forces, but for the sake of our body itself as the ultimate limit of the process of divine humanity, as the intended dwelling of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ C] , as we saw,] *Absent in AB.*

⁶⁹ C] unfair and pitiless] unfair, pitiless and ungodly **AB.**

⁷⁰ C] At the same time ... the holiness of God] *Absent in AB.*

⁷¹ C] If this awareness ... then it is not] Conscience reproaches us not **AB.**

⁷² E] See Plato 1963c: 17 (31c-d).

⁷³ E] Matthew 5: 48.

⁷⁴ C] new] special **A.**

⁷⁵ E] Cf. 1 Corinthians 3: 16—“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

[210]Chapter 9

The Reality of the Moral Order

I

The unconditional moral principle, which is logically developed from religious experience, represents the full scope of the moral good (or the proper relation of everything to everything) as an idea or demand. However, this principle also reveals the real powers contained within it, powers which fulfill this demand and create the perfect moral order, or Kingdom of God, in which the unconditional significance of every creature is realized. Only by virtue of¹ this highest principle can the moral good give us final and complete satisfaction or be² for us the true good and a source of infinite bliss.

We experience the reality of God not as something indefinitely divine, *δαμονιον τι*, but, in His own attributes, as totally perfect or absolute.³ We find our own soul in inner experience not only as something distinct from material facts, but as a positive⁴ force that struggles with material processes and surmounts them. The experience of physiological asceticism⁵ provides the bases not only for the truth that the soul is immortal (Kant went no further than this in his postulates), but also for hope⁶ in the resurrection of the body. For, as we already know from our own preliminary and rudimentary experiences, in the victory of the spirit over matter, the

E] In the edition of the compiled book from 1897, this chapter appeared as part of Chap. 7. The first paragraph of Chap. 9, §I in the second edition appeared as Chap. 7, §XI, pp. 220–221. Chap. 9, §I of the second edition continued then as Chap. 7, §XIII in the first edition, and so on. Thus, in the second edition, Chap. 9, §§II–VII, pp. 190–209 correspond in the first edition to Chap. 7, §§XIV–XIX, pp. 231–249.

¹ C] Only by virtue of] Therefore, only in **A**.

² C] final and complete satisfaction or be] real satisfaction or become **A**.

³ E] *δαμονιον τι*] Greek: something divine.

⁴ C] facts, but as a positive] being, but as a real **AB**.

⁵ C] asceticism] or ascetic morality **AB**.

⁶ C] hope] the truth **AB**.

latter is not destroyed, but is perpetuated as a mode of spiritual quality and as an instrument of spiritual activity.⁷

As for matter in itself, we do not know from experience what it is. It is a subject for a metaphysical investigation. However, both [211]immediate, personal experience, as well as social, scientific and historical experience, indubitably shows us that despite the qualitative incommensurability of psychic and physical phenomena with respect to whether they can be known (because we know the first directly by means of the inner senses and the latter through the external senses), no gulf separates the real being of spiritual nature from that of material nature. Rather, the tightest connection and a constant interaction exists between them, by virtue of which the process of universal increasing perfection, of being divine-human beings, also necessarily makes us *divine-material* beings.

The principal concrete stages of this process, given in our experience, bear the traditional designation⁸ “*kingdoms*.” This is significant, because the designation actually suits only the final, highest stage, though this fact is not usually taken into account. Counting this final stage,⁹ there are five of them: the *mineral kingdom* (or, more generally, the inorganic), the *vegetable kingdom*, the *animal kingdom*, the *human kingdom* and the *Kingdom of God*. Arranged in an ascending order of universal increasing perfection, minerals, vegetables, animals, natural humanity and spiritual humanity are the typical forms of being. From various other points of view, the number of these forms and stages can be multiplied or, on the other hand, reduced to four, three or two. We can combine vegetables and animals to form one organic world. We can, then, combine the entire sphere of physical existence, both organic as well as inorganic, under one concept—that of nature, in this way leaving only a triple division into the Divine, the human and the natural kingdoms. Finally, we can stop with the simple opposition of the Kingdom of God to the kingdom of the world.

Without rejecting in the least these and all the other divisions, we should realize that measured in terms of the moral sense realized in the divine-material process the five kingdoms indicated represent a list of the most firmly established and characteristic *gradations of being*.

Stones and metals are distinguished from everything else by their extreme self-satisfaction and conservatism. If nature depended on them alone, it would never have woken from its deep sleep. On the other hand, however, without them the further growth of nature would not have had a firm basis and support. Plants, in stationary dreams, as it were, are involuntarily *drawn* to light, warmth and moisture. Animals, by means of *sensations* and [212]*free movements*, seek the full scope of sensory being: satiety, sexual satisfaction—and the joy of existence (their games and singing). In addition to all this, natural humanity rationally aspires to improve

⁷ C] For, as we already ... spiritual activity.] For in the victory of the spirit over matter, the latter is not destroyed but is perpetuated as an instrument and a form of spiritual activity. **AB**.

⁸ C] traditional designation] *In Opravdanie dobra 1914 and Opravdanie dobra n.d. alone, but not A nor B nor Opravdanie dobra 1899, we find traditional and significant designation.*

⁹ C] This is significant ... this final stage] *Absent in AB*.

life by means of the sciences, the arts and social institutions and actually does improve it in various respects, finally rising to the *idea* of unconditional perfection. Spiritual humanity, or humanity born from God, not only *understands* this unconditional perfection with the mind but also *accepts* it in its heart and its deeds¹⁰ as the *actual principle of what should be in everything* and aspires to realize it to the end, i.e., to have it incarnate in the life of the whole world.

Each preceding kingdom obviously serves as the immediate material for the next. Plant life feeds on inorganic matter, animals exist at the expense of the vegetable kingdom, people live at the expense of animals, and the Kingdom of God is made up of people. If we examine any organism from the point of view of its material structure, we will find nothing in it except elements of inorganic matter. However, this matter *ceases* to be *merely* matter to the extent that it enters into the *unique plan* of organic life, which makes *use* of the chemical and physical properties of matter as well as its laws, though is irreducible to them. Similarly, human life, on its material side, consists of animal processes, but these processes do not in themselves have the same significance here that they do in the animal world. Instead, they serve as the means and the instruments for the new goals and tasks that follow from the new, higher plan of rational, i.e., human, life. The goal of the (typical) animal is satiety (gastric or sexual). However, a person who is satisfied in this way is correctly called “bestial,” not only in the sense of a swear word, but¹¹ precisely in the sense of dropping to a lower level of being. Just as a living organism is composed of chemical substances that are more than just substances, so humanity consists of animals that are *more* than just animals. Similarly, the Kingdom of God consists of people who are more than *just* people. They are entering a new, higher plane of existence in which their purely human tasks become the means and instruments for another, final goal.

[213]II

A stone exists; a plant exists and lives; an animal, additionally, is aware of its life in its factual states; a human being understands the meaning of life in terms of ideas; the sons of God actually realize this meaning or the perfect moral order in everything to the end.

That the stone exists is clear from the palpable effect that it exerts on us. Anyone who denies this truth can easily convince himself otherwise, as many have noted

¹⁰ C] not only *understands* this ... in its heart and its deeds] accepts this unconditional perfection **AB**.

¹¹ C] not only in the sense of a swear word, but] *Absent in AB*.

long ago, by knocking his head with a stone.^{12,13} A stone is the most typical incarnation of the category of being as such, and, unlike the Hegelian abstract concept of being, it shows no inclination to pass into its opposite.¹⁴ A stone is what it is and has always served as a symbol of inalterable being. It merely exists but does not live nor does it die. Its broken pieces are not qualitatively different from the whole.¹⁵ A plant not only exists; it also lives. This is clear already from the fact that it dies. Life does not presuppose death, but death obviously¹⁶ presupposes life. Between a leafy tree and firewood, between [214]a blooming flower and one that is withered, there is a definite and essential difference, to which there is nothing corresponding in the mineral kingdom.

Just as it is impossible to reject life in plants, so it is impossible to reject consciousness in animals except with the help of arbitrary and artificial terminology that is not required of anyone. According to the natural meaning of the word, consciousness in general¹⁷ is a definite and regular mental combination or interrelation of the inner psychic life of a given creature with its external environment. Such a correlation, undoubtedly, exists in animals. Just as the presence of life in the vegetable world is clearly proven by the difference between living and dead plants, so the presence of consciousness in animals (at least in the case of higher ones, which

¹² F] As Kant correctly realized, such an argument is inadequate for the purposes of theoretical philosophy, and we will concern ourselves with the question of the existence of things when we take up epistemology. However, in moral philosophy we can limit ourselves to this argument, since *in all good conscience* it is convincing. C] As Kant correctly realized] Certainly **A**.

¹³ E] Surely, an allusion, albeit incorrectly related, to the celebrated words of Samuel Johnson, the English essayist and lexicographer, who, according to his biographers James Boswell, when asked how he would refute George Berkeley's philosophy, kicked a large stone with his foot, saying "I refute it thus."

¹⁴ F] As is well known, according to Hegel's dialectic pure being passes into pure nothing. Having one learned critic in mind, I will note that acknowledging a stone in general as the typical incarnation and symbol of inalterable being, I do not in the least *identify* a stone with the category of being, and I do not deny the mechanical and physical properties of any real stone. Everyone considers, for example, the pig to be the typical incarnation and symbol of the moral category of unlimited carnality, which therefore is called "piggishness" without at all denying that any real pig has in addition to "piggishness" four legs, two eyes, two ears, etc. C] Having one learned critic ... two ears, etc.] *Absent in AB* E] pure being passes into pure nothing.] See Hegel 2010: 59.

¹⁵ F] I have in mind here the stone as the most characteristic and concrete specimen of an inorganic body in general. Such a body, *taken separately*, does not have a real life of its own. This, however, does not in the least prejudice either the question of the life of nature in general or that of the animated nature of more or less complex natural aggregates or wholes, such as seas, rivers, mountains and forests. These questions must be left for metaphysics. By the way, separate inorganic bodies, such as, for example, stones, which have no life within themselves, can serve as constant conductors for the localized living actions of spiritual creatures. Such were the sacred stones, the so-called bethels or bethils (houses of God) which were connected with the appearance and actions of angels or Divine powers that seemingly resided in these stones. C] By the way, separate ... in these stones.] *Absent in A* E] the so-called bethels or bethils (houses of God)] Cf. Genesis 12: 8 and 35: 7.

¹⁶ C] obviously] certainly **AB**.

¹⁷ C] in general] *Absent in AB*.

is typical of the entire kingdom) clearly is proven by the difference between a sleeping animal and one that is awake. For the distinction lies precisely in the fact that a wide-awake animal consciously participates in the life surrounding it, whereas the psychic world of the sleeping animal is severed from direct communication with that life.¹⁸ An animal not only has sensations and representations; it connects them by means of correct associations. And although impressions and interests of the present moment predominate in its life, it *remembers* its previous states and *foresees* future ones, without which the education or training of animals would be impossible. Nevertheless, such training is a fact. No one dares deny that a dog or a horse has a *memory*. Yet to remember or to be aware of it are one and the same thing, and the denial of consciousness [215] in animals is merely an aberration of the human consciousness in some philosophers.

Already one fact of comparative anatomy would be enough to remove this crude mistake. To deny the presence of consciousness in animals is to reduce their entire life to the blind suggestions of instinct. However, from this point of view how do we explain the gradual development of organs of conscious mental activity, of the brain, in higher animals? How could this organ appear and develop in animals if they have no corresponding functions? Surely, unconscious, instinctive life has no need of a brain, which is clear from the fact that in general such life not only appears before this organ, but also that it attains its highest development in brainless creatures. The superiority of social, hunting and constructive¹⁹ instincts in ants and bees is certainly connected not with the brain, which, strictly speaking, they do not have, but only with the abdominal nodes (the sympathetic nerve), which is actually strongly developed in them.

The human being is distinguished from animals owing not to the presence of consciousness, which they do have, but by the mastery of reason, that is, the faculty of general concepts and ideas. We find direct evidence for the conscious character of animals in their purposeful movements, their mimicry and their language, which consists of various sounds. The fundamental evidence for human rationality is language, which can express not only a given conscious state, but the general sense of everything. Ancient wisdom correctly defined the human being not as a conscious being—which to it is not enough—but as a linguistic or rational being.

The ability to grasp the all-one and all-uniting truth that is contained in the very nature of reason and of speech has acted in various ways in separate and different nations, gradually forming the human kingdom on the basis of animal life. The definitive essence of this human kingdom lies in the ideal demand for the perfect moral order, i.e., in the demand for the Kingdom of God. The human spirit has proceeded to the *idea* of the Kingdom of God and the *ideal* of the divine person

¹⁸ F] The usual ways in which the psyche of an animal is correlated with the data of the external environment are closed to it in sleep. However, the possibility of a different environment and of other means of mental interaction, i.e., of another region of consciousness is by no means excluded. However, in such a case the periodic transition of a given mental life from one sphere of consciousness into another world provides an even clearer proof of the conscious character of this life in general.

¹⁹ C] constructive] artistic **AB**.

along two paths: Jewish prophetic inspiration and Greek philosophical thought.²⁰ [216]There arose²¹ parallel to this two-fold internal process, but naturally slower than it, an external process of cultural and political unification in the chief historical nations of the East and the West that was completed by the Roman Empire. In Greece and Rome (natural or pagan) humanity reached its limit, an affirmation of its unconditional divine significance: the beautiful, sensuous form and speculative idea of the Greeks and the practical reason, will or power of the Romans. There appeared the idea of the absolute person, or *human god*. However, this idea in its essence cannot remain abstract or purely speculative; it demands *incarnation*. Meanwhile, it is just as impossible for a person to make a god of himself as it is for an animal through its own efforts to attain human dignity, to become a rational creature capable of speech. Remaining at the same level of development, within the limits of the same kingdom, animal nature could reach only as high as the ape, but human nature can reach as high as the Roman caesar. Just as the ape can be seen as the precursor of humans, so the deified caesar is the precursor of the divine person.

III

While the pagan world at one time contemplated its spiritual breakdown in the person of a pseudo human-god caesar, who impotently played the role of a deity, individual philosophical minds and trusting souls awaited the incarnation of the divine Word, i.e., the appearance of the Messiah, of the Son of God and the King of Truth. A human god, even though in the form of a universal sovereign, is merely an empty illusion, whereas the divine human being can reveal his reality in the form of a wandering rabbi.

The historical existence of Christ, as well as His real character preserved in the Gospels, cannot seriously be doubted. It would be impossible to invent him, and indeed there is no one to do it. This perfectly historical figure is the figure of a perfect man, but of a man who does not say: "I became god," but of one who says: "I was born and sent from God, and I was one with God before the creation of the world." Reason forces us to believe this testimony, because the historical appearance of Christ, as a divine person, is indissolubly connected with the entire world-process, and if this appearance is rejected the universe loses its meaning and purpose.

[217]When the first vegetable forms appeared in the inorganic world and then developed into the sumptuous kingdom of trees and flowers, it would have been quite absurd to claim that these forms appeared by themselves from nothing. And it would be just as absurd—though a disguised absurdity—to suppose that they arose from contingent combinations of inorganic substances. Life is a certain new posi-

²⁰ F] These two paths—the biblical and the philosophical—coincided in the mind of the Alexandrian Jew Philo, who from this point of view is the last and most significant thinker of the ancient world.

²¹ C] There arose] There took place **AB**.

tive content, something comparatively *more* than lifeless matter, and to derive this more from something less would mean to claim that something in reality arose from nothing. That is, such a claim would be plainly absurd. Even if the *manifestations* of vegetable life continually accompany the *manifestations* of the inorganic world, *what is manifested* in both kingdoms is essentially different, and this heterogeneity is revealed all the more clearly and sharply as the new kingdom develops further. In exactly the same way, the world of plants and the world of animals arise, as it were, from a single root. Indeed, the elementary forms of both creatures are so similar that biology recognizes an entire division of *plant-like animals* (zoophytes). However, under this seeming (i.e., apparent or phenomenal) homogeneity there undoubtedly hide fundamentally and essentially different types. This difference is later manifested in two divergent directions or planes of being—the vegetable and the animal. Here again as compared with the vegetable what is new and greater in the animal type cannot be reduced without obvious absurdity to the lesser, i.e., to their common properties, because that would mean identifying $a+b$ with a , i.e., recognizing something as equal to nothing. In exactly the same way, despite the proximity and close material connection (in terms of appearance) between the human and the animal worlds, there is an essential feature of the former—which is certainly manifested more in Plato and Goethe than in a Papuan or an Eskimo—that as a new and positive content, a certain²² *plus* of being, cannot be deduced from the old, animal type. An individual cannibal by himself is only a little above the ape. However, the whole point is that he does not represent the ultimate example of humanity and²³ that continuous series of *ever improving* generations lead from this cannibal to Plato and Goethe, whereas an ape, so long as it is an ape, essentially²⁴ *never improves*. We are connected with our half-savage ancestors by a historical memory, or by a single collective consciousness, which animals do not have: The only memory they have is of their individual consciousness. [218] On the other hand, the ancestral connection²⁵ expressed physiologically through heredity does not, however, enter into their consciousness. Therefore, although there is an increasing perfection in the animal forms (in accordance with the theory of evolution) it takes place with a certain degree of participation on the part of the animals themselves. In terms of its results and goals, such improvement remains for them an external and alien fact. Humanity's increasing perfection is conditioned by our faculties of reason and our will, both of which exist even in savages, albeit only in a rudimentary state. However, these higher faculties cannot be deduced from animal nature, and this is why they form a separate human kingdom. In exactly the same way, the attributes of the spiritual person—a person who is not merely improving but is *perfect*, i.e., the divine person—cannot be deduced from natural human attributes and states. Consequently, the Kingdom of God cannot be understood as the result of the continuous development of the purely human world. *A divine person cannot be understood to*

²² C] certain] *Absent in AB.*

²³ C] that he does not represent the ultimate example of humanity and] *Absent in AB.*

²⁴ C] , so long as it is an ape, essentially] *Absent in AB.*

²⁵ C] connection] memory **AB.**

be the same as a human god, even though in natural humanity there may exist and may have existed precursors of the coming higher life. However, just as the sea lily at first sight appears to be a water plant, whereas it is undoubtedly an animal, so the rudimentary bearers of the Kingdom of God *apparently* have not differed and do not differ in any way from the people of this world, although they have within themselves the active principle of a new form of being.²⁶

From the fact that higher forms, or types, of being appear or are revealed after²⁷ the lower, it does not follow that they are the product or creation of the lower. The order of that which exists is not the same as the order of appearance. The higher, more positive, fuller forms and states of being exist (metaphysically)²⁸ prior to the lower, although they appear or are revealed after them. This does not mean a rejection of evolution. It is impossible to deny it; evolution is a fact. However, to claim that evolution creates the higher forms entirely from that which is lower, i.e., ultimately from nothing, means to substitute a fact with a logical absurdity. The evolution of lower types of being cannot by themselves create higher types. However, it produces the material conditions or provides a suitable environment for the manifestation or the revelation of a higher type. Thus, each manifestation of a new type of being is, in a certain sense, *a new creation*. However, least of all can it be seen as a creation from nothing. For, in the first place, the material basis for the emergence of a new type [219] is the earlier type, and, in the second place, the unique positive content of the higher type does not arise anew from non-being. Existing from eternity, it merely appears (at a certain moment in the process) in another sphere of being, in the world of appearances. The conditions for this appearance are the result of the natural evolution of nature; that which appears is the result of God.²⁹

IV

The interrelation between the fundamental types of being (which are also the principal stages in the world-process) is not exhausted by a negative fact. For this reason these types, each having its particular features, cannot be reduced to one another. There is³⁰ a direct connection between them that gives a positive unity to the entire process. This unity (whose inner essence we cannot investigate here) is revealed from three³¹ directions. The first of these is that each new type represents a *new condition* that is necessary for the realization of the highest and ultimate goal—the real manifestation in the world of the perfect moral order, the Kingdom of God, or

²⁶ C] , even though in ... form of being] *Absent in AB.*

²⁷ C] revealed after] revealed (in the world) after **AB.**

²⁸ C] (metaphysically)] (in God) **AB.**

²⁹ F] The original relation of God to nature lies outside the bounds of the worldly process and is a purely metaphysical topic, which, by the way, we will not discuss here.

³⁰ C] another. There is] another. In spite of this, there is **AB.**

³¹ C] three] two **A.**

“the revelation of freedom and glory of the sons of God.”³² In order to attain this highest goal, or to manifest its unconditional significance, a creature must, first of all, *be*, then it must be *alive*, and then be *conscious*. Furthermore, it must be *rational* and finally already be *perfect*. The defective concepts of non-being, lifelessness, unconsciousness and irrationality are *logically* incompatible with the concept of perfection.³³ The concrete incarnation of each positive stage of existence³⁴ also forms an actual kingdom of the universe, so that the lower stages enter into the moral order as necessary conditions for that order’s realization. However, this instrumental relation does not exhaust an obvious universal connection (that is given in experience). The lower types themselves gravitate toward the higher, strive to reach them, seeing in them, as it were, their limit and their goal. This also reveals the expedient character of the entire process (the most vivid manifestation of this aspiration is the already mentioned example of the anthropoid ape). Finally, the positive connection between the graduated kingdoms [220]consists³⁵ in the fact that each type embraces or includes within itself the lower (and the higher the type, the more completely it embraces the lower). In this way, the world-process is not only a developmental process and a process of increasing perfection, but also a *process of universal collecting*. Plants physiologically absorb their surrounding environment (inorganic substances and physical influences thanks to which they feed and grow). Besides feeding on plants, animals also psychologically absorb into themselves (i.e., into their consciousness) an even wider circle of phenomena with which they are correlated through their experience. In addition to this, a person also takes in by means of reason remote circles of being that are not immediately experienced. A person, at a high stage of development, can embrace everything in oneself or understand the meaning of everything. Finally, the divine person, or existent reason (Logos), understands not only abstractly, but actually realizes the meaning of everything, or the perfect moral order, and embraces and connects everything by the living personal force of love. The highest task of a human being as such (of the pure human being) and of the purely human sphere of being consists in *collecting the universe in an idea*. The task of the divine person and of the Kingdom of God consists in collecting the universe *in reality*.

Vegetable life does not eliminate the inorganic world, but merely points out its lower, subordinate place. We see the same thing in the other stages of this universal

³² E] Apparently, Solov’ëv is here, somewhat inaccurately, quoting from memory a passage in Romans 8: 19–21—“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. . . . Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”

³³ C] The defective concepts . . . concept of perfection.] *Absent in B*.

³⁴ C] of each positive stage of existence] of each of these stages **B**.

³⁵ C] The first of these . . . graduated kingdoms consists] The first of these is that the lower types gravitate (and the further evolution advances, the more powerfully) towards the higher, strive to reach them, seeing in them, as it were, their limit and their goal. This also reveals the expedient character of the entire process (the most vivid manifestation of this aspiration is the already mentioned example of the anthropoid ape). Secondly, the positive connection between the graduated kingdoms is expressed **A**.

process. It is precisely the same at the end of this process with the appearance of the Kingdom of God, which does not eliminate the lower types of existence, but puts them all in their proper place. It regards them not as special spheres of existence, but as both spiritual and physical organs of a *collective* universe indissolubly connected by unconditional, internal solidarity and interaction. This is why the Kingdom of God is the same as the reality of the unconditional moral order, or—what amounts to the same thing—the universal resurrection and restoration of everything possible (*αποκατάστασις των πάντων*).³⁶

V

When we designate a divine person, who lays down the principle of the Kingdom of God, as the ideal, this does not, correctly speaking, mean that he is merely conceivable but not real. A divine person is the ideal in the sense in which we can say that a real person³⁷ is the ideal for an animal or a real plant³⁸ is [221]the ideal for the earth out of which it grows. Having a higher ideal being (in the sense of greater dignity),³⁹ this plant has not a lesser, but, on the contrary, a *greater reality* or full scope of existence compared with a clump of earth. Precisely the same thing holds for an animal in comparison to a vegetable, a natural person in comparison to an animal, and for a divine person in comparison to a natural person. On the whole, an increase in the ideal content is *directly proportional* to the increase in real power. A plant has actual abilities (e.g., to process inorganic substances in an expedient fashion) that are completely absent from the clump of dirt. A human being is much more powerful than an ape, and Christ has incomparably greater power than a Roman caesar.

The difference between the natural and the spiritual person lies not in the fact that a higher, spiritual element is completely absent in the former, but in the fact that this element in itself does not have the power to realize itself completely. To obtain this power it would have to be fertilized by a new creative act or by the action of what in theology is called *grace*, which gives human sons the “power to become the sons of God.”^{40,41} Even according to the teachings of Orthodox theologians, grace does not eliminate nature in general and the moral nature of people in particular,

³⁶ E] The “restitution of all things,” the universal salvation of all, is a fundamental doctrine in Origen’s writings. The expression occurs only once in the New Testament, in Acts 3: 21. There, however, it does not have Origen’s eschatological meaning. Scholars note, however, that the idea is not intrinsically Christian, but Hellenistic. Origen held that souls pre-existed with God in an original state of purity before the Fall. See Scott 2012, pp. 53–60. Solov’ev himself penned the extensive entry on Origen in the *Brockhaus-Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary*. See Solov’ev 1997: 332–343; SS, vol. 10: 439–449.

³⁷ C] real person] person **AB**.

³⁸ C] real plant] plant **AB**.

³⁹ C] (in the sense of greater dignity)] *Absent in AB*.

⁴⁰ C] , which gives human ... sons of God.”] *Absent in A*.

⁴¹ E] “power to become the sons of God.”] John 1: 12.

but *perfects* it. Human moral nature is a necessary condition and presupposition of divine humanity. It is not the case that just any inorganic substance can accept the influence of a life force and form part of vegetable and animal organisms. Only certain specific chemical combinations can do that. Similarly, not every living entity, but only those that possess a moral nature, can apprehend the effects of grace and form part of the Kingdom of God. Actually already by our very nature, human beings reveal the rudiments of spiritual life in the feelings of shame, pity and reverence that are peculiar to us and can be found in the principles of living that follow from these feelings and are protected by conscience or by an awareness of what should be. This natural moral good in the human being is an imperfect good, and it is logically unavoidable that it in itself remains always imperfect, for otherwise we would have to admit that the infinite can arise from the addition of finite quantities, the unconditional from the conditional and ultimately something from nothing. However, human nature does not contain and therefore cannot create [222]an actual infinity or full scope of perfection out of itself. Therefore, owing to its peculiar reason or universal meaning human nature contains the possibility of this moral infinity and aspiration for its realization, i.e., for an apprehension of the deity. A speechless creature attracted to reason is merely an animal, but a creature that actually possesses reason ceases to be an animal but is a person, and forms a new kingdom that cannot be derived from the simple continuous evolution of lower life forms. Similarly, this new creature, though rational, yet not completely rational, though imperfect yet attracted to perfection, is only a person, whereas a creature that *is* perfect cannot be *merely* a person. He or she reveals a new and final Kingdom of God in which not a relative good but the unconditional Moral Good, or dignity of being, is being realized. For the unconditional cannot be deduced from the relative, since the difference here is not quantitative or in gradations, but qualitative.

The divine person is distinguished from an ordinary person not by being a represented ideal, but by being a *realized ideal*. The pseudo idealism that recognizes the ideal as unrealizable and is in no need of realization is idle talk and does not deserve a critique. However, there is another question here that needs to be considered. Although admitting in general the real significance of the divine, or perfect, person and not merely its imagined significance, one can deny the historical fact of His appearance in the past. There are, however, no rational bases for such a denial. Moreover, it directly deprives the general course of universal history of any sense. If the historical personage that we know from the books of the New Testament were not the manifestation of the divine person, or, to use Kant's terminology, the realized "ideal," then this person could only be a natural product of historical evolution.⁴² However, in such a case, why did this evolution not proceed further in that same direction and not produce other, even more perfect people? Why is it that after Jesus Christ we notice progress in all spheres of life but not in the fundamental sphere of personal spiritual power? Anyone who does not purposely close his eyes must recognize the enormous distance between the most distinguished type of natural,

⁴² E] Regarding Kant's view of Jesus as the "personified idea" of moral perfection, see Kant 1996e: 103–117.

searching wisdom, immortalized by Xenophanes in his memorable notes as well as by Plato in his dialogues, and the radiant appearance [223]of triumphant spirituality, which is preserved in the Gospels and which blinded Saul so as to regenerate him.⁴³ Meanwhile, between Socrates and Christ less than four centuries elapsed. But if historical evolution could produce in this short period such an increase in spiritual power in the human individual, why, then, did this evolution turn out to be absolutely impotent not only in raising personal spiritual perfection to a corresponding degree over a much longer time and with an accelerated historical movement, but even to keep it at the same level? Why is it, for example, that Spinoza and Kant, who lived 16 and 17 centuries after Christ and represent quite distinguished types of natural wisdom, can be compared with Socrates, but it would not enter into anyone's head to compare them with Christ? Is it really only because they were active in another sphere? However, some figures became famous in the religious sphere—Mohammad, Savonarola, Luther, Calvin, Ignatius Loyola,⁴⁴ Fox, Swedenborg—all of them powerful expressions of human nature. Yet who would honestly try to compare them with Christ! Finally, why do the historical figures who approach the moral ideal most closely, for example, St. Francis, decisively recognize their direct dependence on Christ as a higher being?

VI

If we see in Christ merely one of the relative stages of moral perfection, then the absence of further stages in the almost 2000 year spiritual growth of humanity is completely absurd. If we were to recognize Him as the unconditionally highest stage, which arises naturally, He should appear *at the end* and not in the middle of history. Second, His appearance [224]could not, in any case, be a simple product of historical evolution, since the difference between absolute and relative perfection is not a matter of stages or a quantitative difference, but a qualitative and essential difference. Moreover, to deduce the former from the latter is logically impossible.

Thus, by its factual course the reason of history compels us to recognize in Jesus Christ not the final word of the kingdom of humanity, but the first and all-one Word of the Kingdom of God—not a human god, but the Divine person, or unconditional individuality. From this point of view it is understandable why He first appeared

⁴³ E] Cf. Acts 9: 1–19.

⁴⁴ F] It is well known that in letters written shortly before his death Auguste Comte set Ignatius Loyola higher than Christ. However, this evaluation like other similar opinions and the corresponding actions on the part of the founder of positive philosophy force all impartial critics to recognize that this thinker, who in his youth lived with a brain disease for 2 years, again in the final years of his life was on the threshold of being mentally deranged. Cf. my article on Comte in the *Brockhaus-Efron Encyclopedia*. E] in letters ... before his death] Solov'ev surely has in mind here a letter of Comte's to Alfred Sabatier dated 6 March 1857. See Comte 1904: 365. E] my article on Comte] See SS, vol. 10, pp. 380–409 and reprinted in Solov'ev 1997: 202–237. C] in letters written shortly before his death] *Absent in AB* C] again in the final years ... encyclopedia.] again experienced mental derangement near the end of his life **AB**.

in the *middle* of history, and not at its end. The goal of the world-process is the revelation of the Kingdom of God, i.e., the perfect moral order realized by a new humanity, *which spiritually arises from the Divine person*. Thus, it is clear that this universal appearance must be preceded by the individual appearance of the Divine person. Just as the first half of history up to Christ prepared the environment, or external conditions, for His personal birth, so the second half is a preparation of the external conditions for His universal revelation, i.e., for the appearance of the Kingdom of God. Here the general law of the world order has force (logical validity). The highest type of existence *is not created* by the preceding process, but its appearance is conditioned by that process. The Kingdom of God is not a *product* of Christian history, just as Christ himself was not a product of Jewish and pagan history. History developed and is developing merely the necessary natural and moral *conditions* for the appearance of the Divine person and divine humanity.

VII

By his word and his exploits in life, beginning with his victory over all the temptations of *moral* evil and ending with his resurrection, i.e., his victory over *physical* evil—over the law of death and decay—the true divine-person has revealed to us the Kingdom of God. However, in accordance with the very meaning and law of this new Kingdom, revelation is not the same as its attainment.⁴⁵ Realizing the unconditional significance of each person, the perfect moral order presupposes the moral freedom of each of us. However, for the finite spirit real freedom is acquired by experience alone. Free choice is possible only for someone who knows or has experienced what [225]he is choosing and its opposite. Christ has definitively vanquished evil in the true center of the universe, i.e., in Himself. However, only humanity's own experience can overcome evil all around the world, i.e., in the collective whole of humanity. For this, a new developmental process is needed in the Christian world which has been baptized but has not yet been invested in Christ.^{46, 47}

The real basis of the perfect moral order is the *universality* of Christ's spirit capable of embracing and regenerating *everything*. That is, after having accepted Christ the essence of the matter for humanity is to see His Spirit as relevant *to everything* and through this to make it possible that His Spirit is incarnate *in everything*. For this incarnation cannot be merely a physical state. The individual incarnation of the Word of God required the consent of a personal feminine will: "be it unto me

⁴⁵ C] revelation is not the same as its attainment] for Him to force all of humanity to enter there would be impossible A.

⁴⁶ F] Any attentive reader will see that I have not given the slightest basis for a serious critic to charge me with absurdly identifying the Kingdom of God with historical Christianity, or the visible church (exactly which one?). I reject not only implicitly but also explicitly this identification as well as the claim that every baptized scoundrel is a "spiritual" person, or a "son of God."

⁴⁷ E] been invested in Christ.] Cf. Galatians 3: 27.

according to Thy word.”⁴⁸ Likewise, the universal incarnation of Christ’s Spirit, i.e., the appearance of the Kingdom of God, needs the consent of the collective will of humanity to a reunification of everything with God. So that this consent be, in the first place, completely recognized, Christ must be understood not only as the unconditional *principle of the moral good*, but also as the *full scope* of that good. That is, a Christian (and an anti-Christian) relation to all aspects and⁴⁹ spheres of human life must be established. In the second place, in order that this consent be perfectly free and additionally that it not be a matter of an overwhelming superior force, but a genuine moral act or the fulfillment of inner truth, it was necessary that Christ withdraw into the transcendent sphere of invisible being and restrain his obvious influence in history. It will be revealed when not just individual people, but all of human society is ready for a conscious and free choice between the unconditional moral good and its opposite. Therefore, the unconditional moral demand (“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father [226]which is in heaven is perfect.”)⁵⁰ is directed towards each person, though not taken separately in isolation, but only together with others (*be you*, not *be thou*). This demand (only if it is understood and accepted as an actual task in life) inevitably moves us into the sphere of conditions that determine the present *historical* existence of *society*, i.e., of the collective human being.⁵¹

⁴⁸ E] Solov’ëv here quotes Luke 1: 38, but in the Russian text he does not expressly indicate that he is doing so.

⁴⁹ C] aspects and] *Absent in AB*.

⁵⁰ E] Matthew 5: 48.

⁵¹ C] Therefore, the unconditional ... collective human being.] *Absent in AB*.

[227]Part III
The Moral Good through Human History¹

¹ C] Part III ... through Human History] *Absent in B.*

Chapter 10

The Individual and Society

I

We know that the complete sense of the moral good, which also includes the concept of the real good or satisfaction, is ultimately defined as the real moral order. The latter expresses the unconditionally proper and desirable relation of each of us to the whole and of the whole to each of us. This is called the Kingdom of God, and it is quite clear that from the moral point of view only the realization of the Kingdom of God, as¹ the highest good, satisfaction and bliss, can be the ultimate goal of life and of our activity. If we think about this matter precisely and concretely, it is just as clear that the real moral order, or Kingdom of God, is both a quite universal and a quite individual concern. For *each* of us wants it for oneself and for everyone, and only *together with everyone* can we reach it.² Consequently, in essence it is impossible to set the individual against society. It is impossible to ask which of the two is the end and which is merely the means. Such a question would presuppose³ the real⁴ existence of the single individual as a solitary, closed circle, whereas in fact each single individual is merely the center of an infinite number of interrelations with another and with others. To abstract oneself from every actual thing in life would mean to transform the individual into an empty possibility of existence. To present [228]the personal center of one's being as actually distinct from one's surroundings and from the general sphere of life that connects one with other centers is no more than a morbid illusion of self-consciousness.⁵

E] The first version of this chapter consisting of eight sections appeared as (A). In the first edition of the compiled book (B), these sections form the first eight sections of Chap. 8, pp. 250–279, and the chapter bears the same title as in the second edition of the compiled book.

¹ C] as] *Absent in B.*

² C] For *each* of us ... can we reach it.] *Absent in B.*

³ C] would presuppose] presupposes **B.**

⁴ C] real] actual **B.**

⁵ C] We know that ... of self-consciousness.] *Absent in A*

As is well known, when a chalk line is drawn before a rooster's eyes it takes this line as some sort of fatal barrier that absolutely cannot be crossed. Obviously, it is not in a position to understand that the overwhelming significance of the chalk line, which it sees as fatal, arises simply from the fact that it is concerned exclusively with what for it is an unusual and unexpected sight. Consequently, the rooster is *not free* with regard to it. A mistake is rather natural for a rooster, but less natural for a rationally thinking person. However, such a person too often does not understand that the given limitations of his subjectivity are insurmountable and impenetrable solely because one's attention is concentrated exclusively on this limitation, that the fatal separation of one's own "self" from everything else consists only in the fact that he or she pictures it to oneself as fatal. He or she is also a victim of autosuggestion, which, although it certainly has objective bases, is as relative and easily removed as the drawing of the chalk line.

It is by virtue of this self-delusion that an individual person considers him or herself to be a real person even when he or she is separated from everything and presupposes this pseudo isolation to be the genuine basis and even sole possible point of departure for all of the individual's relations. The self-delusion of abstract subjectivism leads to devastation not only in the sphere of metaphysics (which from this point of view is quite simply eliminated), but also in the sphere of moral and political life. From this arise so many complicated theories, irreconcilable contradictions and unanswerable questions! All of this insolubility and fatality would disappear by itself if, without fearing famous names, we would take into account the simple fact that these theories could have been devised and these unanswerable questions could have arisen only from the point of view of the hypnotized rooster.

II

The *human individual*, and, consequently, each individual person, *has the possibility of realizing an unlimited [229]reality, or a unique form of infinite content*. In the human mind, there lies an infinite possibility for an ever truer and truer cognition of the meaning of everything, and the human will contains the same infinite possibility for the ever increasingly complete realization of this meaning encompassing all within a given vital environment. The human individual is infinite: This is an axiom of moral philosophy. However, abstract subjectivism here draws its chalk line in front of the eyes of the careless thinker, and the most fruitful axiom is transformed into a hopeless absurdity. The human individual, as an infinite possibility, is separated from all the actual conditions and the actual results achieved through society⁶ of his or her realization. It is not only separate from them,⁷ but even opposed to them.⁸ An insoluble contradiction turns up between the individual and so-

⁶ C] through society.] by society. **AB**.

⁷ C] them] it **AB**.

⁸ C] them] it **AB**.

ciety, and there appears the “unanswerable question”: Which of the two principles⁹ must be sacrificed? On the one hand, those hypnotized by individualism claim the self-sufficiency of the isolated individual, who has all of his or her relations stemming from oneself. Such people see social ties and the collective order only as an external limit and an arbitrary constraint that must be eliminated no matter what. On the other hand, those hypnotized by collectivism see in the life of humanity only social masses and take the individual as an insignificant and transient element of society who has no rights of one’s own and can be disregarded in favor of the so-called general interest. However, what lies behind a society that consists of impersonal wretches¹⁰ who lack rights, of moral zeros? In any case, would it be a *human* society? Where is its dignity? Where is the inner value of its existence, and where does it get that dignity? What would maintain that dignity? Is it not clear that this is a sad chimera, as unrealizable as it is undesirable? Is not the opposite ideal of the self-sufficient individual the same chimera? Deprive an *actual* human individual of everything that in one way or another is due to one’s connections with social or collective wholes and you get a brutish individual who is nothing but pure possibility alone or an empty form of a person, i.e., something that in reality does not exist at all. Those who happened to descend into hell or rise into heaven, as, for example, Dante and Swedenborg, did not find [230]solitary individuals there, but saw only social groups and circles.

Social life is not a condition that accompanies individual life, but is contained in the very definition of the individual, who essentially is both a rationally cognizing and morally active force. Both are possible only in the form of a social being. Rational cognition on its *formal* side is conditioned by *general concepts* that express a unity of meaning in the elusive manifold of appearances. However, the actual and objective commonality (or common meaning) of concepts is revealed in linguistic intercourse, without which rational activity, arrested and deprived of realization, naturally atrophies. Then, the very faculty of understanding disappears or passes into a state of pure possibility. Language—this realized form of reason—could not have been created by a single, isolated individual. Consequently, a single individual would not be a linguistic creature, would not be a person. With respect to the *material*, cognition of the truth is based on *experience*—hereditary, collective and accumulating experience. Even if a single, absolutely isolated creature could exist, its experience would obviously be quite insufficient for cognition of the truth. As for the *moral* determination of the individual, the very idea of the moral good or of a moral evaluation is not merely the consequence of social relations, as many think. It is quite obvious that the *realization* of this idea or the actual development of human morality is possible for a person only in a social setting through interaction with it. In this chief respect, society is nothing other than the objectively realized content of the individual.

Instead of an insoluble contradiction of two mutually exclusive principles, two abstract “isms,” we find in reality two correlative terms that both logically and his-

⁹ E] That is, individualism or collectivism.

¹⁰ C] wretches] beings **AB**.

torically presuppose and demand one another. In terms of its essential significance, society is not the external limit¹¹ of the individual, but is one's inner embodiment. Society is not the arithmetical sum or mechanical aggregate of individual people, but the indivisible whole of their social life. This life has already been partially realized in the past and preserved through the abiding social *tradition*, is partially being realized in [231]the present by means of social *services* and, finally, anticipates its future perfect realization in the best conceptualizations of the social *ideal*.

Corresponding to these three fundamental and abiding moments of the personal-social life—the religious, the political and the prophetic—there are¹² three main concrete stages of human consciousness and levels in life. These stages consistently appear throughout the course of historical development and are: (1) the *gens*, which belongs to the past, although it is still preserved in a modified form in the family; (2) the *nation-state*, which dominates at the present, and finally; (3) *universal* intercourse in life conceived as the future ideal.

In terms of its essential content, society is, at all these stages, the moral *embodiment* or *realization* of the individual in a given sphere of life. However, the size of this sphere is not the same in each case. At the first stage, the sphere is restricted to one's own *gens*; at the second stage, to one's fatherland. Only at the third stage does the human individual, having achieved clear awareness of one's inner infinity, strive, in the corresponding way, to realize this infinity in a *perfect* society with the elimination of all limitations not only in terms of the *content* but also in terms of the extent of interactions in life.

III

Each individual person, as an individual, possesses the possibility of perfection, or positive infinity, namely, the faculty to understand everything with one's own reason and embrace everything with the heart, i.e., to enter into a living unity with everything. This double infinity—the power of representation and the power to aspire and act, which is called in the Bible (according to the interpretation of the Fathers of the Church) the image and likeness of God—is the indispensable possession of each person. Properly speaking, herein lies the unconditional significance, dignity and value of the human individual and the basis of his inalienable rights.¹³ [232]Clearly,

¹¹ C] limit] boundary **AB**.

¹² C] are] appear **AB**.

¹³ F] In terms of the inner connection between, and the relative distinction of, these terms, this sense of the image and likeness of God is in essence the same as that mentioned earlier in Part II. In fact, it is clear that an infinite power of representation and understanding of everything can give us only the *image* (the "schema") of perfection, whereas an infinite aspiration, having as its goal the *actual* realization of perfection, is the beginning of our *likeness* to the living God, who is not only an ideal perfection, but an actual perfection to which we aspire. C] *This entire note absent in AB*.

the realization of this infinity, i.e., the reality of this perfection, is conditioned by the participation of all and cannot be the personal possession of each one *taken separately*, but is assimilated by each through interaction with all. In other words, by remaining in isolation and confinement, the single individual thereby deprives him or herself of the actual full scope of the whole, i.e., deprives oneself of perfection and infinity. Even the consistent assertion of one's individuality or uniqueness would be physically impossible for a person. Everything that in life is held in common necessarily in one way or another influences single individuals. It is assimilated by them, and only in and through them reaches its ultimate reality, or completion. Moreover, if we look at this same matter from another angle, we see that all of the *actual* content of personal life is obtained through the social environment and in one way or another is conditioned by its given state. In this sense, we can say that *society is a supplementary or expanded individual, and the individual is a compressed or concentrated society*.

The task set for the world is not the creation of solidarity between each and all—such already exists by the nature of things—but the full awareness and then spiritual assimilation of this solidarity by all and each, the conversion of this solidarity from being a merely metaphysical and physical solidarity into a morally metaphysical and a morally physical one. Human life already in itself, both from above and from below, is an involuntary participation in the progressive existence of humanity and of the whole world. The *dignity* of this life and the meaning of the entire universe demands only that this involuntary participation of each in the whole become voluntary, be more and more conscious and free, i.e., really *personal*, in order that each more and more understands and embodies the *common concern*,¹⁴ as *one's own*. Obviously, therefore, the infinite significance of the individual is realized only in this manner, or passes from possibility into reality.

However, this very transition—this spiritualization or moralization of solidarity, according to the nature of what exists—is also an inseparable part of the common concern. In terms of its actual progress, the fulfillment of this highest task depends [233]not on personal conditions alone, but is necessarily determined by the general course of world history or by the present state of the social environment in a given historical moment. In this way, the personal perfecting of each human being can never be separated from general perfecting, nor personal morality from social morality.

¹⁴ E] *common concern*] A reference to the views of Nikolaj F. Federov, with which Solov'ëv became acquainted already in early 1878 through Dostoyevsky. In an undated letter to Federov, though most likely from the mid-1880s, Solov'ëv wrote, "I accept your 'project' unconditionally and without hesitation. . . . For now, I will say only that your 'project' is the first movement forward of the human spirit along Christ's path since the appearance of Christianity." *Pis'ma*, vol. 2, p. 345. Federov's main work was published posthumously by friends under the title *Filosofija obshchego dela* [*Philosophy of the Common Concern*]. See Federov 1906–1913.

IV

Actual morality is the proper interaction between a single individual and the given environment (in the broad sense of the term, embracing all spheres of being, both higher and lower, with which a person practically interacts). Undoubtedly, the actual personal dignity of each individual is expressed and embodied in his or her relations to what surrounds that individual. The infinite possibilities that lay in human nature itself—in each and all of us—is gradually realized in our *personal-social* reality. Historical experience finds the human being to be already supplied with a certain social environment, and all subsequent history is only an elevation and enlargement of this two-sided personal-social life. The three principle stages, or formations, in this process that we have mentioned—the gens, the nation-state and the universal—are, of course, connected by a number of intermediate links. In spite of this, a higher form does not replace and does not entirely eliminate a lower one but, absorbing it into its own sphere, only changes it from an independent whole into a subordinate part. Thus, with the emergence of the state the union of gentes becomes a subordinate, particular element of it, taking the form of the family. In the state, a family's blood ties are not so much eliminated as morally extended, changing only their sociological and legal¹⁵ significance, ceasing to be the foundation of an independent power or serving as a jurisdiction of its own.

With the transition from the lower forms of collective life to the higher, selected representative individuals by virtue of their inherent infinite potential to understand and to aspire for the better appear as the principle of action and progress (the dynamic element in history). On the other hand, the given social environment, as the already attained reality, as the complete objectification of the moral content in its sphere and at its stage,¹⁶ naturally [234]represents the stagnant, protective side (the static element in history). In time, particular individuals who are more gifted and more developed than others begin to be aware that their social environment is *not* the realization and fulfillment of their lives, but only an external restriction and obstacle to their positive moral aspirations. They, then, will become the bearers of a higher social consciousness, which aspires to be embodied in new forms and new orders of life that correspond to it.

Every social environment is an objective manifestation or embodiment of morality (of proper relations) at a certain level of human development. However, the moral individual by virtue of one's aspiration for the unconditional moral good outgrows the given limited form of moral content embodied in the society and begins to take a negative attitude towards it—not towards it in itself,¹⁷ but only towards the given lower stage of its embodiment. Obviously, such a conflict is not a fundamental opposition between the principle of the individual and that of society as such, but only between the earlier and the new stages of personal-social development.

¹⁵ C] and legal] *Absent in AB.*

¹⁶ C] and at its stage] *Absent in AB.*

¹⁷ C] attitude towards it—not towards it in itself,] attitude—not towards this very content, **AB.**

V

Human moral significance and dignity are manifested for the first time in *gentile life*.¹⁸ Here we find a rudimentary embodiment or organization of the whole of morality: religious, altruistic and ascetic. In other words, a gens is the realization of personal human dignity in the most intimate and most fundamental sphere of society. The first condition of actual human dignity—reverence for that which is higher than oneself, for the super-material powers that govern one's life—are realized in the veneration of ancestors or of dead forefathers. The second condition of personal dignity—recognition of the dignity of others—is expressed in the solid interrelations between the members of the gens, in their love and concern. Finally, the third (but, from another point of view, the first) condition of human dignity—freedom from [235]the predominance of carnal desires—is achieved here to a certain extent by means of some obligatory restriction or regulation of sexual intercourse through the various forms of marriage and also by means of the other restraining rules of the community life of the gens, which demanded the *shame* of which the¹⁹ ancient chronicler spoke.

Therefore, in this original circle of human life the moral dignity of the individual is realized in all respects by and in society. Where can we find an expression of the fundamental contradiction and hostility between the individual and society, and why does it appear? The relation between them is direct and positive. The social law is not something foreign to the individual, something imposed on it from outside and contrary to its nature. It merely imparts a definite, objective and constant form on the inner motives of personal morality. Thus, a person's own religious feeling (already encountered in its rudimentary state in individual animals) prompts one to respect the secret causes and conditions of one's existence—the gentile cult of ancestor veneration gives only an objective expression to this aspiration. It is precisely this same peculiar feeling of pity in the human being that inclines us to a just attitude and to a loving attitude towards our relatives. The social law merely strengthens this personal altruism with constant and definite forms and provides it with the means to its true realization (thus, the defense of the weak members of the gens from injury by someone else, which is impossible for a single person is organized by the gens as a whole and by a union of gentes). Finally, the modesty inherent in the human individual is realized in the social commandments concerning specific abstentions. How does one separate here personal from social morality, when the former is the inherent principle of the second, and the second is the objective realization of the first? Once the rules of the community life of the gens—such as veneration of the common ancestors, mutual aid to members of the gens, a limitation of sensuality by marriages—have a moral source and character, then clearly the fulfillment of these social rules leads not to a loss, but to a gain for the individual.

¹⁸ F] I take "gens" in the broad sense to indicate a group of people connected in a single closed community by ties of blood and marriage in whatever fundamental form this connection happens to take—be it "consanguine" or "punaluan," matriarchical or patriarchal.

¹⁹ C] the] our **AB**.

The more a single member of a gens enters in fact into the spirit of the order of that gens, which demands reverence for the unseen, solidarity with one's neighbors and moderation of carnal passions, the more moral this person obviously becomes, and the more moral, the higher his or her inner worth or [236]personal dignity. Therefore, *submission to society is an elevation of the individual*. On the other hand, the freer this submission, i.e., the more independently the single individual follows the inner inducements of his moral nature, which agree with the demands of social morality, the more such an individual can serve as a reliable and firm support for society. That is, *the independence of the individual is the basis of the social union's strength*. In other words, there is a direct, and not an inverse, relationship between the actual significance of the individual and the actual power of society.

So, how, in fact, can the fundamental revolt of the individual against society and his superiority to it be expressed in the gentile way of life? Would this supposed fighter for the rights of the individual perhaps desecrate the tombs of his ancestors, outrage his father, disgrace his mother, kill his brothers and marry the sisters of his gens? Just as it is clear, however, that such actions are below the lowest social level, so it is also clear that the actual realization of unconditional individual dignity is impossible through a simple rejection of the given social order.

VI

The moral content of gentile life is eternal; the historical process with the active participation of the individual inevitably severs the limited form of the gentile way of life. The original expansion of this primitive life is certainly caused by the natural pace²⁰ of reproduction. Even within the limits of a single gens, the more distant degrees of kinship follow right behind the nearest, but moral obligations extend to them as well. This is why similar to the progressive division of the living organic cell there occurs a division of the social cell—one gens into many gentes, which, however, preserve the connection between themselves and the memory of their common origin. From a gens is formed a new social group—the tribe, which embraces several close gentes. For example, the North American red-skinned Seneca tribe, whose organization and way of life were studied and described by the well-known sociologist Morgan,²¹ consisted of eight independent gentes, which evidently arose from the division of a single original gens, because of which they preserved a definite relation to one another. Each gens was based on [237]a recognized blood kinship, and marriages within a gens were unconditionally forbidden as incestuous. Each such gens was treated as autonomous. However, this autonomy was in certain

²⁰ C] pace] process AB.

²¹ E] Lewis Henry Morgan (1818–1881), an American anthropologist whose studies of the gens organization of American Indian tribes led him to the claim that all human cultures develop along a single or unilinear path. Morgan's 1864 work *Ancient Society* was to prove highly influential in comparative anthropology in subsequent decades.

respects subordinate to the general authority of the entire tribe, namely, to the tribal council, which consisted of representatives of all eight gentes. In addition to this military-political institution, the unity of the tribe was expressed in a common language and in common religious festivals. The transitional stage between the gens and the tribe were those groups that Morgan, adopting a classical term, designated as *phratries*. Thus, the Seneca tribe was divided into two phratries with the same number of gentes in each. The first contained the Wolf, Bear, Turtle and Beaver gentes; the second contained the Deer, Snipe, Heron and Hawk gentes. The gentes in each group considered each other as *brother-gentes*, and the gentes in the other group as *cousins*. Clearly, the original gens from which the Seneca tribe descended was first divided into two new gentes and each of them divided later into four, and this gradual division has been retained in the common memory.²²

There is no reason why the dissemination of social solidarity to the entire group of gentes should be limited to tribes. The enlargement of the moral horizon, on the one hand, and the known advantages of aggregate action, on the other, prompt many tribes to proceed at first into temporary and then enter into permanent unions with each other. Thus, the Seneca tribe along with many others enters into a tribal union, bearing the general designation Iroquois. In such tribal unions, common distant ancestors are a usual assumption, though not a necessary condition. In many, if not the majority of cases several tribes, whose ancestors separated in times immemorial and which then multiplied and developed independently, outside any connection with each other, coming together under new conditions, form a union by means of *treaties* for the sake of mutual defense and joint undertakings. Treaties here have, in any case, incomparably greater significance than blood kinship, which cannot be at all assumed.

The union of tribes, in particular those that have achieved a certain measure of culture²³ and occupy a specific territory, is already a transition to a state, the embryo of a nation. The Iroquois, like the majority of other Indian tribes, who stayed in [238] the wild forests and prairies of North America, did not advance this embryo of the nation and state. However, other representatives of the same race, who moved to the south, rather quickly passed from a military union of tribes to a permanent political order. The Aztecs in Mexico and the Incas in Peru established genuine nation-states of the same type as the great theocratic monarchies of the Old World. The inner, essential connection between the original social cell—the gens—and the broad political organization is clearly expressed in the word *fatherland*, which designates in almost all languages the union of a nation-state. Expressing a blood relationship, the term “fatherland” (*patria*, *Vaterland*, etc.) thereby points out not that the unity of the state is just an extended gens—that would be contrary to the truth—but that the moral principle of this great new union must be, in essence, the same as the principle of a smaller union, viz., that of the gens. In reality, states are a product of wars and treaties, but this precludes that the goal or reason why they were formed was to establish the same solidarity or peaceful co-existence of peoples in the broad circle

²² E] Morgan 1877: 90.

²³ C] culture] civilization **AB**.

of national and even international relations that had existed from time immemorial within the limits of the gens.

The process by which states are formed and the changes in the external life of peoples connected with this process are beyond the scope of the present study. Our concern is merely the moral status of the individual with respect to this new social environment. As long as the only rudiments and attempts at constituting higher forms above the gens were manifested as tribes and tribal unions, the status of the individual did not essentially change or changed, so to speak, only quantitatively. Moral awareness received greater satisfaction and was more fully realized thanks to an enlargement of the sphere of practical interaction, and that was all. The divine ancestor of a given gens found brothers in the same gods of the other gentes, and there arose a mutual recognition of the gods. The religions of the individual nations were combined and in part received a collective meaning (periodically, at the time of common tribal festivals), but the character of the worship services remained the same. In the same way, the expression of human solidarity—the defense of one’s own gentile brothers and an obligation to avenge an injury done to them—remained inviolable even with the formation of tribes and the tribal union.²⁴ An essential change took place with [239]the emergence of the fatherland and the state. However the national religion may have arisen from a developed ancestor cult, its origin was forgotten by the nation itself. In the same way, the impassive justice of the state is something essentially different from a blood feud. We already see here not only an expansion of the earlier (gentile) order, but the creation of a new one. Here in connection with the emergence of this new order of the nation-state there appears and actually has appeared a moral conflict of principle between the formative social forces that at a superficial level can be taken as a conflict between the individual and society as such.

VII

Neither the tribe nor the tribal union, nor even the organization of the nation-state—the fatherland—destroys the original social cell, but merely changes its significance. This change can be expressed in the short but quite precise formula: *The state order transforms the gens into a family*. In fact, before the formation of the state family life, strictly speaking, does not exist. The elementary group of people connected more or less by close blood kinship that at the time forms²⁵ a social organization is not at all like a genuine family at present in a very essential respect. The distinguishing attribute of the family is that it represents a form of private life as distinguished from public life. A “public family” is a contradiction in terms. However, this distinction between the public and the private could have arisen only with the forma-

²⁴ C] —the defense of one’s own ... and the tribal union.] (the gens or blood revenge), remained unaltered with the formation of tribes and the tribal union. **AB**.

²⁵ C] forms] is **AB**.

tion and development of the state, which precisely represents the (for the most part) public side of community life. Earlier, before the separation of the juridical and political functions of social life from the domestic, when judgment and punishment, war and peace were still the private matter of the elementary groups connected by blood, such groups, even the tightest of them, clearly had no distinctive attribute of the family or of the domestic society. These groups received this new character only when the mentioned functions passed to the state as a unique public or nation-wide organization.

However, this transformation of the early gens, i.e., of the political and [240]domestic union, into a family, i.e., into an exclusively domestic, private, or household, union could be understood in two ways: one with respect to the purification and internal elevation of the gentile connection and the second with respect to its external belittling and debasement.²⁶ Since for a long time an individual's obligation to his gens was the sole expression of one's morality, those with a stagnant and passive nature could regard as immoral the subordination of the gens to a new, higher unity—one's fatherland or state. For the personal consciousness, the earlier question is unprecedented. On which side should it stand with regard to the two social unions: on the side of the narrower and closer or the wider and remote? Regardless of how this question is decided by this or that person, it is clear in any case that this is not a dispute over the individual and society, nor even over the two types of social ties—that of the gens and of the nation, but only a dispute between whether human life should stop at the stage of the gentile way of life or progress by means of the state.

The human individual can better realize his or her intrinsic dignity in the gentile union, in its moral conditions and institutions, than in a state of savage isolation. Already, historical experience shows that the individual's further development and perfecting demands the more complex conditions of life that arise only in civilized states. Let the immature phantasy of the budding poet glorify the half-savage way of life of the nomadic gypsies. An uncontested appraisal of this phantasy is contained in the simple fact that the offspring of our civilized society, Pushkin, could create his "Gypsies,"²⁷ whereas the gypsies themselves despite their supposed advantages²⁸ could not create their own Pushkin.²⁹

²⁶ F] We can clarify this twofold point of view by an analogous example from a quite different sphere of relations. Even sincere and good Catholics can see the elimination of the Roman pope's secular power and the abolition of the church as a state in different and frankly contradictory ways: either as a favorable condition for an *increase* of the inner moral authority of the pope, or as the deplorable belittling and *debasement* of his political role.

²⁷ E] A reference to one of Pushkin's poems. "Gypsies" was written in 1824. In that year, Pushkin was banished for an indefinite period to his mother's country estate for his alleged atheism. There, he was placed under police surveillance for 2 years.

²⁸ C] despite their supposed advantages] *Absent in AB.*

²⁹ F] Moreover, the same poet dedicates one of his more mature works "with respect" to *the historian of the Russian state*. E] Pushkin's play *Boris Godunov*, written in 1825 and published in 1831 was dedicated to N. M. Karamzin (1766–1826), the author of the multi-volume *History of the Russian State*.

Everything that nourishes our spiritual nature, everything that gives beauty and dignity to our life in the sphere of religion, science and [241]art, all³⁰ arose based on civilized community life, conditioned by the state—all were created not by the gens, but by the fatherland. This is why the people who, while the gentile way of life still predominated, supported the then just emerging or even only just envisioned fatherland, which they had founded, were bearers of a higher consciousness, of a better personal-social morality. They were benefactors of humanity and historical zealots. It was not in vain that the grateful citizens of the Greek communities and of other lands esteemed such people as their heroes—the eponyms.³¹

Societal progress is not an impersonal matter. The conflict between the enterprising individual and one's immediate social environment led to the establishment of a wider and more significant unit—the fatherland. The bearers of this *super-gentile* consciousness or, more precisely, of this semi-conscious aspiration for a broader morality and community, who felt confined in the gentile way of life, broke their connection with it, gathered around themselves a *free band* of like-minded individuals and established cities and states. The arbitrary domination of a pseudo-scientific critique has hastily converted into a myth³² the fugitive Dido, who founded Carthage,³³ and the banished brothers who founded Rome.³⁴ However, in historical times there appear an ample number of examples that instill in us warranted confidence in these ancient tales. An individual exploit that severs the given social frontiers in order to create new and higher cultural and political formations is a phenomenon so fundamental that it cannot help but be encountered in every era of humanity.³⁵

³⁰ C] in the sphere of religion, science and art, all] *Absent in AB*.

³¹ E] A reference to, e.g., Hellen, the eponym of all the Greek tribes and himself the father of Dorus, the eponym of the Dorians, to Achæus, the eponym of the Achæans, and to Ion, the eponym of the Ionians.

³² E] A reference to the work of Theodor Mommsen (1817–1903), who wrote, “The story of the foundation of Rome by refugees from Alba under the leadership of the sons of an Alban prince, Romulus and Remus, is nothing but a naïve attempt of primitive quasi-history. ... Such tales, which profess to be historical but are merely improvised explanations of no very ingenious character, it is the first duty of history to dismiss.” Mommsen 1911: 45.

³³ E] In his *Aeneid*, Virgil tells of Dido, a princess of Tyre in Phoenicia. Escaping tyranny in her own land, she ventured to Libya where she founded Carthage, a great city which Aeneas and his comrades, who survived the sack of Troy, visited seven years after the end of the Trojan War. Dido received the Trojans with hospitality. Having loved Aeneas, she felt betrayed when he left for Italy and committed suicide.

³⁴ E] A reference, of course, to Romulus and Remus, the central characters in the legend of Rome's establishment.

³⁵ F] The absurdity of the points of view that negative historical criticism usually adopts avoids the general ridicule only thanks to the “gloom of time” in which the objects of its concern are hidden. If its favorite techniques and considerations were applied, for example, to Mohammad or to Peter the Great, there would be as little left of these historical heroes as there is of Dido or Romulus. Anyone who has read Whateley's excellent little book on Napoleon has to agree that the biting significance of this mythological hero is revealed by the book's use of the critical school's rigorous principles. The book has a level of consistency, clarity and completeness that we find lacking in the more or less famous works of negative criticism, even though they were written not in jest but

On the basis of historical experience as well as experience drawn from natural history, it is impossible to suppose that [242]a given organized group breaks down or undergoes any essential transformation (for example, become parts of another larger whole) except with the participation of the ultimate units that form it. The ultimate unit of human society is the individual, and the individual has always been the active principle³⁶ of historical progress, i.e., of the transition from the narrowly limited and scanty forms of life to wider and more substantial social formations.³⁷

VIII

A given narrow social group (let us say, a gens) has rights over the individual person, since only in it and through it can a person begin to realize one's inner dignity. However, these social rights over the individual can in no way be³⁸ *unconditional*. For a given, isolated group represents³⁹ only one of the relative stages of historical progress, whereas the human individual can pass through all these stages in aspiring to infinite perfection, which obviously is neither conclusively exhausted nor satisfied by any limited social order.⁴⁰ In other words, *by virtue of one's intrinsic infinity the individual can be definitively and unconditionally in solidarity with and inseparable from the social environment not with its given limitations, but only with it as an infinite whole. This whole is gradually manifested whereas in interacting with single individuals its general forms are*⁴¹ widened, raised and *perfected*. A personal *accomplishment* is fruitful only in society, but only in a society that is *moving along*. Not only is a person not obligated to surrender oneself *unselfishly* to any limited and fixed form of social life, but he or she also *has no right* to do so, for that could be done only by damaging one's human dignity.⁴²

with the most serious of intentions. E] See Whateley 1985. This work originally published in 1819 was an attack on Hume's position on miracles by showing that there is no evidence that Napoleon ever existed.

³⁶ C] with the participation of the ultimate units ... the individual has always been the active principle] through the activity of the single elements that form it. The single element of human society is the individual, and the individual always was the dynamic principle A] with the participation of the single elements that form it. The single element of human society is the individual, who always was the active principle B.

³⁷ C] formations] *footnote added here in AB*: This important truth concerning the significance of the individual in history, which is rejected by certain popular theories, forms the dominant idea in many works of Professor N. I. Kareev, who from this point of view must be recognized as one of the nice and comforting phenomena of our contemporary literature. AB E] Regarding Kareev, see, for example, Kareev 1890. As for the other view, Solov'ëv had in mind at least the position expounded in L. Tolstoy's *War and Peace*.

³⁸ C] can in no way be] in no way is AB.

³⁹ C] isolated group represents] group, as an independent whole, represents AB

⁴⁰ C] order.] organization. A.

⁴¹ C] *its general forms are*] this very sphere is A.

⁴² C] A personal *accomplishment* ... human dignity.] *Absent in AB*.

However, an enterprising member of a gens, then, is morally right in rising up against the conservatism of a gens and assisting in the formation of a state, by virtue of which previously independent social groups are transformed into elementary cells of the new larger whole. It follows from this that the new state has no *unconditional* rights over [243]the former gens (which are from then on only *family*) connections. Representing a *comparatively* higher, but in no way an absolute form of human life in the community, the state has only a *relative* primacy over the gentile way of life. Being only a transitional stage of social development, it includes also, however, a certain unconditional moral element, which retains its power in the state and must be sacred to it. In fact, we clearly distinguish the two-fold structure of gentile morality: (1) that which is connected with the idea of the gens as a completely independent, or autonomous, form of community life which it was at one time, but which it ceased to be with the formation of the state. That is, it is a transitional, expendable element in gentile morality; and (2) natural obligations, which follow from the close, blood tie and constant cohabitation, which obviously retain all their significance even with the transition to a way of life in the state, or, what amounts to the same thing, with the transformation of the gens into a family. The hard shell of the gentile organization has burst open and broken apart, but the moral kernel of the family remained and still remains until the end of history. Meanwhile, when the transition from one way of life to another is only just completed, the representatives of the newly formed state, aware of its recently discovered advantages over the gentile union, could easily ascribe to the new system an absolute significance that does not belong to it and set state law above natural law. In the conflicts that originate from this,⁴³ moral righteousness belongs not to these representatives of the *relatively* higher social order, but to the defenders of *what is unconditional* in the old,⁴⁴ i.e., what must be held equally sacred under *any* social order. Here, conservatism ceases to be blind or selfish stagnation and becomes a pure awareness of a higher duty. Here the embodiment of the protective principle⁴⁵—the female—the usual bulwark of low routine—becomes the bearer of moral heroism. Sophocles' Antigone is the personification of what is unconditionally valuable in the gentile way of life that remained and forever will remain after the transformation of the gens into the family with the coming of the state. She has no thought at all of the political⁴⁶ autonomy of the gens, of the right of blood feuding, etc.—she defends only her unconditional right to fulfill her unconditional obligation [244]of piety and brotherly love: to give an honorable burial to her closest relative, who can obtain it from no one else except her. In her, there is no enmity towards the moral foundations of the state but only an awareness—quite correctly—that outside these foundations the demands of positive law are not unconditional but have their limits in natural law, which is consecrated by religion and protects family obligations even against the state if necessary when it confers on itself what it should not. The conflict between Antigone and Creon is not a collision of two moral forces—the personal and the social. It is

⁴³ C] In the conflicts that originate from this,] In cases of such a conflict, **AB**.

⁴⁴ C] in the old] *Absent in AB*.

⁴⁵ C] the embodiment of the protective principle—] *Absent in AB*.

⁴⁶ C] political] *Absent in AB*

a conflict of the moral force, as such, with an anti-moral force. It is impossible to agree with the generally accepted view of Antigone as⁴⁷ the bearer and champion of personal feeling against the common law embodied in Creon, the representative of the fatherland. The genuine sense of tragedy is quite different. A religious attitude towards the dead is a moral obligation, the fulfillment of which is the basis of any society, but personal feeling expresses only the subjective side of the matter. In our own day, the funeral of and respect paid to dead relatives is not the result of personal feeling alone, and this was even more so in ancient times. It is possible that the feeling is not there, yet the obligation still remains. Antigone had a heartfelt attachment to both brothers, but her sacred obligation connected her to the one who needed her religious help. Being the epitome of a moral individual, Antigone is thereby at the same time the representative of true social life, which is preserved only by the fulfillment of one's obligation. Without hiding her feelings at all, she, nevertheless, bases her actions not on them, but on her sacred obligation, which has to be fulfilled to the end (*φιλη μετ αυτου χειρισμαι, φιλου μετα,—όσια πανουργήσασα*).⁴⁸ Of course, this obligation is not an abstract duty, but an expression of the eternal real order:

Since I must longer please
Those who are below before the living.
For *there I will dwell forever*. Well, if you
Want to neglect what *the gods have revered*.⁴⁹

Indeed, to Creon's question: "You dared to break the proclaimed laws?"⁵⁰ She refers not to her personal feeling, but to [245]the absolute right of the eternal moral order, which cannot be abrogated by civil laws:

For it was not Zeus who announced them to me
Nor Justice, the friend of the gods below
Who gave such Laws to people.
And your decrees cannot have such power,
That place the dead will above
The unwritten and indelible divine statutes.⁵¹

For his part, Creon is not a representative of the state system, the moral foundation of which is the same as that of the gens, albeit with the advantage of a more complete realization. He is the representative of a state system that is distorted or that has put itself in a false position, a state system *that has put on airs*.⁵² However, where does this distortion originate, a distortion that lies not in the essence and purpose of the state, if it does not come from the personal evil passions of its representatives, in the present case of Creon? In other words, in direct opposition

⁴⁷ C] It is impossible to agree ... of Antigone as] Only a superficial and sentimental critique can see in Antigone **AB**.

⁴⁸ E] Greek: "I will stay with him, my brother; and my crime will be devotion" Sophocles 1973: 23, lines 72–73.

⁴⁹ E] Cf. Sophocles 1973: 24, lines 75–79.

⁵⁰ E] Cf. Sophocles 1973: 39, line 449. Here, Solov'ev is clearly quoting from *Antigone*, but he omits in his text the quotation marks.

⁵¹ E] Cf. Sophocles 1973: 39, lines 450–458.

⁵² C] *that has put on airs.*] that has put on airs and become presumptuous. **AB**.

to the popular⁵³ idea it could just as rightly be said that Antigone is the bearer of the social principle and Creon of the individual. However, both would be imprecise and inadequate. It is clear that the very opposition of the individual to society, of the principle of the individual to that of society is, in this case, as in all others, not in agreement with the true situation. The actual opposition and conflict here is not sociological, but purely moral—between good and evil, each of which is manifested as a whole, both in the personal and in the social sphere. Cain killed Abel not because he was the representative of the principle of the individual as against the congeneric union—because all developed “individuals” would certainly have to kill their brothers. He killed, because he was the representative of the principle of *evil*, which can manifest itself both individually and collectively, both privately and publicly. In turn, Creon forbade the citizens from fulfilling certain religious and moral obligations not because he was the head of state, but because he was evil and followed the same principle that was active in Cain before there was any state. Certainly, every law is a state act, but Creon’s position is determined not by the fact that he issued a law, but by the fact that he issued a *profane* law. In this what was at fault was not the state system, but Creon’s own moral worthlessness. For hardly anyone would dare to assert that the permanent [246]function of the state consists in enacting nothing else but profane and inhuman laws.

Thus, Creon is not the bearer of the state principle but of the evil principle, which is rooted in an individual’s will, though it is manifested and embodied in social life. In the present case, it takes the form of a bad state law. In turn, Antigone, who sacrifices her life in order to fulfill a religious, moral obligation that underlies community life, is only a representative of the moral good, which is also rooted in an individual’s will but realized in true social life.

Every conflict in the life of humanity is *ultimately* reducible not to relative sociological opposites, but to the unconditional opposition of the moral good with a self-asserting evil. Therefore, however, if the most profound essence of the problem is always the same, it does not follow that the various historical circumstances in which it turns up again and again are devoid—even from an ethical point of view—of an interest and significance of their own. The inner essence of the moral good and evil is known with complete clarity only in its typical manifestations. The evil that is manifested in a distortion of the idea of the state, or in an exaltation of a state law over the moral law, is a quite specific evil, or a unique, higher stage of evil, than, for example, a simple murder or even fratricide. However, precisely owing to its greater subtlety and complexity, it is subjectively more excusable and less offensive than these crude crimes. Therefore, although socially more harmful, Creon is, for example, personally less guilty than Cain.

There is yet another important nuance of the theme in this most profound drama. The state in general is a higher stage of historical development than the gentile order. This higher stage had just been reached in Hellas. In the representatives of the new order, there are still fresh memories of its origin, struggle and creation. This recent victory of the new over the old, the higher over the lower, is not something

⁵³ C] popular] generally accepted AB.

accidental. In view of the obvious advantages of the unifying state system over gentile discord, its creation is recognized as a progressive, necessary and proper phenomenon. Hence, Creon's self-confidence at the beginning of the drama. [247] The bad law he issues setting allegiance to the new fatherland above the original religious obligations is not only an abuse of state power, but also an abuse of the *victory*—not the local victory of the Thebians over the Argives, but the general victory of the state—the fatherland and city—over the gens. This is why it is impossible to look on Creon—and in antiquity he was not looked on that way—as just a tyrant, in the sense of a representative of personal arbitrariness and real power.⁵⁴ The expression of the general will of the citizenry is assumed to be in the law he issued. The short preface of Aristophanes the grammarian,⁵⁵ usually inserted before the drama, begins in this way: Antigone, who buried Polynices *contrary to the order of the city* (or state)—*παρα τὴν πρόσταξιν τῆς πόλεως*. In Sophocles himself, Ismene justifies her refusal to help Antigone, saying that she cannot violate the will of her fellow citizens. Creon also speaks out not in the name of autocracy, but in the name of the unconditional significance of patriotism:

Indeed, anyone who puts a friend above
his fatherland is as good as nothing.⁵⁶

The ethical and psychological basis of the bad law, certainly, lies in Creon's bad will. However, this will is not only absurd and personally arbitrary, but is connected with a general, though nevertheless false, idea by virtue of which the power of the state and its laws are above the moral law. Creon formulates this false idea with complete clarity:

Whoever the city proclaims should be obeyed
Both in small matters and in just ones, *as well as their opposite*.⁵⁷

This idea, despite being a flagrant lie, has inspired and continues to inspire people who do not have the excuse that Creon had and who was carried away by the recent progress, namely the victory of the state over the lack of principles in the gens and the tribe. On the other hand, perhaps in these semi-historical times, [248] clear protests, such as those Sophocles puts into the mouth of Antigone, were not raised by a better consciousness against this false idea. However, in Sophocles' own time the best minds already understood well enough that historical progress, which creates new forms of society, cannot in any way have an advantage over the fundamental bases of *any* social life. Although historical progress is a necessary and important phenomenon, it is, nevertheless, relative and subordinate to a higher idea, and it

⁵⁴ F] As is well known, the Greek word *τύραννος* did not originally have a bad meaning, but was used to designate any monarch. Thus, in the same trilogy of Sophocles the first drama is called *οἰδίπου τύραννος*, which is not incorrectly translated as “Oedipus the King.” We should not translate this word differently in the *Antigone* in reference to Creon.

⁵⁵ E] This “Aristophanes” is commonly referred to in English-language literature as “Aristophanes of Byzantium.”

⁵⁶ E] Cf. Sophocles 1973: 28, lines 182–183.

⁵⁷ E] Cf. Sophocles 1973: 47, lines 667–668.

loses all justification when it is turned against the unconditional moral good, for the realization of which all historical movement takes place. However highly we value those who manifest the triumph of progress, the highest dignity of a human person, who evokes complete approval and sympathy, lies not in temporal vanquishing, but in preserving the *eternal limits* that were sacred in the past and will be in the future.

[249]Chapter 11

The Principal Eras in the Historical Development of Personal-Social Consciousness

I

Undoubtedly, with the establishment of the nation-state, the moral horizon of the human individual expands substantially and with it the sphere in which one's good feelings and active will can be correctly exercised in moral actions. A certain religious development takes place with conceptions of the deity being generalized and elevated. Altruism, i.e., moral solidarity with other human beings, not only increases quantitatively, or in scope, but is also raised qualitatively, losing its predominant characteristic as a natural instinct, turning toward unseen, ideal objects: the fatherland and the state. Although these ideas are palpably realized in the unity of language, everyday life and in the present representatives of power, etc., everyone understands that these real signs do not exhaust the essence of the matter, that a change in this or that custom does not eliminate the fatherland, that the state does not disappear with the disappearance of its present representatives. Thus, the spiritual nature and the ideal significance of such objects as the fatherland and the state, in any case, remain, and the individual's moral relationship to them, expressed in true patriotism and civic valor, presents in this sense (other conditions being equal) a higher stage of morality than the simple feelings of kinship or of a blood tie.¹ On the other hand, however, it is usually pointed out that as the scope of moral relations or the social environment expands one's inner, personal moral foundation [250]correlatively loses its living force and reality. It is said that the strength or intensity of one's moral motivation is inversely proportional to its objective scope, that it is impossible to love one's fatherland as sincerely and immediately as one's relatives or friends, and that a vital interest in one's personal welfare can never be

C] The first version of this chapter (A), also consisting of eight sections, appeared originally as a continuation of the previous chapter. In the first edition of the compiled book (B), these sections form §§IX-XVI of Chap. 8, pp. 280–320, and there the chapter bears the title “The Individual and Society (Conclusion).”

¹ C] tie.] solidarity. AB.

compared with an abstract interest in the welfare of the state, let alone the universal welfare of humanity, an interest in which some even deny as a mere fabrication.

Putting aside for the time being the problem of humanity, we should recognize that the above comment concerning the inverse proportionality between the intensity and the scope² of moral feelings has a factual basis. However, to be correctly appreciated the three following reservations must be taken into account:

(1) Independently of the manner in which human individuals, taken separately, relate to the social whole, more or less broadly conceived, there exists a *collective* morality, which binds these³ people into a totality—such as a mob or a nation. If there is such a thing as a criminal mob, which has now become a concern of criminologists, and if a senseless mob, a human herd, makes itself felt even more, then there is also a valiant mob, a heroic mob. And just as a mob, excited by bestial or brutish instincts lowers the spiritual level of those individuals who are captivated by it, so a popular mass stirred by collective-moral motivations lifts up those individuals in whom these motivations would by themselves be weak and insincere.⁴ During the era of the gentile way of life the best people aspired for a broader collective morality, and this aspiration conditioned the creation of the state, or fatherland. However, once created, this new *social whole*, real and powerful despite its ideal nature, *exerts a direct influence not only on the best, but also on the average person and even on those individuals who are bad and are part of it.*

(2) Putting aside collective morality, if, quantitatively speaking, the majority of people, taken separately,⁵ are bad patriots and poor citizens, this consideration is balanced qualitatively by the fact that, although not numerous,⁶ true examples of genuine patriotism and civic valor could have emerged in the primitive conditions of life. They became possible only with the rise of the fatherland, the state and the nation.

[251] (3) Finally, whether the moral gains attained through the enlargement of the social sphere in the nation state are great or small, they are, in any case, a *gain*. For this enlargement does not eliminate the earlier merit of gentile morality, but only modifies and purifies it into the form of family ties and virtues, which patriotism does not replace but only supplements. Therefore, from the point of view of the individual,⁷ love for millions of one's compatriots cannot be as powerful as the love for tens of one's close friends. Even though it is comparatively weak and does not destroy the other, more powerful one, this wider love is, nevertheless, a direct

² C] scope] extensivity **AB**.

³ C] these] single **A**.

⁴ C] insincere.] *Footnote added here in AB only*: Concerning the passive or unresponsive attitude of individuals toward their surroundings or the given collective whole, see, incidentally, the investigations by [Gabriel] Tarda and also the excellent, though unfortunately, incomplete article by N. K. Mikhajlovskij "Geroi i tolpa" (in a collection of his works). E] See Mikhajlovskij 1896: 95–190.

⁵ C] taken separately] taken individually **AB**.

⁶ C] although not numerous.] *Absent in AB*.

⁷ C] the individual,] the subjective individual, **AB**.

gain. Consequently, from whatever side we look at it, an expansion of the bounds of the sphere of life of a people from the gens to the state or fatherland represents indubitable moral progress, which apart from our relations to the gods and to our neighbors, can, as we will now see, be pointed out in⁸ the realm of our relations to lower, material nature.

II

The moral principle, which demands that we subordinate ourselves to what is higher and that we stand in solidarity with our neighbors, also demands that we ascend over material nature, taken as the material of reason. The immediate object of this ascendancy is the flesh of each individual person—hence ascetic morality in the narrow sense of the word. However, the material life of an individual person is only a speck of the general material life that surrounds one, and there is no logical foundation to separate this speck from the whole nor is there any practical possibility to do so. As long as external nature completely suppresses a person, helplessly lost in primeval forests amid savage beasts and forced to think only of one's survival and the means of sustenance, any thought of the supremacy of the spirit over the flesh could hardly arise, let alone of attempts to accomplish⁹ such a task. A person, who of necessity starves, usually does not fast for ascetic reasons. Undergoing every kind of deprivation from birth and living under constant threat of a violent death, a person in the savage state is an ascetic, albeit involuntarily and without being aware of it, and [252]feats of endurance are of as little moral force as the sufferings of little fish pursued by pikes and sharks.

The manifestation of an inner spiritual moral force over the flesh presupposes a certain level of personal material security against the destructive actions of external nature, and a single person alone cannot possibly achieve this material security. It requires a social union. Although certain forms of ascetic morality aspire to renounce social ties, this very aspiration, obviously, could only have emerged on the basis of an already existing society. Both in Brahmin¹⁰ India and in Christian¹¹ Egypt, ascetic hermits were products of a social, cultural environment that they had spiritually outgrown but without which they themselves would have been historically and materially impossible. Wild beasts were subdued when confronted with isolated hermits, who had voluntarily left society for the desert, even though there was no reason for the beasts to submit when confronted with the vagrant savages in forced isolation. The latter, though inferior to these beasts in terms of physical strength, were still too close to them in terms of their general level. For both victo-

⁸ C] progress, which apart ... pointed out in] progress. This progress is noticed not only in the sphere of our relations to the gods and to our neighbors but also in **AB**.

⁹ C] attempts to accomplish] accomplishing **AB**.

¹⁰ C] Brahmin] *Absent in AB*.

¹¹ C] Christian] *Absent in AB*.

ries—that over the evil beasts around them and that over the evil passions within themselves—a certain amount of culture was necessary. This was possible only through the development of social life. Consequently, ascetic morality is not a *matter* of a single individual, taken abstractly. Rather, it can be *manifested* by a person only as an individual social creature. The inner foundations of the good in a person do not in themselves depend on the forms of social life, but the actual realization of these goods presupposes such forms.¹²

At the original stage of social life—the gentile way of life—ascetic morality¹³ takes on a purely restrictive character. Besides the constraints¹⁴ on sexual sensuality by marriage mentioned above, there are prohibitions of this or that food (for example, of the totemic¹⁵ animals connected with a given gens as its spirit-protectors or as the embodiment of their ancestors), and also the restricting of the eating of meat to sacrificial feasts alone (thus, particularly among Semitic nations the flesh of domestic animals was originally the object of religious use alone, cf. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*).¹⁶

Under the conditions of the gentile way of life, however, asceticism by its very essence cannot go beyond such elementary restrictions. [253]As long as personal dignity is realized only in connection with a gens or in any case only is conditioned by it, there can be no talk of the ideal of complete abstention or of a morally obligatory struggle with those passions on which alone the gentile way of life depends. The virtuous person in a gens is noted for revenge, rapaciousness, and has no right to dream of complete chastity. The ideal representative of gentile morality is the biblical Jacob, who had two wives and several concubines, who gave birth to twelve sons and increased the gentile property without consideration of the means.¹⁷

The formation of the way of life within a state turned out to have an enormous, albeit indirect, influence on ascetic morality (in a broad sense of the term), i.e., on that aspect of the moral principle which deals with the material nature of the human being and of the world and has to do with the full triumph of the rational spirit over blind, elemental forces. Human control of nature is completely impossible for the isolated savage or for the human beast, and only in rudimentary and uncertain forms is it attained at the barbaric stage of the gentile way of life. It becomes significant, durable and, above all, is continuously increasing under the conditions of a civilized existence within broadly and strongly organized political unions. A military, theocratic despotism served as a condition for the spiritual development of the solitary individual, served as a school of active asceticism for the popular masses and as the start of the subjugation of the Earth in the interests of humanity. To bring about civilization, it united people into large groups in the four different corners of the Earth—between the Yellow and Blue Rivers, between the Indus and the Ganges,

¹² C] The inner foundations of the ... such forms.] *Absent in AB*.

¹³ C] ascetic morality] this morality **AB**.

¹⁴ C] constraints] limitations **AB**.

¹⁵ C] totemic] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁶ E] Smith 1956. This work originally appeared in 1889.

¹⁷ C] The ideal representative ... of the means.] *Absent in A*.

between the Tigris and the Euphrates and, finally, in the Nile Valley. These military, theocratic despotisms, which remind us, in miniature, of Arakcheev's military settlements,¹⁸ were certainly quite far from the norm of human social life.¹⁹ However, their great historical significance as a necessary moral school for primitive humanity is recognized even by the theoreticians of unconditional anarchism.²⁰

[254] In general, *in order to rise above the compulsory form of social morality savage*²¹ *humanity must pass through it. That is, in order to outgrow despotism, savage humanity must experience it.* In particular, three considerations are indubitable²² here: (1) The more difficult the initial struggle with primitive²³ nature, the more it was necessary for people to unite into broad but closely knit communities, and to combine the broad expanse of a social group with the close and firm bond between its members is possible only with the strictest *discipline*, supported by the most powerful of *sanctions*, namely the religious sanction. Consequently, these political unions, which for the first time subdued savage nature and laid the cornerstone of human civilization, had to have the character of a religious, military despotism or of a compulsory theocracy. This work in the interest of civilization was executed under moral and material pressure. These "Egyptian toils"²⁴ were not only by their very organization a school of human solidarity for the popular masses, but can be called with respect to their objective goal and result the *first feat of collective asceticism* in humanity, the first historical triumph of reason over the blind forces of matter. (2) The compulsory quality of this collective feat does not allow us to ascribe an ideal value to it, but this does not deprive it of all moral significance. The compulsion here is not merely material, but ultimately rests on the faith of the popular masses in the divine nature of the power that makes them work. However imperfect in terms of its object and its form this faith may be, to subordinate one's life to it, to endure all sorts of hardships and difficulties by its demand is, in any case, a moral issue, which, not only in terms of its general historical result but also in terms of its psychological effect on each person in the popular mass, has the character of a

¹⁸ E] An army general under Tsar Alexander I, Aleksej A. Arakcheev (1769–1834) supervised military "settlements" or "colonies" intended to reduce the cost of maintaining a standing army by having the soldiers farm and maintain a strict orderly regime. Such a regimented life-style resulted in incessant revolts, and the settlements were in time eliminated.

¹⁹ C] These military, theocratic ... human social life.] No one seriously dares to exhibit these military, theocratic despotisms as the ideal of human social life. **AB**.

²⁰ F] I refer, in particular, to the interesting book by Lev Mechnikov, *La civilisation et les grands fleuves*. Concerning it, see my article "Iz filosofii istorii" in *Voprosii filosofii i psikhologii*, 1891 and also the article by Prof. Vinogradov in the same journal. One respectable critic imagined that in speaking about military theocracy as a historical school of asceticism I had in mind the *personal intentions* of the Egyptian pharaohs and Chaldean kings! C] One respectable critic ... kings!] *Absent in AB* E] See Metchnikoff 1889. A Russian translation appeared in 1898, though Solov'ev was clearly familiar with the work in the original French. For the mentioned article by Solov'ev, see SS, vol. 6: 340–360.

²¹ C] savage] *Absent in AB*.

²² C] three considerations are indubitable] three considerations have value **A**.

²³ C] primitive] savage **AB**.

²⁴ E] Cf. Exodus 1: 13.

genuine, albeit imperfect, asceticism, i.e., a victory of the spiritual principle over the carnal. If innumerable Chinese²⁵ sincerely recognize the Chinese emperor as the “Son of Heaven,” if the Hindus seriously believe that priests spring from the head of Brahma and kings and princes from his arms, if the Assyrian king was actually [255] in the eyes of his nation the embodiment of the national god Asshur and the pharaoh was for the Egyptians actually a manifestation of the supreme solar deity, then an unconditional subordination to such rulers was for these nations a religious and moral obligation, and compulsory work in accordance with their will was an ascetic exercise. This did not apply, however, to slaves in the narrow sense—prisoners of war from foreign lands for whom their new masters’ gods were *foreign gods*. However, even apart from this national limitation, the general structure of these primitive religious political unions represented a basic imperfection in the sense that the gods themselves who received both voluntary and passive human offerings (both in the figurative and in the literal sense) lacked unconditional intrinsic worth, representing only the infinity of force and not the infinity of justice. A person remains morally superior to such gods, superior by feats and, consequently, by sacrificing oneself to these gods and their earthly representatives one does not find what is higher, for the sake of which it is worthwhile to give up what is lower.²⁶ If the meaning of the sacrifice lies in cultural progress, then this meaning is only relative, for progress itself is, obviously, only a means, a path, a direction, and not the unconditional and ultimate goal. Moreover, there is in the human individual something unconditional, something that can never be merely a means. Inherent in it is the inner possibility of infinite perfection through the perception and assimilation of the absolute full scope of being. Such a society where the individual’s significance is not recognized, where the individual is considered to have only the relative value of an instrument for political and cultural ends—even if these ends are the most exalted—²⁷ cannot be the ideal of human social life, but represents only a transitional stage of historical development. Such is the case especially with the military theocratic despotisms from which world history originates. However, (3) these primitive forms of the religio-political union demanded further progress not only owing to their imperfection. They even created by their very nature the external conditions that were necessary for this progress. For the time being, within the bounds of the gentile way of life, each member of a given social group was bound by necessity and by a sense of duty to engage in plunder, pillage and murder, to fight wild beasts, to breed domestic live-stock and produce [256] numerous descendants. Obviously, there is no place here for the higher spiritual development of the human individual. It naturally became possible only when, with the compulsory division of labor in the great religious, political organizations, there arose, in addition to the popular masses doomed to hard work, a class of people free from such work, who were secure and possessed leisure. Here alongside the soldiers there also appeared professional priests, scribes, fortune-tellers, etc., among whom a higher conscious-

²⁵ C] innumerable Chinese] the masses in the Chinese nation **AB**.

²⁶ C] to give up what is lower.] to disavow what is lower. **A**] to sacrifice the lower. **B**.

²⁷ C] —even if these ends are the most exalted—] *Absent in AB*.

ness actually arose. This great historical moment was immortalized in the Bible in the form of a sagacious and sublime²⁸ tale about how the best representative of the gentile way of life, Abram, with his gang of armed servants,²⁹ humbled himself before the *gens-less* priest of the God Most High, Melchizedek, who came to Abram with the gifts of a new, settled³⁰ culture—bread and wine and with the spiritual blessing of Justice³¹ and Peace.^{32, 33}

The weapons of the great conquerors gradually extended the scope of the difficult collective work of the popular masses, securing the external, material successes of human civilization. At the same time, the inner work of thought among the leisured and peaceful representatives of the national, theocratic order led human consciousness to a more perfect ideal of individual and social *universalism*.

III

The first awakening of human self-consciousness in world history occurred where its sleep was the richest in fantastic and wild visions—in India. To the overwhelming diversity of Indian mythology, there corresponded a similar diversity and conglomeration of religiously political and domestic forms and conditions of life. Nowhere was the theocratic order as complex, burdened and connected with as much national and class exclusivity. Neither from China nor from Egypt, neither from the Chaldeans nor the Phoenicians and not from the Greco-Roman world but precisely from India do we get conceptions, expressing an extreme degree of separation between classes of people³⁴ [257] and of a rejection of human dignity. If the “pariahs,” as standing outside the law, were devoid of human dignity, then people within the legitimate castes and even within the highest of these were devoid of any freedom as a result of a most complex system of prescriptions and rites, both religious and customary. However, the more narrow and artificial the fetters created by and for the spirit itself, the more they testify to its inner strength and to the fact that nothing

²⁸ C] sublime] grand **AB** *Opravdanie 1899*. This change is among the corrections in a list included in *Opravdanie 1899*. Since Solov’ev did not change this word in the various earlier editions, this decision itself reflected in the list of corrections could be considered impulsive. However, “sublime” does appear more appropriate here.

²⁹ C] Abram, with his gang of armed servants,] Abram, a nomad, a herder and a leader of armed servants, **AB**.

³⁰ C] settled] *Absent in AB*.

³¹ E] Solov’ev’s word here is “*Pravda*”—note the capitalization—which can be translated as either “Truth” or “Justice.” Much has been written on the difficulty of accurately translating this word. For a quite informative and full discussion, see Cassin 2014: 813–319.

³² F] I am speaking here, of course, only of the cultural, historical sense of this tale, without touching its secret significance.

³³ E] See Genesis 14: 17–20; Hebrews 7: 2.

³⁴ F] Although the word “caste” is Portuguese, not Indian, it arose (in the given sense) to designate precisely these Indian relationships.

external can definitively bind and restrain it. From the nightmare of ritual sacrifices, obligatory deeds and painful exploits, he³⁵ awakes and says to himself: All this is only my own fabrication, which I, while asleep, took for reality; if only I could stay awake, all of these fears and sufferings would disappear. But what would then remain? To this we find a very subtle and at first unclear, but in any case significant, answer in *the religion of awakening*.³⁶ Here is perpetuated the very moment of the return of the human individual from external objects to oneself, the act of identifying one's purely negative, or formal, infinity, without any definite content. Here, the individual is aware of one's infinitude, one's freedom and universality only because he or she transcends every given determination, every given relation and particularity. One senses within oneself something that is greater and higher than this caste, this nationality, this cult, this path through life. He or she senses something higher than *all of this*. Whatever objective determination a self-conscious individual places before oneself, he or she does not stop with it; he or she knows that it was posited; this individual knows that that creation is not worthwhile and therefore abandons it: *All is empty*. However, if everything in the objective world is rejected and nothing is recognized as worth existing, there nevertheless remains this very spiritual power of rejection within us. Quite significantly, Buddhism recognizes this power not in the form of a solitary individual, but in a personal-social form, as the so-called *Triratna*, i.e., "three jewels" or "three treasures," a faith in which every Buddhist must profess: "I recognize the Buddha; I recognize the teaching or law (*Dharma*); I recognize the community of the disciples³⁷ (*Sangha*)."³⁸ Therefore, even with an awareness of one's negative infinity, the human individual cannot retain one's isolation and segregation, but by means of the general teaching one irrepressibly passes into a social organization.

[258] All is an illusion except for three things that are worthy of recognition: (1) the person who is spiritually awake, (2) the word of awakening and (3) the brotherhood of those who are awake. Here is the genuine essence of Buddhism, which feeds the hunger of millions of souls in far away Asia.³⁹ This is the first enduring

³⁵ C] he] *In Opravdanie* 1914 *alone, we find the word* "it."

³⁶ E] A reference, of course, to Buddhism. Already in his 1883 work "Velikij spor i khristianskaja politika," Solov'ev wrote, "the first awakening of the human spirit was decisively taken in India and is called Buddhism." SS, vol. 4: 22.

³⁷ C] of the disciples] of the disciples or the church **AB**.

³⁸ C] "I recognize ... I recognize ... I recognize] "I believe in ... I believe in ... I believe in **AB**.

³⁹ F] We should note, by the way, that following the lead of the biased Schopenhauer the number of Buddhists is usually wildly exaggerated. It is said that there are 400, 600 and even 700 million followers of this religion. These figures would probably be correct if all of China and Japan were populated by Buddhists. In fact, however, the teaching of Buddha in its different variations is the religion of the national masses only in Ceylon, Indochina, Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia and among the Buriats and Kalmyks. In other words, the maximum figure amounts to 75 or 80 million souls. In the Chinese empire and Japan, it is merely one of the permitted teachings to which educated people more or less closely adhere, without abandoning their own national culture. In a similar fashion, for example, many Orthodox Christians in Russia during the reign of Alexander I attended the lodges of the Freemasons. C] in Ceylon, Indochina, Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia] in Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia **AB** C] In the Chinese empire] In China **AB**.

stage of human universalism, which ascended over an exclusionary national-political order in religion and social life.

Born in a land of castes, Buddhism by no means rejected the caste organization of society nor did it attempt to destroy that organization. The followers of Buddhism simply stopped believing in the principle of that system, in the unconditional hereditary inequality of the social classes. Arising in the middle of a sharply segregated nation, it did not reject this nationality, but merely transferred human awareness into the realm of other universal and super-national concepts. As a consequence, although theoretically grounded in Indian philosophy and ultimately rejected in India, this Indian religion took root in many different nations of a different race and with a different historical background.

A recognition of the negative infinity of the human spirit was apparent to individual philosophical minds before Buddhism,⁴⁰ but [259]we find *in Buddhism* such a recognition embodied for the first time in the collective historical life of humanity. Thanks to his moral and practical universalism, which starts not so much from the mind alone as from the heart, Shakyamuni, the Buddha, created a form of social life previously unprecedented—a brotherhood of beggar-monks of every caste and of every nationality—“listeners” (Shravaki) of the true teaching, followers of the perfect path. Here for the first time, the dignity of the individual and the relationship between the individual and society is definitively determined not by the *fact* of hereditary membership in a specific gens or a specific national political organization, but by an inner *act* of selecting a certain spiritual ideal. The theoretical conceptions of the first authentic Buddha and the everyday life-style conditions of his monastic brotherhood underwent a number of historical transformations, but the moral essence of what he expressed and created has remained up to now solid and crystal clear in the Lamaian monasteries of Tibet and Mongolia.

The moral essence of Buddhism, as a personal social formation, which for two thousand odd years has adequately defined its historical existence, lies in the feeling of religious reverence for the first Who Has Woken Up—the spiritual ancestor of all those who later woke—for the totally blissful teacher. It is a demand for holiness or the complete *lack of a will* (inner asceticism as opposed to the external mortification of the flesh, which the “gymnosophists” have exercised and still are exercising but which did not satisfy the Buddha-Shakyamuni). Finally, there is the commandment

⁴⁰ F] For a long time, there were fantastic ideas about the antiquity of Indian philosophy. These are beginning to disappear in light of more rigorous scientific investigation. The Hindus acquired a large part of their wealth in academic philosophy in later times partly under the direct influence of the Greeks after Alexander the Great and partly even later with the help of the Arabs who brought Aristotle to the East no less than to the West. On the other hand, however, leaving aside the Arabs, it is indisputable that the Greeks upon their first acquaintance with India already found there the distinctive indigenous philosophy of “naked wise men” (*gymnosophists*) to be a typical and traditional manifestation from antiquity. In terms of external attributes, these Indian Adamites could not be identified with the followers of Buddhism. In all probability, they were representatives of an ascetic mysticism, Yoga, which preexisted Buddha. Even older was the pantheism of the Upanishads. Not without reason, Shakyamuni’s immediate precursor is considered to be the creator of a system of spiritualistic dualism (given in the *Sankhya Karika*), *although the individual and the very name of this wise man—Karika—is a puzzle.*

of universal kindness or favorable compassion for all creatures without exception. With the latter, however, [260]the most comprehensible and attractive side of Buddhism also reveals its inadequacy.

IV

From the Buddhist point of view, what in essence distinguishes someone who is spiritually awake from one who is not? Accepting the suggestion of sensory illusions, someone who is not awake takes apparent and temporary distinctions to be real and definitive, and as a consequence of this wants and fears various things, strives for one and is disgusted by another, loves some and hates others. Those who have woken from these sleepy agitations understand that these objects are empty and therefore calm down. Finding nothing on which it would be worthwhile to concentrate their will, they are free of all desire, preference and fear and thereby lose all reason for discord, anger, enmity and hatred. Being free of the passions, they experience the same feeling of benevolence or pity for everything without exception. However, where do they get *this* feeling? Having become convinced that *everything is empty*, that all the objective conditions of being are illusory and insignificant, an awakened sage should be absorbed in a state of unconditional *impassivity*, equally free from spite as well as from pity. Both of these contradictory qualities equally presuppose, first, confidence in the actual existence of living creatures, and second, a distinction of one from the other (for example, the suffering ignoramus, who appeals for pity, to the completely beatific Buddha, who has no need of it), and finally third, pity no less than spite moves us to certain acts that are dependent on the objective qualities and conditions of the given being, and all this is quite incompatible with the fundamental principle of universal emptiness and indifference. Buddhist moral doctrine demands active self-sacrifice. Indeed, this demand is connected with the very concept of a Buddha. The perfect Buddha (such as Gautama Shakyamuni) is distinguished from the imperfect or solitary Buddha (Pratyeka Buddha) by the fact that he is not restricted by his own awareness of the painful emptiness of being, but resolves to liberate all living creatures from this torment. This general decision was preceded in his earlier existences by individual acts of [261]extreme self-sacrifice, which are replete in Buddhist legends. (For example, in one of his earlier existences he sacrificed himself to a raging tiger in order to save a poor woman with children.) By such exploits (in contrast to the pointless self-destruction among the pre-Buddhist ascetics of India) the highest bliss is directly achieved for everyone “who is awake.” In this way, a typical and well-known tale concerns one of the apostles of Buddhism—Aryadeva. Approaching a certain city, he saw an injured dog that was infested with worms. In order to save the dog without destroying the worms, Aryadeva placed the worms on a piece of his own body that he had cut off. At that moment both the city and the dog disappeared before his eyes, and he was at once plunged into Nirvana. Such active self-sacrifice out of pity towards all living creatures, which is a distinctive trait of Buddhist moral teaching, cannot, however,

be logically reconciled with the fundamental principle of the Buddhist worldview, i.e., with the doctrine of indifference and the emptiness of everything. Certainly, in feeling pity for everything equally, from Brahma and Indra to a worm, I do not violate the principle of indifference. However, as soon as the feeling of universal compassion becomes a deed of salvation, it is necessary to bid farewell to indifference. If, instead of a dog with worms, Aryadeva had met a person suffering from delusions and vices, pity for *this* “living creature” would demand from him not a piece of his flesh, nor words of the true doctrine, while to address him with rational admonishments would be no less absurd than to feed a satiated but deluded person his own flesh. Thus, *equal pity for all demands not an equal, but a completely different active⁴¹ relationship to each*. This *distinction* turns out *not* to be merely *illusory* for the Buddhist. For he certainly agrees that if Aryadeva had not distinguished the worm and the dog from the human and had offered suffering animals soul-saving books to read, he would hardly have been able to complete any work and deserve Nirvana. Thus, along with an *all-embracing pity* there must be a *distinguishing truth* that renders to each his own: a piece of meat to an animal and a word of spiritual awakening to a rational creature. However, it is impossible to stop with this. Pity for all makes me wish for each and all the higher and final good, which lies not in satiety, but in perfect deliverance from the torment of this limited [262]existence and the necessity of rebirths. However, the worm, remaining a worm, cannot attain this deliverance—the sole true real good. Only the self-conscious and rational creature can attain it. Therefore, if I must extend pity to all lower creatures, I cannot limit myself to a simple easing of their present sufferings, but must help them achieve their final goal through rebirth in higher forms. Meanwhile, Buddhism rejects the objective conditions of being as empty and illusory. Consequently, the ascension of living creatures up the ladder of rebirths depends exclusively on their own actions (the law of *karma*): The form of the worm is the inevitable fruit of earlier sins, and no help from without can raise this worm to a higher level, say, that of a dog or an elephant. The Buddha himself could directly act only on conscious, rational creatures and then only in the sense that his preaching gave them the possibility to accept or reject the truth: in the former to be saved from the torment of rebirth and in the latter to continue to undergo it. All that those “who are awake” can hope for in their salutary effort is to arouse their sleeping neighbors, some of whom will thereby awake, while others will merely change one set of painful dreams for another, even more agonizing set.

Therefore, the principle of active pity for all living creatures, despite its inner truth, cannot be genuinely applied from the Buddhist point of view. It is completely out of our power to procure true salvation for lower creatures, and our influence on rational beings in this respect is extremely limited. Regardless of the commandments and legends, the very formula of faith (cf. above) indicates that for the Buddhist the actual sphere of moral relations and real connections is determined only by the brotherhood of “those who are awake,” such as himself, who support each other

⁴¹ C] active] *Absent in AB.*

in a peaceful and contemplative life—all that is left of their earlier activities before the final crossing into nirvana.

V

The significance of Buddhism in world history lies in the fact that here for the first time the human individual was valued not as a member of a gens, a caste, or of a national political union, but as the bearer⁴² [263] of a higher consciousness, as a creature capable of waking from the illusions of everyday life, of being liberated from the chain of causality. Such a creature could be someone from any caste or of any nationality,⁴³ and in this sense the Buddhist religion expresses the discovery of a new stage in history—one that, after the particularism of the gens and nation-state, includes all of humanity, i.e., is universal. It is clear, however, that Buddhist universalism has only an abstract and negative character. It proclaims the principle of indifference and rejects the earlier significance attributed to caste and ethnic divisions. People of all colors and status are gathered together in the new religious community, but then all is left as before. The task of collecting together all segments of humanity and forming from them a new kingdom of a higher order is neither conceived nor posed. Buddhism goes no further than the universalism of a monastic order. With the transition from the gentile way of life to the state, the earlier independent social units—the gentes—enter as subordinate parts into a new unit of a higher order, the organized political union. Similarly, a third, higher stage of human development, one that is ecumenical or universal, demands that states and nations enter as constituent parts into a new all-embracing organization. In other words, however broad the principles are proclaimed to be, in real life the existing national political groups completely retain their positive significance, and “all the people”—and thereby “all living beings”—will be only an abstract concept, symbolically embodied in the form of a monastery that is divorced from life. Remaining quite foreign to the task of actually collecting living creatures or even merely scattered portions of humanity, into a new ecumenical kingdom, Buddhism shows that it is only the first, elementary stage of a panhuman understanding of life.

The individual manifests here his or her own infinite significance insofar as the unconditional *self* rejects any limitation, insofar as this individual says, “I am connected to nothing; I have learned everything and know that all is empty. I am above everything.” *The rejection of being through knowing it* is, according to Buddhism, the absolute nature of the human spirit, which gives it an advantage not only over all earthly creatures, but even over all gods. For they are gods only by nature, [264] whereas the awakened sage becomes a god through one’s own intentional act and will. Such a sage is an *autotheist*, a *self-made* god. According to this, all of creation is only material for those willful and cognitive feats, by means of which the

⁴² C] bearer] subject **AB**.

⁴³ C] or of any nationality] *Absent in AB*.

individual must come⁴⁴ to a self-idolization. Single individuals who have embarked on the path leading to this goal constitute a normal society or brotherhood (monastic order), which is included in the Buddhist creed of faith (I believe... in *sangha*). However, this society, obviously has only a temporary significance as long as its members have not achieved a perfect state: Social life, like all other determinations, must ultimately⁴⁵ disappear in nirvana. As long as the unconditional character of the individual is understood only negatively, i.e., as a freedom from everything, this individual needs no completion, and all relationships to others represent only a ladder, which is thrown away when the summit of absolute indifference has been attained. However, the negative character of the Buddhist ideal gives not only social life, but even morality itself, merely conditional and temporary significance.

The religious and moral feeling of reverence (*pietas*) in Buddhism has no constant and eternal object. The sage who knows everything and who is liberated from everything finds nothing to worship. When Buddha Shakyamuni attained the highest understanding, not only Indra with the entire group of Vedantic deities, but also the supreme god of the powerful priests, the Brahma, came as a humble listener to hear the new teaching and, having been enlightened, to show the teacher divine honor. Meanwhile, the Buddha is a person who by his own power was made a god or attained an absolute state, and this is the highest goal for any creature. For this reason, although Buddhists respect to the point of idolatry the memory and relics of their teacher, this is possible only if the worshippers are in an imperfect state. The perfect Buddhist, having attained nirvana, is no different from the Buddha himself and no longer has any object for his or her religious feeling. Consequently, the possibility of a religious relationship is here abolished in principle, i.e., ideally, and Buddhism in its most profound essence is not only a religion of denial, but also self-denial.

In the same way, the altruistic portion of morality also falls away at the higher stages of the true path. For [265]all the distinctions there are known to be empty, including those by virtue of which certain objects, phenomena and states evoke in us a feeling of pity. An elementary teaching of the sutras says, "Be merciful to all creatures." The higher metaphysics of Abhidharma proclaims, "There are no creatures, and all feeling is the fruit of ignorance."⁴⁶ Finally, Buddhism, despite its monasteries, provides no positive justification for ascetic morality. Its monasteries are merely shelters for those seeking contemplation who have renounced worldly vanity while waiting to cross into nirvana. However, a struggle with the flesh in order to strengthen the spirit and *to spiritualize the body*, which characterizes positive moral asceticism, does not enter the circle of Buddhist concepts. In Buddhism, the spirit is merely a cognition, but the body is a phantom that is cognized as such. Physi-

⁴⁴ C] must come] comes A.

⁴⁵ C] ultimately] unconditionally AB.

⁴⁶ F] As is well known, the holy canon of Buddhist teaching, taken as a whole, is divided into three sections, which, therefore, are called the "three baskets" (*tripitaka*). The *Sutras* contain the moral teaching, the *Vinaya* the monastic rule and the *Abhidharma* transcendental wisdom. C] As is well known,] *Absent in* AB.

cal mortality, the sight of which struck Prince Siddhartha⁴⁷ so powerfully, proves merely that life is an illusion from which we must free ourselves. No Buddhist, however, would ever conceive of resurrection. In the absence of a higher ascetic goal, the means leading to it makes no sense. From the point of view of absolute indifference, ascetic rules, like all others, lose all their significance. They are retained in the external practice of Buddhism merely as pedagogical techniques for those who are spiritually young or simply as a historical legacy of Brahminism. However, the perfect Buddhist, certainly, does not set out to abstain from abundant food or distinguish meat from vegetarian dishes. It is quite remarkable that according to a legend, the authenticity of which we have no reason to doubt, the very founder of this religion, which allegedly demands strict vegetarianism, died from imprudently eating pork.

VI

Like every negative teaching, Buddhism is bound up with what it rejects, viz., with this material world, with this sensual and mortal life. “All this is empty”—it repeats [266]without tiring and moves on no farther, for to it the emptiness is everything. It knows positively only what it denies, and it has no positive conception or expression for what it affirms, what it recognizes as not emptiness. Buddhism can only negatively say: Nirvana is inaction, immobility, stillness, non-being. Buddhism recognizes only the lower, only the empty; it does not know the higher and the perfect, but merely *demands* it. Nirvana is merely a postulate, and not an idea of the absolute good. This *idea* was given to us not by the Hindus, but by the Greeks.

Human reason, having found its universal and unconditional nature in a rejection of everything that is particular and finite, could not stop having taken this first step. From an awareness of the emptiness of material being, it had to pass to what is not emptiness, to that in the name of which it rejected illusory reality. In Indian Buddhism, the individual finds one’s unconditional significance merely in a rejection of what is worthless. However, in the Hellenic world-view, which received its practical⁴⁸ embodiment in Socrates and which was expressed in a theory by his student,⁴⁹ this unconditionality is justified by an affirmation of what is worthy, viz., the world of ideas and ideal relations. This idealism, no less than Buddhism, understands that everything that is temporary is emptiness, that the fluid material reality is only a phantom of being. Material reality is in essence non-being (το μὴ ὄν), and the Hellenic outlook fully shares the everyday pessimism⁵⁰ of the Buddhists.

⁴⁷ C] Siddhartha] Shakyamuni **AB**.

⁴⁸ C] practical] *Absent in AB*.

⁴⁹ C] which was expressed by his student] was interpreted by his student **AB**] which was expressed by the greatest of his students] *Opravdanie dobra* 1988: 317!

⁵⁰ C] everyday pessimism] practical pessimism **AB**.

Rash and pitiable, I think are they
 Who want to prolong life beyond measure
 For a long life is a long sorrow
 Each day multiplies the suffering.
 And you equally find no rest in anything,
 If you too much desire.⁵¹

Although here for the first time the characteristic Hellenic conception of *measure* appears, it is not dwelled upon. Not only in some exceptional instances is life sorrowful, but *every* life is nothing but sorrow:

The first and the great good is not to be born at all,
 The second is having been born,
 To die as quickly as possible and hardly arrive
 Unreasonable, easy youth, —
 [267] That is already enough—the torments will not end

 Jealousy, anger, quarreling and murder!
 And the end for all is final—
 Lonely, sick,
 Spiteful, feeble old age
 Bitter, curse
 Of curses, torment of torments!⁵²

It was as clear to the higher Greek outlook as it was for the Indian that the everyday will, blindly aspiring for material satisfaction, cannot find it under any external conditions and that, consequently, the true good, from this point of view, lies not in some enjoyment of life, but in its final elimination.

Here comes the deliverer without marriage song,
 Without lyre and without choirs,
 All desires are satisfied,
 The vapors of quiet Hades
 Offer a comforting death.⁵³

This pessimistic view, expressed in poetry, was also confirmed by Greek philosophy in various sayings that have become truisms for any idealistic and spiritualistic moral teaching: Sensual life is a spiritual prison, the body is the soul's coffin, true philosophy is a continuous process of dying, etc. Assimilating this Buddhist principle, however, the Greek genius did not stop there. The supersensual aspect of being revealed to the Greeks its intellectual content, and the place of nirvana was taken by the Cosmos of eternal intelligible essences, viz. ideas (for the Platonists) or the organism of universal reason (for the Stoics). The human individual here affirms one's unconditional significance not through merely rejecting what is false, but through intellectually participating in what is true. The individual bearer of this

⁵¹ F] Sophocles, "Oedipus at Colonus," trans. by D. Merezhkovskij. E] Cf. Sophocles 2004: 155.

⁵² F] Sophocles 2004: 155.

⁵³ F] Sophocles 2004: 155.

higher universal consciousness is not the wise-monk, who renounces the emptiness of real being in accordance with the principle of indifference, but the wise-thinker, who assimilates the full scope of ideal being into the inner unity of real being's many distinctions. Neither wants to live by the senses, but the latter lives by the mind in a world of pure ideas, i.e., of what is worthy of being and therefore truly and [268]eternally is. This is a dualistic view: All that exists—apart from its false material aspect, which the Greek philosophers regard just as negatively as do the Hindu “gymnosophists”—represents the true, positive aspect. What is a deceptive appearance to the senses and to our sensibility contains to the mind “the stamp of the idea” according to Plato,⁵⁴ or “the seed of reason” according to Stoic teaching (λόγοι σπερματικοί—“seminal principles”⁵⁵). Therefore, in human life there is an opposition between that which both conforms to an idea, agreeing with reason, and that which contradicts the ideal norm. The true sage is not just a hermit or a wandering monk who has renounced life and gently preaches this renunciation to others, but a bold exposé of everyday untruths and foolishness. Hence, the end is different for each of them. The Buddha-Shakyamuni peacefully dies after a fraternal meal, whereas Socrates, condemned and imprisoned by his fellow-citizens, is sentenced by them to drink poison.⁵⁶ However, despite this tragic outcome, the conflict of Hellenic idealism with worthless reality is not the decisive struggle. The highest representative of humanity at this stage—the philosopher—is aware of his own unconditional importance, insofar as he lives by pure thought in what truly exists, i.e., in the intelligible world of ideas or of the all-embracing rationality, despising what is untrue, viz., the merely illusory being of his material, sensuous environment. When it is sincere and bold, this contempt evokes the anger of the mob, which is totally absorbed in the lower sphere, and he may pay for his idealism with his life—as happened with Socrates. Nevertheless, he has a purely contemptuous attitude towards worthless reality. This contempt is, certainly, of another kind than that in Buddhism. The Buddha despises the world, because everything is emptiness, but the very indeterminacy of this evaluation deprives it of its sting: If everything is equally worthless, then no one in particular is injured by it, and if nirvana alone is opposed to this bad reality, then the latter can sleep in peace. For nirvana is simply an absolute condition, and not the norm of relative conditions. The idealist *has* such a norm. He despises and condemns the world around him not because of its inevitable involvement in the universal emptiness, but for its abnormality, its irrationality, its disparity with the idea. Such condemnation does not remain indifferent. There is in it a demand and a challenge. It [269]is insulting to all those connected by everyday irrationality and therefore leads to the usual⁵⁷ hostility and sometimes persecution⁵⁸ and a cup of poison.

⁵⁴ E] cf. Plato's *Timaeus*, 50c: “the likenesses of eternal realities” in Plato 1963a: 1177.

⁵⁵ E] Diogenes Laërtius: book 7, § 148.

⁵⁶ C] poison.] from a poisoned cup. **AB**.

⁵⁷ C] the usual] *Absent in AB*.

⁵⁸ C] hostility and sometimes persecution] hostility, persecution **AB**.

Nevertheless, there is something contingent in this conflict. Socrates condemned Athenian customs his entire life, but only when he was elderly, at the age of seventy, was he prosecuted, apparently owing only to a change in political circumstances. The irrationality of the Athenian state organization was merely a local peculiarity; Spartan customs were better. The greatest student of Socrates, Plato, later left for Sicily in order to establish there, with the help of Dionysius of Syracuse, an ideal state in which philosophers would receive the reins of government rather than a cup of poison. He was not successful, but after returning to Athens he was able to resume teaching in his academy unhindered and to live undisturbed to a grand old age. Neither the students of Socrates nor, in general, the proponents of idealism were ever subjected to systematic persecution: They were not loved, but they were tolerated. The fact is that by its very essence idealism directly⁵⁹ gravitates towards the intelligible world, and the apparent opposition here⁶⁰ between the normal and the abnormal, what should be and what should not be despite all of its relative determinacy remains for the most part intellectual and theoretical. Although it touches upon the reality it condemns, idealism does not penetrate deeply into its very heart. We know, in fact, how superficial the practical ideals of Plato, the greatest of the idealists, were. They were much closer to the bad reality than to that which truly is. The kingdom of ideas is an unconditionally universal, all-encompassing unity. In it there are no partitions; there is no discord, no enmity. However, Plato's pseudo-ideal state, with all the audacity of its separate conceptions and with all the elegance of its general⁶¹ construction, is essentially connected with those limited features from which humanity quickly freed itself not only conceptually, but also in reality. This kingdom of philosophers is merely a small, localized community of the Greek nation, which was based on slavery, continual war, and sexual relations that recall mating stables. Clearly, political activity was not intrinsically connected with the principal interest of the philosopher. In essence, to him it is all the same how people go about living on this earth, where truth does not and will not exist. He himself finds genuine satisfaction in contemplating the eternal intelligible truth of the whole, and the natural aspiration [270]to realize or embody the truth in his surrounding environment is sufficiently counterbalanced by two beliefs that are inseparable from idealism. The first of these is the fact that the ideal truth can only be reflected or impressed upon the surface⁶² of real being, and not essentially embodied in it. The second is the fact that our own spirit has merely a temporary and extrinsic⁶³ connection with this reality and, consequently, can have no unconditional task to perform in it.

The dying Socrates was simply happy that he was once and for all leaving this world of false being for the realm of what truly exists. Obviously, such an attitude,

⁵⁹ C] directly] nevertheless **A**.

⁶⁰ C] apparent opposition here] opposition that follows from this **A**.

⁶¹ C] of its separate conceptions and with all the elegance of its general] and elegance of its **AB**.

⁶² C] upon the surface] in the sphere **AB**.

⁶³ C] extrinsic] superficial **AB**.

in the final analysis, excludes any practical activity. With such a view, there can be neither obligation nor desire to dedicate oneself to transforming this life or saving this world. Platonic idealism, just like Buddhist nihilism, which raises the human individual to the level of the unconditional, does not aim to create for the individual a social environment corresponding to his unconditional importance. Both a community composed of monks and a state ruled by philosophers represents merely a temporary arrangement between the sage and this false life. In the first case, the individual's genuine satisfaction is seen as lying only in the pure indifference of nirvana, and, in the second case, in the purely mental world of ideas. Does this mean, however, that for idealism our actual life is still absurd? At this point, we find in idealism an inner contradiction that does not allow the human consciousness to stop here and recognize this stage as the highest truth.

VII

If the world in which we live did not participate in ideal, or true, being, idealism itself would be impossible. The direct representative of the ideal principle in this world is, certainly, the philosopher himself who contemplates what truly exists. However, this philosopher did not fall from the heavens; his reason is only the highest stage of the general human reason that is expressed in speech—an essentially universal phenomenon, the real idea or palpable reason. This was already understood beautifully by Heraclitus and assimilated and expounded by Socrates and Plato, Aristotle and Zeno the Stoic. However, the presence of this higher principle is not restricted to the human world. The purposeful organization and the movement of living [271]creatures and the general teleological connection of phenomena served for Socrates himself as his favorite argument in support of reason as the universal principle.⁶⁴ However, adherence to the final goal does not alone exhaust the ideal principle; the principle extends to every definite being, excluding only the principle that is directly opposed to it, viz., the unmeasurable chaos (*τό άπειρον—τό μη όν*). Where there is a measure, a limit, a norm, there is, thereby, also reason and idea. But if this is the case, then the opposition between the world of sense phenomena and the world of intelligible ideas, which is essential for idealism, turns out to be only relative and variable. Since every definite being participates in ideas, the difference can lie only in the degree of this participation. A plant or an animal contains more definitely conceived content and has a more complex and deeper connection with everything else than a simple stone or an individual natural phenomenon. For this reason, we should recognize that there is a greater presence of ideas or a higher degree of ideality in plants and animal organisms than in a stone or a puddle of water. Furthermore, every person, as a linguistic creature or a creature capable of rational thought, represents a higher stage of ideality than does an animal. However, the human ignoramus, devoted to passions and vices, is, to the same extent, inferior to

⁶⁴ C] reason as the universal principle.] the rationality of the organization of the world. **AB**.

the philosopher, whose word is an expression of reason not only in terms of its general structure, but also in terms of its actual use. Finally, philosophers differ from each other in the degree to which they have assimilated the higher truth. This entire *distinction of stages of rationality in the world*, from a cobble-stone to the “divine” Plato, is neither absurd nor opposed to the idea. It would be so if reason demanded indifference and if the “idea” meant monotony. However, reason is the general connection between everything, and the idea is the form of the intrinsic combination of the many in one (for example, the idea of an organism, in which many parts and elements are combined to serve a single goal, or the idea of the state, which combines a multitude of interests into one general good or the idea of science, in which many bits of knowledge form a single truth). Therefore our reality, in which innumerable things and phenomena come together and coexist in a single world order, must be recognized as essentially rational and in conformity with an idea. By right, idealism’s condemnation of this reality cannot in any way concern the general nature of the world nor the difference in the stages that follow from this nature and without [272] which there would be no higher unity. It concerns only this or that reciprocal condition of these stages, which does not correspond to their inner dignity. The idea of a person is not violated, but finds expression in the fact that, in addition to a mind, a person also has an active will and sense receptivity. However, since the mind, which contemplates the truth of everything, is essentially higher than our desires and sensations, which are limited to particulars, it should dominate them. If, on the contrary, these lower parts gain the upper hand in human life, the idea of the mind becomes distorted and in it there arises an abnormal and absurd phenomenon. In the same way, a difference in states or classes is not contrary to the idea of a civil society, provided the interrelation between these classes is determined by their intrinsic quality. However, if a group of people, by nature more capable of subservient work than in seeking knowledge and realizing a higher truth, comes to a predominant position in society and seizes into its hands all the concerns of the government and of national education, while people of true knowledge and wisdom are forced to devote all their efforts to manual labor, then under such a system the state contradicts its very idea and loses all meaning. The ascendancy of the lower faculties of the soul over reason in a particular person and the ascendancy of the working class over the intellectual in society are both cases of one and the same perversion and absurdity. Idealism recognizes these cases to be this way when it firmly exposes this fundamental evil in both the soul and the human social order. Because he exposed these evils, Socrates had to die, and—strangely enough—even this tragic fact did not make his disciples recognize that *in addition to the moral and the political* there is yet in the world even a third type of *untruth*—a *physical untruth*, namely, *death*. This illogical break of the first two anomalies, viz., the evil soul and the evil society—an artificial conceptual interruption between the moral-social life and natural-organic life—is a feature that is characteristic of the entire idealist worldview as an intermediate and transitional, partial and incomplete universalism.

Nevertheless, is it really unclear that the sway of death in the world of the living is the same *outrage*, the same distortion of stages, as the supremacy of the blind passions in the rational soul or the supremacy of the mob in human society? Un-

doubtedly, the intrinsically expedient structure and the life of organisms represent [273]the realization of the ideal principle in nature to a greater extent and to a higher degree than do the elementary forces of inorganic substance. Thus, it is clear that the triumph of these elementary forces over life, their liberation from its power and the ultimate dissolution of the organism by them contradicts the proper ideal order. Such a triumph is absurd and an anomaly. Life does not destroy the lower forces of a substance, but subordinates them to itself and thereby resuscitates them. Clearly, a subordination of the lower to the higher is the norm, and, consequently, the reverse relationship, accompanied by the elimination of a given higher real form of being, cannot be justified and legitimized in the name of reason and its idea. Death is not an idea, but only a negation of an idea, only a revolt of blind force against reason. This is why the joy of Socrates before his death was, strictly speaking,⁶⁵ merely an excusable and touching weakness of an old man wearied by daily burdens, and not an expression of a higher consciousness. In a mind occupied not with personal feelings, but with the essence of things, such a death should evoke not joy, but a two-fold sadness: Taken as social lawlessness, as a victory of the vicious and evil ignoramus over the righteous and the wise, this death sentence was sad, and taken as physical lawlessness, as a victory of the blind and heartless power of a poisonous substance over a living, disciplined body in which a rational spirit is embodied, the very process of dying is sad.

The whole world—not only the psychic and the political, but also the physical—suffers from a norm that has been transgressed. *Everything* is in need of help, and nothing is in a position to be helped by a weak-willed ascetic, who has renounced all of life and his surroundings. Nor can anything be helped by the intellectual contemplation of the philosopher, who lives only to think about the realm of ideas. Help can come only from the living force of the whole human individual, who possesses an unconditional significance not merely in terms of negative potential and not merely ideally, but as a positive reality. This is the perfect, or Divine, person, who does not quit the world for nirvana, or for the kingdom of ideas, but comes into the world in order to save it and rejuvenate it into the Kingdom of God, so that the perfect individual will be completed by the perfect society.

VIII

The unconditional moral significance of the human individual demands our perfection or the full scope of life. This demand [274]is satisfied neither by a simple rejection of imperfection (as in Buddhism), nor by merely an ideal participation in perfection (as in Platonism and idealism in general). It can be satisfied only by the *actual presence and realization of perfection in the entire person and throughout*

⁶⁵ C] strictly speaking,] by the essence of the matter, A.

the circle of one's entire life, which directly or immediately embraces all that exists. Such is the true character of Christianity and its essential distinction from Buddhism and Platonism. Without going into the metaphysical aspect of Christian belief, I simply have in mind here the fact that Christianity (and it alone) is built upon the idea of both the actually perfect person and the perfect society. Consequently, it promises to fulfill the demand for a true infinity⁶⁶ that we have in our human consciousness. Clearly, in order to achieve this goal it is necessary, above all, to stop being satisfied with our limited and worthless reality. We must renounce it. However, it is just as clear that this is merely the first step. In stopping here, a person has only emptiness. This first step, which the universal human consciousness had to take, but with which it must not stop, is Buddhism. Having abandoned this worthless reality, I must replace it with what is worthy of existence. However, in order to do this I must first understand or learn the very idea of a worthy being. This is the second step and is represented by idealism. Once again, it is clear that it is impossible to stop here, for with idealism truth is merely conceived, but not realized. Such a truth cannot fill one's whole life. It is not what is needed; it is not unconditional perfection. The third and final step, which we can take thanks to Christianity, consists in the positive realization of a worthy existence in everything.

The Nirvana of the Buddhists is located *outside everything*. It is a *negative universalism*. The ideal cosmos of Platonism represents only the intelligible, or *conceivable, side of everything* alone. It is a *semi-universalism*. Only the Kingdom of God, revealed by Christianity, *actually* embraces *everything* and is a *positive, whole and complete* universalism. Clearly, the unconditional principle in the human spirit at the first two stages of universalism does not extend to the end and therefore remains *sterile*. Nirvana is located beyond any horizon. The world of ideas, like [275]the starry heavens, embraces the Earth, but is not one with it. Only the absolute principle embodied in the Sun of Righteousness⁶⁷ penetrates into the depths of earthly reality, creates a new life in it and is realized as a new order of being—as the all-united Kingdom of God—*virtus ejus integra si versa fueri in terram*.⁶⁸ And without the Earth, there is no heaven for humanity.

As we saw, not only Buddhism, but also Platonism, is unable to satisfy the unconditional moral principle,⁶⁹ i.e., to create the full scope of life or the perfect soci-

⁶⁶ E] The expression “true infinity” comes from Hegel. In contrast to a “bad infinity,” which is a boundless linear sequence, e.g., the mathematical concept of a straight line, a “true infinity” is an absolute self-containment, presented by a circle, which has neither a beginning nor an end.

⁶⁷ E] Malachi 4: 2—“But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.”

⁶⁸ F] “The power thereof is perfect. If it be cast on to earth” (Tabula smaragdina) E] Linden 2003: 28. Solov'ev provides a Russian translation of the Latin in his footnote. There are a number of alternative translations from the Latin, including one by Isaac Newton himself. Current opinion is that the “Tabula smaragdina” was originally written in Arabic in the period from the sixth to the eighth centuries and translated into Latin in the twelfth century. It was quite popular among alchemists in the medieval and Renaissance periods.

⁶⁹ C] principle] task A.

ety. Consequently, the consistent application of its principle would result in the destruction of the chief foundations of morality as a whole. Where does the consistent idealist find the object of piety? Such an idealist treats the nation's gods skeptically, or at best with prudent restraint. The ideal essences in which the idealist sees the absolute truth cannot be an object of religious worship—either for his mortal “body,” which knows nothing about them, or for one's immortal mind, which knows them too well and immediately in intuiting comes to a full equality with them. Religion and religious morality are precisely the connection between the higher and the lower, a connection that the dualistic character of idealism tears apart, leaving, on the one side, the divine, incorporeal (and sterile) mind, and, on the other, the material body, completely devoid of all that is divine. However, this connection, severed by idealism, goes even further. Not only does it serve as the basis of reverence, but also of pity. Who can the consistent idealist pity? Such a person knows only two categories of being: the false, or material, and the true, or ideal. However, false being, as Anaximander of Miletus taught even before Plato, by rights *should* suffer and perish and does not deserve pity, but the true by its very essence *cannot* suffer and, consequently, cannot evoke pity. This is why the dying Socrates simply was glad to pass from this world, which is not worth pitying, to one where there is no object to pity. Finally, it is impossible to find a profound basis for an ascetic morality within idealism. For the consistent idealist *in general* is ashamed of the fact of having a body, as Plotinus, the greatest of Plato's disciples, said. [276]However, with respect to morality such shame is of no importance. As long as he lives on the Earth, it is impossible for a person to be incorporeal. Consequently, by virtue of the indisputable rule *ad impossibilia nemo obligatur*⁷⁰ (no one is obliged to do the impossible)—the shame of one's corporeality either obliges one to commit suicide or obliges nothing.

If we take Buddhism and Platonism not as necessary transitional stages of the universal consciousness, which they really are, but look at both of them as the final word of ecumenical truth, we can ask: What, properly speaking, have they given to humanity? What have they gained for us? By themselves, not only did they give nothing, they also promised nothing. For centuries, “*nirvana*” and “*samsara*” have been set against each other. A blissful emptiness for those who are spiritually awake has been set against a painful emptiness for those who are spiritually asleep. There was also the incontestable law of causative acts and caused states (*karma*), which by means of countless regenerations leads a creature from painful emptiness to empty bliss. Just as this was the case before Buddha, so it remained after him and will remain so endlessly. From the viewpoint of Buddhism itself, none of its followers, who were aware of its ideas, can maintain that the Buddha improved something

⁷⁰ E] Solov'ëv was apparently fond of this expression. He used it previously in his 1883 piece “Morality and Politics.—The Historical Obligations of Russia.” See SS, vol. 5: 15, and for an English translation of that essay see Soloviev 2000b: 6–19. This expression occurs in the medieval scholastics as well as in Roman law. Samuel von Pufendorf, the seventeenth Century Germany natural law philosopher, also wrote, “Hence the common phrase: there is no obligation to do the impossible” Pufendorf 1991: 25.

in the world order, created something new, or actually saved someone. And there is no place for any promise in the future. In the final analysis, the idealist point of view says the same thing. There is an eternal world of intelligible ideas that truly is and a phenomenal world of sense appearances. Between them, there is no real bridge; to be in one means not to be in the other. Such a bifurcation always was and will forever remain. Idealism provides no reconciliation at the present time and promises none for the future.⁷¹

Christianity steps forth differently: It gives and promises humanity something actually new. It gives the individual the living image of an individual who is perfect not merely by having the negative perfection of a weak will, nor by merely having the mental perfection of ideal contemplation, but by having an unconditional and all-round perfection that extends to the end and therefore [277]vanquishes death. Christianity *reveals* to humanity the unconditionally perfect and therefore a *corporeally* resurrecting individual. It promises humanity a perfect society that conforms to the principle represented by this individual. Since this society cannot be created in an external and forced manner (for it would then be imperfect), its *promise* poses a *task* to humanity and to each person individually to assist the perfect personal power revealed to the world in transforming our universe so that it may collectively embody the Kingdom of God. The ultimate truth, or unconditional and positive universalism, obviously, cannot be merely personal or merely social: It must express the full scope and integrity of personal-social life. True Christianity is the perfect unity of three inseparably connected foundations: (1) *the absolute event*—the revelation of the perfect individual—the corporeally resurrected Divine-human being that is Christ; (2) the absolute *promise*—of a society that conforms to the perfect individual, viz., the Kingdom of God, and (3) the absolute *task*—to contribute to the fulfillment of this promise through the regeneration of our entire personal and social environment in the spirit of Christ. If one of these three foundations is forgotten or discarded, the entire concern is paralyzed and distorted. This is why the moral development of humanity, as well as its external history, did not stop after the appearance of Christ even though Christianity is the unconditional and definitive revelation of the truth. What has come to pass and what was promised stands firmly within the bounds of eternity and is independent of us. However, the task of the present lies in our hands. We ourselves must work for the moral regeneration of our lives. This general task is connected with the unique concern of moral philosophy: It has to define and clarify in terms of historical reality⁷² the proper interrelation between all the fundamental elements and spheres of the personal-social whole in accordance with its definitive norm.

⁷¹ F] The momentary rise of Platonic thought to the idea of Eros as a bridge connecting the world of what truly is to material reality was not taken up. In enigmatic expressions, the philosopher pointed to this bridge, but he was unable to cross it and lead others. C] *Entire note absent in AB.*

⁷² C] in terms of historical reality] *Absent in AB.*

[278]Chapter 12

Abstract Subjectivism in Morality

I

With Christianity, human consciousness reaches the historical stage at which the moral life is revealed to be a universal *task*, embracing everything. Before speaking of its formative historical conditions, we must dispel the view that, in principle, rejects morality as a historical task, as a concern of the collective human being, and instead reduces it entirely to the subjective, moral impulses of individual people. This view arbitrarily constrains the human moral good in a narrow way that it has never really known and does not now know.¹ Properly speaking, morality was never merely a matter of personal feeling or a rule concerning private behavior. In the gentile way of life, the moral demands of reverence, pity and shame were inseparably connected with the obligations of the members of a gens to the gentile unit. What was considered “moral” was indistinguishable from the “social,” the individual from the collective. If, in this way, morality turned out to be rather base and limited, it was not owing to the fact that morality was collective, but only to the generally low level and narrow limits of the given way of life, which expressed merely an elementary stage of historical development. It was base and limited only in comparison with further moral progress, but not in comparison with the morality of savages living in trees and in caves. In spite of the relative separation and isolation of domestic life, with the formation of the political state the interaction between individuals and the collective whole to which they belonged grew ever wider, more complex and came to determine morality in general. [279]It became impossible to be moral outside a definite and positive relationship to the state. Morality was, above all, a matter of civic virtue. If such *virtus antiqua* ultimately does not satisfy us, it certainly is not because it was a matter of a *civic* as opposed to a domestic virtue *alone*, but because such civic-mindedness was too far from the genuine social idea. It represented merely a transition from barbarianism

E] Most likely written at the end of 1896 or early 1897, this chapter is largely a reply to the views of L. Tolstoy and B. Chicherin.

¹ C] Before speaking of ... not now know.] *Absent in B.*

to a truly human culture. If morality valiantly serves the social whole, viz., the state, but the state itself rests on slavery, incessant war, etc., then what is to be condemned here is not the social character of morality, but the immoral character of society. Certainly, in the same way we rightfully condemn the morality of the medieval church not because it was the church's, but because at that time the church was far from the model of a truly moral organization and because along with the moral good it was responsible for evil—the terrible evil of religious persecutions and torture—thereby violating the unconditional principle of morality in its own, inner sphere.²

As the “gospel of the kingdom,”³ Christianity appears on the scene with an unconditionally high ideal, with a demand for an absolute morality. Should this morality be *merely subjective*, i.e., limited merely to the inner states and individual actions of the subject? The answer can already be found in the question itself. However, in order to present this issue clearly, let us recognize from the outset the truth in an exclusively⁴ subjective Christianity. Undoubtedly, a perfect, or absolute, moral state must be fully experienced, felt, and assimilated by the single individual inwardly. It must become *one's own* state, the content of one's own life. If perfect morality were recognized as being subjective in this sense, then any dispute concerning it could only be a matter of words. However, the issue here concerns another question: How do separate individuals attain moral perfection? Is it purely a matter of the individual's own, inner efforts to improve oneself and proclaim the results, or is it achieved *with the help of* a certain social process, which acts not only individually but also collectively? Those who support the first view, which reduces the entire issue to a matter of individual [280]moral work, certainly deny neither the existence of social life nor the possibility of morally improving its forms. However, they suppose that such improvement is merely the simple and inevitable result of personal moral achievements: The situation with the individual is just like that with society. If individuals would only understand and uncover their true essence and arouse morally good feelings in their own souls, a paradise would be established on Earth. It is indisputable that without such feelings and thoughts there can be neither personal nor social morality. It is also indisputable that *if* all individuals were morally good, society would also be so.⁵ However, to think that the actual virtue of a few good people alone is *enough* to morally regenerate all the others is to pass into a world⁶ where babies are born from rose bushes and beggars eat sweet cakes because there is no bread. Surely, the issue here is not only whether the individual's moral efforts

² C] Certainly, in the same ... own, inner sphere] *Absent in B.*

³ E] Cf. Matthew 24: 14—“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.”

⁴ C] an exclusively] *Absent in B.*

⁵ C] It is also ... also be so.] *Absent in B.*

⁶ C] the actual virtue ... pass into a world] a few kind words are enough to create a perfect social order is to pass into a world **B.**

are enough to make *oneself* perfect, but whether these individual efforts alone can possibly get *other* people, who make no moral efforts, to *start* doing them.⁷

The inadequacy of a subjective moral good and the need for it to be embodied in the collective is demonstrated quite clearly by the entire course of human history. I will limit myself to just a single vivid illustration.

II⁸

With apparent sympathy, we are told at the end of Homer's *Odyssey* how this typical Hellenic hero reestablished justice and order in his house and destroyed his rivals after his ultimate victory over the enmity of the gods and of men. With the help of his son, he executed the servants who in his absence of 20 years, when his fate was unknown and considered by all to be dead, did not oppose Penelope's suitors. These servants sided with the suitors, who made themselves at home in Odysseus's house:

Then when they had made the whole place quite clean and orderly, they took the women out and hemmed them in the narrow space between the wall of the domed room and that of the yard, so that they could not get away: and Telemachus said to the other two, "I shall not let these women die a clean death, for they were insolent to me and my mother, and used to sleep with the suitors."

So saying he made a ship's cable fast [281] to one of the bearing-posts that supported the roof of the domed room, and secured it all around the building, at a good height, lest any of the women's feet should touch the ground; and as thrushes or doves beat against a net that has been set for them in a thicket just as they were getting to their nest, and a terrible fate awaits them, even so did the women have to put their heads in nooses one after the other and die most miserably. Their feet moved convulsively for a while, but not for very long.

As for Melanthius, they took him through the cloister into the inner court. There they cut off his nose and his ears; they drew out his vitals and gave them to the dogs raw, and then in their fury they cut off his hands and his feet (*Odyssey*, XXII, 457–477).⁹

Not only were Odysseus and Telemachus no monsters, but on the contrary they represent the highest ideal of the Homeric era. Their personal morality was iraproachable; they were full of piety, wisdom, justice and all family virtues. Moreover, in spite of his courage and steadfast nature in the face of disaster Odysseus had an extremely sensitive heart and wept at every appropriate occasion. He has this

⁷ C] Surely, is the issue ... doing them.] *Absent in B*.

⁸ C] *This designation of the start of a new section, §II, is absent in both Opravdanie 1914 and Opravdanie n.d. However, there is a clearly delineated start of §III in both editions.*

⁹ E] Finally, when the whole house ... his hands and feet.] Homer 1900: 297–298. Immediately after providing this long excerpt from Homer, Solov'ev mentions in the body of his text that the translation is that by Zhukovskij and provides the reference, but no additional bibliographic information. Quite possibly, he used the translation in Zhukovskij 1894: 326–327.

characteristic and very remarkable trait throughout the entire poem. Since I have not found special references to this predominant trait of our Homeric hero in the literature, I will permit myself to go into some detail.¹⁰ Already with his first appearance in *The Odyssey*, our hero¹¹ is presented as crying.

but Ulysses was not within; he was on the sea-shore as usual, looking out upon the barren ocean with tears in his eyes, groaning and breaking his heart for sorrow. (V, 82–84; also 151, 152, 156–158)¹²

He himself recounts:

I stayed with Calypso seven years straight on end, and watered the good clothes she gave me with my tears during the whole time. (VII, 259–260)¹³

He cried at the thought of his far away land and family and also upon recalling his own exploits:

the muse inspired Demodocus to sing the feats of heroes, and ... [282]the quarrel between Ulysses and Achilles.... Thus sang the bard, but Ulysses drew his purple mantle over his head and covered his face, for he was ashamed to let the Phaeacians see that he was weeping. (VIII, 73, 75, 83–86)¹⁴

And more:

All this he told, but Ulysses was overcome as he heard him, and his cheeks were wet with tears. He wept as a woman weeps when she throws herself on the body of her husband who has fallen before his own city and people, fighting bravely in defense of his home and children. ... even so piteously did Ulysses weep.... (VIII, 521–525)¹⁵

He cried when he learned from Circe of his coming voyage, though quite safe, into the realm of Hades:

I was dismayed when I heard this. I sat up in bed and wept, and would gladly have lived no longer to see the light of the sun. (X, 496–499)¹⁶

It is no wonder that Odysseus cries when he sees his mother's shadow (XI, 87), but he is affected in the same way by the shadow of the worst and most licentious of his fellow combatants, who was ruined by an evil demon and the power of indescribable wine. (XI, 61)¹⁷

We had with us a certain youth named Elpenor, not very remarkable for sense or courage, who had gotten drunk and was lying on the house-top away from the rest of the men, to sleep off his liquor in the cool. When he heard the noise of the men bustling about, he

¹⁰ C] Since I have ... into some detail.] *Absent in B*.

¹¹ C] *The Odyssey*, our hero] it, he **B**.

¹² E] Homer 1900: 64; cf. Homer 1900: 65. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 74, also 76–77.

¹³ E] Homer 1900: 90. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 103.

¹⁴ E] Homer 1900: 95. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 66.

¹⁵ E] Homer 1900: 106. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 120.

¹⁶ E] Homer 1900: 136. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 152.

¹⁷ E] Since the Russian translation Solov'ëv provides differs somewhat from the English translation, I have translated the Russian translation. Cf. Homer 1900: 140: "it was all bad luck, and my own unspeakable drunkenness." For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 157.

jumped up on a sudden and forgot all about coming down by the main staircase, so he tumbled right off the roof and broke his neck, and his soul went down to the house of Hades. (X, 552–561)¹⁸

I was very sorry for him, and cried when I saw him. (XI, 55)¹⁹

[283]He cries at the sight of Agamemnon:

we two sat weeping and talking thus sadly with one another. (XI, 465–466)²⁰

Odysseus cries bitterly upon finally coming to his native Ithaca (XIII, 219–221) and even more intensely on first meeting his son:

They were both so much moved that they cried aloud like eagles or vultures with crooked talons that have been robbed of their half fledged young by peasants. Thus piteously did they weep.... (XVI, 215–220)²¹

Odysseus sheds a few tears on seeing his old dog Argus:

...he dashed a tear from his eye without away without Eumaeus seeing it.... (XVII, 304–305)²²

He cries before murdering his wife's suitors, and as he embraces the divine swineherd Eumaeus and the god-like cowherd Philoetius (XXI, 225–227), and also cries after the savage massacre of the twelve maid-servants and the goatherd Melanthis:

It made him feel as if he should like to weep, for he remembered every one of them. (XXII, 500–501)²³

The last two cantos of the *Odyssey* are certainly not without abundant tears from our hero:

Then Ulysses in his turn melted, and wept as he clasped his dear and faithful wife to his bosom. (XXIII, 231–232)²⁴

And more:

When Ulysses saw him so worn, so old and full of sorrow, he stood still under a tall pear tree and began to weep. (XXIV, 233–235)²⁵

[284]As for his personal, subjective sensitivity, Odysseus obviously is in no way inferior to the most intellectually developed and highly-strung person of our day. In general, the Homeric heroes were as much capable of all the moral feelings and tender emotions as we are and not just in relation to their neighbors in the narrow sense

¹⁸ E] Homer 1900: 137. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 154.

¹⁹ E] Homer 1900: 140. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 156.

²⁰ E] Homer 1900: 150. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 168.

²¹ E] Homer 1900: 214. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 236.

²² E] Homer 1900: 228. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 252.

²³ E] Homer 1900: 299. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 327. In all editions consulted, the reference is incorrectly given as (XVII, 500–501).

²⁴ E] Homer 1900: 306. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 334.

²⁵ E] Homer 1900: 315. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 345.

of the word, i.e., to people with whom they shared immediate common interests, but also to strangers and people from distant lands. The Phaeacians were of such a sort to the shipwrecked Odysseus—and yet what gentle human relations grew between them! And if in spite of all this the best of the ancient heroes did things with a clear conscience that are now morally impossible for us, then this was surely not a result of a deficiency in their personal subjective morality. These people were, in any case, as capable of morally good human feelings towards their neighbors and strangers as we are.²⁶ Where is the difference, and how do we account for the change? Why did the virtuous, wise and *emotional* people of the Homeric era consider it permissible and commendable to hang thoughtless female servants as thrushes and to crush up unworthy male servants into fodder for the dogs when such behavior can now be done only by maniacs and born criminals? Reasoning abstractly, one could suppose that people of that long ago era did not consciously have morally good *principles* and rules, even though they had sincere, morally good feelings and impulses. This is why because of the simple factual character of one's morality, the absence of a formal criterion between what should be and what should not or of a clear awareness of the distinction between good and evil, even the best person can manifest fits of savage brutality unhindered along with the keenest moral affects. However, in fact, we do not find such a formal defect in the ancient worldview.

As with us today, ancient peoples in fact not only had morally good and evil natural characteristics but also distinguished in principle the moral good from evil and recognized that the former should be unconditionally preferred over the latter. In the same Homeric poems, which sometimes strike us with their ethical barbarisms, the concept of moral duty appears perfectly clear. Certainly, Penelope's mode of thought and expression is not the same as Kant's. Nevertheless, we find in the following words [285] of Odysseus' wife a firm assertion that moral duty is an eternal, necessary and *universal* principle.

Men live but for a little season; if they are hard, and deal hardly, people wish them ill so long as they are alive, and speak contemptuously of them when they are dead, but he that is righteous and deals righteously, the people tell of his praise among all lands, and many shall call him blessed. (XIX, 328–334)²⁷

III

The *form* of moral awareness, that is, of the moral good as unconditionally obligatory and of evil as unconditionally impermissible, was in the mind of the ancients just as it is in our own. However, could it be that the important difference between them and us in evaluating the same actions arises from a change in the very *content* of the moral ideal? There is no doubt that it is thanks to the Gospels that our ideal of virtue and holiness is much higher and wider than that of Homer. However, it is also

²⁶ C] These people were ... as we are] The morality in them is, in essence, the same as in us. **B.**

²⁷ E] Homer 1900: 256. For the Russian translation, see Zhukovskij 1894: 282.

indubitable that this perfect moral ideal, accepted only in the form of abstract theory and without objective embodiment, produces no change at all in either the lives of people or their actual moral awareness and does not raise in the least their practical *standard* for evaluating their own actions or those of others.

Is it again necessary to recall the representatives of medieval Christianity who, with a clear conscience and even an awareness of their moral obligation and service, treated the supposed enemies of their church with greater cruelty than did Odysseus the enemies of his family and did so at a time closer to us and more enlightened save perhaps²⁸ the American plantation owners who belonged to a Christian denomination and therefore stood under the banner of the unconditionally highest moral ideal? The latter, in fact, not only treated their black slaves generally no better than the pagan Odysseus did his unfaithful servants but also considered themselves (like Odysseus) *right* in doing so. As a result, not only their deeds but also their everyday consciousness remained [286]unaffected by the abstract, higher truth that they theoretically recognized.

In his "Sketches of the history of the Tambov region," I. I. Dubasov recounts the exploits of a Yelatma landowner, K-rov, who prospered in the 1840s. It was discovered that he tortured many peasants (particularly children) to death and that on K-rov's estate there was not a single peasant who had escaped a beating nor a single peasant girl who had not been violated. However, of particular importance were not these "abuses" but the relation of the general public to him. In the preliminary inquiry, the majority of the gentry of the Yelatma district said that K-rov was a "truly noble person." Others added that "K-rov is a true Christian and observed all the rites of the Christian Church." Additionally, the marshal of the nobility wrote to the provincial governor, "The entire district is alarmed by the *calamities* besetting Mr. K-rov." The matter was concluded. This "true Christian" was acquitted of criminal responsibility, and the Yelatma gentry were satisfied (*Sketches of the History of the Tambov Region*, I. I. Dubasov, vol. 1, Tambov 1890, pp. 162–167).²⁹ Another who enjoyed the same sympathy in his area was the even more notorious Tambov landowner Prince Ju. N. G-n of whom, however, not without reason, it was written to the chief of police: "Even animals ... on encountering Ju. N. instinctively take to hide somewhere" (*Ibid.*, p. 92).³⁰

Between the hero of Homer's account and those of Mr. Dubasov's, approximately 3000 years passed, but there was no essential and lasting change in the lives and moral awareness of people concerning the enslaved portion of the population.³¹ The same inhuman attitudes that the ancient Hellenes approved of in the Homeric era were regarded as permissible by both American and Russian slave-owners in the first half of the nineteenth century. If these attitudes now shock us, this rise in ethical standards came about not in the course of 3000 years, but only in the last

²⁸ C] Is it again ... enlightened save perhaps] *Absent in B*] E] Of course, in **B** this somewhat shortened sentence is declarative, and not an interrogative.

²⁹ E] For the quotation see Dubasov 1890: 166.

³⁰ E] Dubasov 1890: 92.

³¹ C] concerning the enslaved portion of the population] *Absent in B*.

three *decades* (for us and for the Americans, and for Western Europe a few decades earlier). What happened so recently? What change came about in so short a period that could not be accomplished in the long centuries of historical development? Did some new moral idea, some new higher moral ideal, arise in our day?

[287]There was not and could not have been anything of the kind. For it is impossible to conceive a higher ideal than that which was revealed eighteen centuries ago. This ideal was known to the “true Christians” of the American states and of the Russian provinces. In this respect, there could not be any new ideal to learn. However, they *experienced a new fact*. Embodied as a social force and a subject of a *common concern*, the idea was able to do in a few years what could not be done in the course of thousands of years when limited to the subjective sphere of personal morality. In both America and Russia, though under very different historical conditions, the organized social whole holding power decided to put an end to the gross violation of Christian justice, both Divine and human, in the social sphere. In America, this was achieved at the price of blood, i.e., through a terrible civil war; with us here in Russia it was done through an imperious³² governmental action.³³ Thanks to this alone, the fundamental demands for justice and *philanthropy* (presupposed by the highest ideal, though not exhausted by it) were transferred from the narrow and tottering limits of a subjective feeling to the wide and firm ground of objective reality and were transformed into a general and obligatory law of living. Here, we see that this external governmental action immediately lifted the level of our inner moral awareness, i.e., did what could not alone be done by thousands of years of moral preaching. Certainly, this social movement and this governmental action were conditioned by earlier preaching, but for the majority, for the social sphere as a whole, this preaching had an effect only when it was *embodied* in organized measures in an executive manner. Thanks to external constraint, beastly instincts lost the chance to be expressed. They had to pass into an inactive state, and were gradually *atrophied* owing to a lack of exercise. In the majority, these instincts disappeared and ceased to be transmitted to successive generations. Now, even those people who openly long for serfdom express *sincere* reservations concerning its “*abuses*,” whereas 40 years ago these very abuses were thought to be compatible with “true nobility” and even with “true Christianity.” Nevertheless, there is no reason to think that the fathers at the time were intrinsically worse than their sons today.

Let us suppose that Dubasov’s heroes, whom the Tambov gentry [288]defended simply out of class interest, actually stood below the average of the society around them. However, besides them there was a multitude of quite decent people who had not committed any outrages and who *conscientiously* believed they fully had a right to exercise the privileges of being a landowner and, for example, to trade serfs like cattle, wholesale and retail. If such things are now impossible even for scoundrels—however much they may want it—how can this objective success of the moral good, this real improvement in life, be ascribed to progress in personal morality?³⁴

³² C] imperious] peaceful **B**.

³³ E] Tsar Alexander II abolished serfdom in Russia in 1861.

³⁴ C] Let us suppose that ... personal morality?] *Absent in B*.

The intrinsic, subjective foundations of human moral nature are invariable. Likewise, the relative number of morally good and bad people has probably not changed. Hardly anyone would dare claim that there are now more people who are righteous than there were several centuries or millennia ago. Finally, there is no doubt that the highest moral ideas and ideals in themselves, i.e., taken abstractly, do not produce any lasting improvement in our lives and in our moral awareness. I have already mentioned an indisputable and firm historical fact, viz., the same and even worse atrocities as those that were committed by the virtuous pagan of Homer's poem with the approval of the social setting were committed thousands of years after it by adherents of the Christian faith, viz., by the Spanish inquisitors and Christian slave-owners.³⁵ They too acted with the approval of their social setting in spite of the rise in the meantime of a higher moral ideal for the individual. Today, only the explicitly insane and professional criminals³⁶ could possibly engage in such behavior. This sudden progress occurred only because moral demands inspired an organized social force, which transformed them into an objective law of life.

IV

The principle of the perfect³⁷ moral good, which was revealed in Christianity, does not abolish the objective structure of the human community but uses it as a form and as an instrument for the embodiment of its unconditional moral content. It demands that human society become an *organized* form of morality. Experience [289]quite obviously shows that when the social setting is not morally organized, the subjective demands of the moral good are inevitably lowered both in oneself and in others. This is why the question does not genuinely concern subjective or objective morality nor personal or social morality. Rather, it concerns only weak or strong morality, i.e., realized or unrealized morality. Every stage of moral awareness inevitably strives for personal and social realization. The difference between the highest and final stage from lower ones certainly does not consist in the fact that at the highest stage morality remains forever merely subjective, i.e., unrealized and powerless—such would be a strange advantage!—but in the fact that this realization must be complete, or³⁸ *all-embracing*. This realization, therefore, demands an incomparably more difficult, complex and protracted process than the previous collective embodiments of morality. The level of the moral good attained in gentile life is embodied easily and freely—without any *history*. Additionally, the formation of extensive national-political groups for the realization of a greater sum and a

³⁵ C] I have already ... Christian slave-owners.] The atrocities that the virtuous pagans of Homer's poem committed with the approval of his social setting were also committed thousands of years later by Christian slave-owners. **B**.

³⁶ C] the explicitly insane and professional criminals] the insane and criminals **B**.

³⁷ C] perfect] absolute **B**.

³⁸ C] complete, or] *Absent in B*.

higher stage of the moral good fills many centuries of history with its peripeteias. How much greater is today's moral task, which Christianity has bequeathed to us and which demands the formation of a proper setting for the real perception of the *unconditional and universal* moral good! The positive conception of this moral good includes the full scope of human relations. In terms of its content, a morally regenerated humanity cannot be poorer than natural humanity. Consequently, our task consists not in destroying existing social divisions but in setting them in their proper, good, or moral, relation to each other. When the cosmic process achieved the creation of higher life forms, the lower form—that of a *worm*—was not excluded as intrinsically unworthy, but given only a new and more appropriate position. The lower form ceased to be the sole and obvious foundation of life (for today). It was absorbed inside the higher life forms to serve, as part of the *digestive system*, as a secondary instrument and was concealed for the sake of beauty. Other forms, predominant at the lower stages, were preserved (not only materially but also formally) as constituent but subordinate parts and organs of a higher whole. Similarly, Christian humanity—the highest form of the collective spiritual life—is realized not in destroying historical social forms and divisions, but [290]in bringing them into a proper relation to itself and to each other in accordance with the unconditional principle of morality.

The demand for such agreement eliminates any justification from moral subjectivism, which rests on an incorrectly conceived interest of the autonomy of the will. The moral will³⁹ should be determined to act exclusively through⁴⁰ itself. Any subordination of it at all to some prescription or command coming *from without* violates its autonomy and must therefore be regarded as unworthy. This is the *true* principle of moral autonomy.⁴¹ However, the organization of the social setting in accordance with the principle of the *unconditional moral good* is not a limitation, but the *fulfillment* of the personal moral will. Such is the very thing that the will wants. I, as a moral being, *want* the moral good to reign on Earth. I *know* that alone I cannot achieve this, and I *see* a collective organization intended to achieve *my* goal. Clearly, this organization not only does not limit me, but, on the contrary, it removes my individual narrow-mindedness, enlarging and strengthening my moral will. Insofar as our own will is moral, each of us inwardly participates in this universal organization of morality, and it is clear that the relative⁴² external limitations on individuals that can follow from this are approved by our own better judgment. Consequently, such limitations can in no way violate our moral autonomy. For the morally inclined person, just one thing is important here, viz., that the collective organization of people⁴³ *actually* be subordinate to the *unconditional moral* principle, that social life *in fact* adhere to the norms of the moral good—justice and mercy—in all instances

³⁹ C] the autonomy of the will. The moral will] moral autonomy. The will **B**.

⁴⁰ C] through] from **B**.

⁴¹ C] This is the *true* principle of moral autonomy.] *Absent in B*.

⁴² C] relative] *Absent in B*.

⁴³ C] people] humanity **B**.

and in all interpersonal relations, and that⁴⁴ the personal social setting become *in its essence*⁴⁵ an *organized form of the moral good*. It is clear that in subordinating oneself to a social setting that is itself actually subordinate to the principle of the unconditional good and conforms to it in practice, the individual cannot lose anything. For the nature of *such* a social setting is, by its very essence, incompatible with any arbitrary limitation on personal rights, to say nothing of outright violence and torture. *The level of the subordination of a person to society should correspond to the level of the subordination of society itself to the moral good*. Without the latter, the social setting has no rights on the individual person. Its rights arise solely from the moral [291]satisfaction or fulfillment that it gives to *each person*. From this perspective, the truth of moral universalism discussed in this chapter receives further explanation and development in the next.

As for the autonomy of the *evil will*, no organization of the moral good can prevent deliberate villains from wanting evil for its own sake and from actively proceeding in this direction. The organization of the moral good, in this respect, has to do only with the external limitations on evil activity that necessarily follow from human nature and from the meaning of history. Concerning the objective limits to objective evil, which are necessarily presupposed by the organization of the moral good but which by no means exhaust it, we will speak later in the chapters on the penal question and on the relations between law and morality.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ C] social life *in fact* ... relations, and that] *Absent in B*.

⁴⁵ C] *in its essence*] *actually B*.

⁴⁶ C] It is clear that ... law and morality.] *Absent in B*.

[292]Chapter 13

The Moral Norm of Sociality

I¹

The true definition of society as *organized morality* eliminates two now-fashionable falsehoods: *moral subjectivism*, which strips the moral will of the real means for realizing itself in community life, and *social realism*, according to which given social

C] In **B**, this appears as Chap. 10 and is entitled “The Moral Foundation of Sociality,” spanning pp. 337–358.

¹ C] *In A alone, this chapter began with the following lengthy prefatory paragraph:* A year or a year and a half ago, a well-known writer, academic and former minister Jules Simon published a newspaper article on the dangers posed to society from socialism. He wrote, “The chief misfortune lies in the fact that the moral foundations of society have grown extremely weak: religion is in decay, the family is breaking up and property is at risk of losing all its value, since the return on capital is constantly and rapidly decreasing. Until recently, it equaled 4%, but now it barely reaches 3%.” Of course, it is a pity for those who receive only three percent on their capital, but the status of religion is even more pitiful in those bourgeois-capitalist circles where its fate is so closely connected with high revenue. Furthermore, J. Simon does not say anything special. He expresses merely the prevailing frame of mind in his circle, though less cynically than others. Comparing the decline of religion to that of the profitability of capital, he gives us to understand by his tone—and others say just this—that for him what is more important is that religion could be well used to preserve the property interests of prosperous people. With regard to one particular parliamentary speech, the conservative press was full of bitter complaints about the irrationality of anti-clerical politics. “Earlier, religious hopes for heavenly bliss served as a substitute for achieving earthly happiness and served to reconcile the poor to all their deprivations. However, now after Gambetta, Jules Ferry and their successors have done everything to rob the people of their faith—an excellent substitution (!) for worldly pleasures—we naturally find among the wretched majority a desire to seize material goods through a socio-economic revolution.” Such a conception of religion and moral foundations reigns not just in France alone. It is shameful and distorted in that it sees in them nothing more than an instrument for the preservation of a particular external order that is advantageous to some and disadvantageous to others. To defend the dignity of these principles and in the interest of social consciousness, it is of the greatest importance that we address the questions: What in fact are the moral foundations of society, and in what sense and under what conditions can we ascribe, in general, such significance to religion, the family and property?

Solov'ev adds in a footnote with regard to the first quotation ascribed to Simon: I cite this from memory, but I vouch for the accuracy of its sense and tone. The article was published in *Figaro* in the fall of 1893. *Solov'ev does not provide any additional information on the source of the second quotation.*

institutions and interests have by themselves a decisive significance in life.² According to the latter, the highest moral principles turn out to be at best³ only means or instruments for the protection of those interests. From this now quite prevalent point of view, one *real*⁴ form or other of sociality is in essence the genuine and main one, although there are attempts to give it moral justification, to connect it with moral foundations and norms.^{5,6} However, these attempts to find the moral bases of human society show that not just a definite form of society, but not even sociality *as such*, is⁷ the highest and unconditional expression of the human being. In fact, if we were defined essentially as⁸ a social animal (*ζῷον πολιτικόν*)⁹ and *nothing more*, this would extremely narrow the *intension* of the concept “human being” and at the same time significantly expand the *extension* of that concept. The concept of humanity would then have to include such animals as, for example, ants, for which social life as such is as much an essential characteristic as it is for the human being. The most authoritative investigator of ants, Sir John Lubbock, says, “Moreover, their nests are no mere collections of independent individuals, nor even temporary associations like the flocks of migratory birds, but organised communities labouring with [293]the utmost harmony for the common good.”¹⁰ According to the observation of this naturalist, these communities sometimes contain such a large population that, of human cities, perhaps only London and Beijing can be compared to them.¹¹ Of far greater importance are the three inner characteristics of the ant community. First, they have a complex social organization. Second, individual colonies have definite differences in the degree of this organization. This difference is quite analogous to the gradual development of the forms of human culture from hunting to an agricultural way of life. It shows that the social life of ants emerged not in some contingent and exceptional manner, but developed according to certain general sociological laws. Finally, third, what is remarkable is the extraordinary strength and

² C] eliminates two now-fashionable ... significance in life.] organized morality, eliminating the falsehood of moral subjectivism, also eliminates at the same time the contrary point of view, according to which various social institutions and interests have an unconditional significance in themselves. **B.**

³ C] at best] *Absent in B.*

⁴ C] *real*] *Absent in B.*

⁵ C] The true definition ... foundations and norms.] *Absent in A.*

⁶ C] and norms] *Absent in B.*

⁷ C] that not just a definite form of society, but not even sociality *as such*, is] that sociality by itself is not **A**] that sociality is not **B.**

⁸ C] as] only as **A.**

⁹ E] A reference to Aristotle. Cf. Aristotle 1941: 1088 (1169b 18–19): “since man is a political creature and one whose nature is to live with others.”

¹⁰ F] Lebbok, D. 1884. *Murav'i, pchely i osy. Nabljudenija nad npravami obshchezhitel'nykh pereponchatokrylykh*, trans. from the 5th edition by D. V. Averkiev. St. Petersburg, p. 92. E] Lebbok 1884: 92. For the English-language original, see Lubbock 1882: 93–94.

¹¹ F] Lebbok 1884: 92. E] Lubbock 1882: 93.

stability of the social bond, and there is an amazing practical solidarity between all the members of the ant citizenry when it is a matter of the common good.

Regarding the first point, if the characteristic feature of a civilization is its division of labor, then it is impossible to deny the existence of an ant civilization. Ants have an extremely sharp division of labor. There are very brave warriors, armed with exorbitantly developed pincer-like jaws with which they deftly grasp and sever the head of the enemy. However, they are unable to do anything else. There are worker ants, who are distinguished by their hard work and skill. There are citizen ants with the opposite qualities going so far that they are no longer able to feed themselves nor walk but can only make use of others' services. Finally, there are the slaves (which are not to be confused with the worker ants).¹² They were acquired by conquest and belong to other species of ants, a fact which does not prevent their complete devotion to their masters. Excluding such a division of labor, the high degree of ant civilization is proven again by the abundance of domestic animals they retain (i.e., domesticated insects from other zoological families). Lubbock notes (of course, not without some exaggeration) "...we may truly [294]say that our English ants possess a greater variety of domestic animals than we do ourselves."¹³ Some of these domestic insects, carefully reared by ants, are used for food (such, in particular, are the honeyed plant-lice (*aphidae*), which Linnaeus calls cows of the ants (*aphis formicarum vacca*).¹⁴ Others perform some necessary social works, for example, serve as scavengers,¹⁵ and a third group in Lubbock's opinion are kept for fun,¹⁶ like our pugs or canaries. The entomologist André presented a list of 584 species of insects that are commonly found in ant communities.¹⁷

Currently, for many highly populated ant communities the chief means of existence is an ample supply of plant products they have collected. Crowds of worker ants systematically and skillfully cut stalks of grass and stems of leaves—as if *reaping*. However, this similarity to farming is neither their unique nor their original means of subsistence. Lubbock says, "we find in the different species of ants different conditions of life, curiously answering to the earlier stages of human progress. For instance, some species, such as *Formica fusca*, live principally on the produce of the chase; for though they feed partly on the honey-dew of aphides, they have not domesticated these insects. These ants probably retain the habits once common to all ants. They resemble the lower races of men, who subsist mainly by hunting. Like them they frequent woods and wilds, live in comparatively small communities, and the instincts of collective action are but little developed among them. They hunt singly, and their battles are single combats, like those of the Homeric heroes. Such species as *Lasius flavus* represent a distinctly higher type of social life; they show more skill in architecture, may literally be said to have domesticated certain species of aphides, and may be compared to the pastoral stage of human progress—to

¹² F] Worker ants (just like worker bees), as is well known, do not represent a separate species but descend from a common queen and remain (sexually) under-developed.

¹³ F] Lebbok 1884: 73. E] Lubbock 1882: 73–74.

¹⁴ E] Lubbock 1882: 67.

¹⁵ F] Lebbok 1884: 74. E] Lubbock 1882: 75.

¹⁶ F] Lebbok 1884: 76. E] Lubbock 1882: 78.

¹⁷ F] Lebbok 1884: 73. E] Lubbock 1882: 74.

[295]the races which live on the produce of their flocks and herds. Their communities are more numerous; they act much more in concert; their battles are not mere single combats, but they know how to act in combination. I am disposed to hazard the conjecture that they will gradually exterminate the mere hunting species, just as savages disappear before more advanced races. Lastly, the agricultural nations may be compared with the harvesting ants. Thus there seem to be three principal types, offering a curious analogy to the three great phases—the hunting, pastor, and agricultural stages—in the history of human development.”¹⁸

Besides the complexity of their social structure and their gradual cultural development, ant communities are also distinguished, as noted above, by the extreme strength of their social ties. Our author repeatedly informs us that “the utmost harmony reigns between those belonging to the same community.”¹⁹ This harmony is dependent *solely* on the common good. On the basis not just of observations alone but also on numerous experiments, Lubbock shows that in all cases where an individual ant undertakes something useful for the entire community but which exceeds its own capability, for example, dragging a dead fly or beetle that it encountered into the anthill, the ant always calls and finds other companions to help it. On the other hand, when an individual ant meets some disaster that concerns it alone, it does not usually arouse any sympathy, and no help is forthcoming. Our patient naturalist rendered individual ants unconscious many times by means of chloroform or vodka²⁰ with the result that the fellow ants either did not pay any attention to these unfortunate ones or threw them out like carrion. However, tender concern over another’s personal grief has no connection with any social function and consequently is not inherent in the concept of sociality as such. In return, both a feeling of civic duty and a devotion to the common order are so great in ants that disputes or internecine wars among them never arise. Their armed forces are designated for external wars alone. Even in the most developed communities, which have a special class of scavengers and a special [296]breed of domestic jesters, not a single observer could find any sign of an organized police or gendarmerie.

II

Sociality is at least as essential a characteristic of the animals examined here as it is for humans. If, however, we do not want to recognize their equality with ourselves, if we do not agree now to accord all human and civil rights to each of the innumerable ants swarming in our woods, this is because human beings have another essential quality, independent of sociality. This quality, on the contrary, makes for the distinctive character of *human* society. It is that each human being, as such, is a moral

¹⁸ F] Lebbok 1884: 89–90. E] Lubbock 1882: 91–92.

¹⁹ F] Lubbock 1884: 117 ff. E] Lubbock 1882: 119.

²⁰ E] In the Russian text (all editions), the word here is clearly “vodka.” Yet, Lubbock just as clearly performed his experiments not with vodka (!) but by immersing ants for a period of time in water until they were unconscious. See Lubbock 1882: 99–101. It should be noted, though, that the Russian word for water is “*voda*.”

being, or a person, having, independently of our social utility, an unconditional value, an unconditional right to existence and to the free development of our positive abilities. It follows directly from this that *no human being under any condition or for any reason can be seen as merely a means* for any outside purpose whatever. The human being cannot be only a means or *an instrument for the benefit of another person* nor for the benefit of *an entire class* nor, finally, for the so-called *common good*, i.e., for the benefit of the majority of other people. This “common good” or “common benefit” is a claim not on the human being, as a person, but on our activity or our work to the extent that it is done for the benefit of society and that, at the same time, provides the worker with a worthwhile existence. A person’s rights as such are based on our inherent and inalienable human value, on the formal, infinite reason in each human being, on the fact that each person has something special and irreplaceable and, consequently, must be an end in itself, and not a mere means or instrument. Such rights of a person are essentially *unconditional*, whereas the rights of society on a person, on the other hand, are *dependent* on a recognition of personal rights. Therefore, society can compel a person to do something only through an act of one’s own will. For otherwise the act will not be obligatory of a person but only the use of a thing. Of course, it does not follow from this (as for some reason one of my critics imagined)²¹ that the social authority [297] must request the special consent of each person for each individual legislative and administrative measure. Instead of such an absurd *liberum veto*,²² the moral principle logically entails (with respect to the political realm) only the right of each able-bodied person freely to change one’s allegiance as well as one’s religion. In other words, *no social group or institution has a right through force to prevent someone from withdrawing as one of its members*.²³

The human value of each person, or what makes one a moral being, depends neither on one’s natural qualities nor on one’s utility. A human being’s position in society and how other people value someone can determine such qualities and such utility, but they cannot determine one’s own significance and human rights. Many animals are by nature more virtuous than many people. The conjugal virtue of pigeons and storks, the maternal love of hens, the gentle nature of deer, the loyalty and devotion of dogs, the kindness of dolphins and seals, the diligence and civic valor of bees and ants, etc. are all distinctive qualities that adorn our little brothers, but by no means do they constitute the predominant qualities of the majority of human beings. Why, then, has it not yet occurred to anyone to deprive the most rotten people of their human rights in order to pass them along to the most superb animal as a reward for its virtue? As for utility, not only is one healthy horse more useful than a great number of sick beggars, but even inanimate objects, for example, a printing press or

²¹ E] Chicherin 1897: 647.

²² E] *liberum veto*] A parliamentary device in the 17th-18th century Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth that gave any deputy to the Sejm the right to force an immediate cessation of the current session and void all legislation already approved. Although used commonly in the first half of the 18th century, it was abolished by the constitution of 1791. See Davies 2005: 265–266.

²³ C] Of course, it does not ... *one of its members.*] *Absent in AB.*

a steam boiler have undoubtedly served the general progress of history more than entire savage and barbarian nations. However, if (*per impossibile*) Guttenberg and Watt had to sacrifice intentionally and consciously even one savage or barbarian for their great inventions, the utility of their *efforts* would not prevent that *action* from being resolutely condemned as immoral. Otherwise, we would have to accept that the ends justify the means.²⁴

In order to have the significance of a moral principle, the common good, or common benefit, should be common in the full sense, i.e., good not only for many or even a majority but *for everyone without exception*. What is actually a benefit for all is thereby also to the benefit of *everyone*—no one is excluded, and consequently in serving [298] *such* a social benefit, taken as the goal, *no* one thereby becomes only a means or instrument of something external and foreign. A true society, which recognizes the unconditional right of each person, is not his or her negative limit but a positive addition. In serving society with selflessness, a person does not lose but instead *realizes* unconditional value and significance. For taken individually, each of us possesses only a possible unconditionality or infinity. This *possibility* becomes a reality only through the intrinsic union of each of us with everyone.²⁵

The principle of human dignity or the unconditional significance of each person by virtue of which society is defined as the intrinsic, free consent of all is the sole moral norm.^{26, 27} Just as there cannot be many moral norms,²⁸ in the proper sense, so there cannot be many ultimate goods or many moralities. It is easy to show that religion (in its given, historical concrete sense), family and property do not contain in themselves moral norms in the strict sense.²⁹ Whether something in itself can or cannot be moral obviously must be determined as one or the other by something else. However, it cannot independently be a moral norm, i.e., impart to others a character that it itself, perhaps, does not have. It is indubitable, though, that a religion may or may not be moral. How can such religions, as, for example, the cults of Moloch or Astarte (remnants or analogies of which can still be found today here

²⁴ C] intentionally and consciously ... justify the means.] even one savage or barbarian for their great inventions, their endeavor could not be condemned as immoral and contrary to human dignity. **A.**

²⁵ F] See above, Chapter 10, “The Individual and Society.”

²⁶ F] This thesis is logically justified in the elementary part of moral philosophy, that part which received, thanks to Kant, the same character of rigorous scientificity in its sphere as pure mechanics has in another field. (See the Appendix at the end of this book.) C] This thesis is ... which received] This thesis is formally demonstrated in the fundamental part of moral philosophy. This part received **A E**] Since the appendix mentioned in this footnote is largely a collection of passages from Kant’s writings and is a reflection of Solov’ëv’s views from some 20 years earlier, it is omitted from this volume. See also the footnote at the end of the “Preface to the First Edition.”

²⁷ C] *free consent of all* is the *sole* moral norm.] free unity of all is the *sole* moral foundation of society. **A]** free agreement of all is the **sole** moral foundation of society. **B.**

²⁸ C] norms,] foundations, **AB.**

²⁹ C] religion (in its given ... in the strict sense.) general religion, family and property cannot in themselves serve as moral foundations in the proper sense. **A]** religion (in its given, historical concrete sense), family and property in themselves do not serve as moral foundations in the proper sense. **B.**

and there), serve as the moral norm of something when their very existence stands in direct contradiction to all morality? Therefore, when we point to a religion as the normal moral³⁰ foundation of society, we must still look whether this religion itself has a moral character,³¹ whether it agrees with the moral principle. Hence, the final foundation and criterion remains this principle and not religion as such.³² If we [299]see in Christianity the true foundation and the norm of all moral good in the world, this is only because Christianity, as the perfect religion, contains the unconditional moral principle. Should Christian sociality be *separated* in any way from the demands of moral perfection, the unconditional significance of Christianity would immediately disappear and it would then become an historical accident.³³

It is also impossible to deny that the family may or may not be moral, not just in individual examples but also in its general given³⁴ structure. Thus, the family in Ancient Greece—not those special heroic families, where the wife kills her husband and is murdered by her son or where the son kills the father and marries his mother—but the ordinary normal family of educated Athenians, which required the institution of hetaeras, and even worse,³⁵ as a necessary complement, had no moral character. The Arab family (before Islam), in which new-born baby girls, if there were more than one or two of them, would be buried alive, was strong in its own way, but it too did not have moral character. It is also impossible to recognize as moral the very strong Roman family, in which the head of the house had the right of life and death over his wife and children. Therefore, the family too, not having an inherent moral character, must obtain a normal³⁶ moral foundation for itself before imparting it to something else.

As for property, to recognize it as³⁷ the moral foundation of a normal society, consequently, as something sacrosanct and inviolable,³⁸ is neither a logical nor, for me, for example (as I suppose it also is for my generation) even a psychological possibility. The first awakening of conscious life and thought occurred in us under the thunder of the destruction of property in two of its basic historical forms: slavery and serfdom. This destruction in both America and Russia was demanded and accomplished *in the name of social morality*. A pseudo inviolability was brilliantly refuted by the fact of such successful involvement and approved by the conscience of all.³⁹ Obviously, property is something that needs to be justified and that demands a moral norm and a support *for itself*⁴⁰ and by no means contains it.

³⁰ C] a religion as the normal moral] religion in general as the moral A] religion as the moral B.

³¹ C] moral character,] moral foundation, AB.

³² C] and not religion as such] *Absent in A.*

³³ C] If we see ... an historical accident.] *Absent in AB.*

³⁴ C] given] *Absent in AB.*

³⁵ C], and even worse,] *Absent in AB.*

³⁶ C] normal] *Absent in AB.*

³⁷ C] recognize it as] recognize it by itself as A.

³⁸ C], consequently, as something sacrosanct and inviolable,] *Absent in AB.*

³⁹ C] and approved by the conscience of all] *Absent in A.*

⁴⁰ E] *for itself*] An Hegelian expression meaning here “explicit” or “external.”

Every historical institution, be it religious or civil, is a fact of mixed character. However, a moral norm,⁴¹ indubitably, can only be a pure principle, and not a mixed [300]fact. A principle that asserts in an unconditional form what *should* be is something inviolable by its very essence. One can reject it and not follow it. However, no harm is thereby done to the principle, but only to the one who rejects and does not follow it. The thesis that runs: “You should respect the human dignity of everyone; you must not use any person as a means or instrument” is a thesis that depends⁴² neither on a fact nor does it assert a fact. For this reason, it cannot be affected by any fact.

The principle that the human individual has rights does not depend on anyone or anything. However, societies and institutions obtain their moral character from it alone. We know that in ancient and modern paganism there were and are great cultural-national bodies with extremely strong families, religions and property relations, but all that notwithstanding they did not and do not have the moral character associated with human sociality.⁴³ At best, they are like a community of wise insects that has a well-ordered mechanism but no purpose for which this mechanism serves. There is no moral good itself, because there is no bearer of it, no free individual.⁴⁴

III

A certain vague and perverted awareness of the essence of morality and of the true norm⁴⁵ of human society exists where the moral principle has no apparent application. Thus, in Eastern despotisms there is only one who has the full scope of rights⁴⁶ and is correctly recognized as a genuine human being, or a person, and such dignity is accorded⁴⁷ there to only one. However, transformed into an exclusive and externally determined privilege, human dignity and rights lose their moral⁴⁸ character. Their sole bearer, then, ceases to be an individual, and as a real, concrete being with no possibility of being a pure principle, this being becomes an idol. The moral principle demands of human beings that we respect human dignity as such, i.e., in others as in ourselves. Only by treating others as persons are individual human beings themselves determined as persons. However, the Eastern sovereign finds⁴⁹ in his world no one with full rights, only things without rights. Therefore, owing to the

⁴¹ C] norm] foundation **AB**.

⁴² C] The thesis ... a thesis that depends] The theses ... the theses that depend **A**.

⁴³ C] the moral character associated with human sociality.] moral foundations and a moral character. **AB**.

⁴⁴ C] that has a well-ordered.. free individual] *Absent in* **AB**.

⁴⁵ C] norm] foundation **AB**.

⁴⁶ C] the full scope of rights] an unconditional right **AB**.

⁴⁷ C] and such dignity is accorded] but such dignity is unjustly accorded **AB**.

⁴⁸ C] their moral] their unconditional moral **AB**.

⁴⁹ C] sovereign finds] sovereign in antiquity found **A**.

impossibility of having [301]any personal moral relationships with someone, he inevitably himself loses his personal moral character and becomes a thing—the most important thing, a sacred, divine, worshipped thing—in a word, a fetish or an idol.

In the civil societies of the classical world, the full scope of rights became the privilege not of one, but of several (in aristocracies) and of many (in democracies). This expansion was very important, since it, albeit within narrow confines, made possible independent moral interaction between individuals and, consequently, also personal self-consciousness, and realized, at least for a given social union,⁵⁰ the idea of equal rights or justice.⁵¹ However, the moral principle by its very essence is universal, since it demands a recognition of the unconditional intrinsic dignity of the human being as such, consequently, without any external limitations. Meanwhile, ancient society—both the gentile troops of the Spartans, the Athenian demos and the original combination of both forms—*senatus populusque romanus*⁵²—recognized the true significance of the human being only within the bounds of its respective civil union. This is why they were not societies founded on the moral principle, but really only preliminary and approximate models of such a society.

However, the structure of this life is⁵³ for us not just of historical interest. In essence, we have still not outlived it. Let us recall, in fact, what limited the moral principle in the ancient world and prevented its true realization. There were three classes of people who were not recognized as possessing any rights and not seen as objects of any moral obligation. Consequently, they were not considered to any extent as an *end* of an activity; they were not included in the idea of the *common good* and were considered only as *material instruments* or as *material obstacles* to this good. These classes were: (1) *enemies*, i.e., originally all foreigners,⁵⁴ then (2) *slaves*, and finally (3) *criminals*. [302]Despite all of their particular differences, the legal status of these three categories of people were essentially one and the same, since that status was throughout equally immoral. There is no need to represent in some exaggerated form the terrible institution of slavery, which replaced, as is well

⁵⁰ C] social union] group **AB**.

⁵¹ F] In Eastern despotisms there can be no talk of an *equality of rights*, only of a negative equality of all in the general absence of rights. However, the equal distribution of *injustice* does not make it just. The concept of equality in itself (taken abstractly) is only mathematical, and not ethical. C] (taken abstractly)] *Absent in AB*.

⁵² E] Latin: “the Senate and the people of Rome”—a reference to the government of the Roman Republic. The initialism (from the Latin) SPQR appeared on the standards of the Roman legions.

⁵³ C] of this life is] of life in antiquity is **AB**.

⁵⁴ F] Although very ancient, hospitality to peaceful strangers, as a phenomenon, is hardly original with us. In Greece, its founder was thought to be Zeus—the representative of the *third* generation of gods (after Kronos and Uranus). Before being a guest in the sense of a disinterested but friendly visitor, a stranger was a guest in the sense of a merchant. Even earlier, the word was understood simply in the sense of the Latin word “*hostis*” (enemy). Moreover, even further back in antiquity accounts of which have been preserved in the classical tradition, a good guest was met with even more joy than in later hospitable times but only with a savory roast at a family feast. Besides such extremes, the dominant attitude towards strangers in primitive society was, undoubtedly, similar to what Sir John Lubbock continually noticed in an ant colony. When a newcomer came along, even though of the same species but from a different community, having been pulled about by the antennae long enough until it was exhausted and half-dead, it was either finished off or driven away.

known, the simple slaughter of prisoners. Slaves had a secure means of existence and in general were not treated badly. However, this was an accident, albeit a frequent one, and not an obligation. Consequently, it had no moral significance. Slaves were valued for their utility, but this had nothing to do with a recognition of their human dignity. As opposed to these useful things, which prudence dictates we should care for, enemies, both internal and external, as notoriously *harmful things*, were subject to ruthless destruction. Ruthlessness towards the enemy in a war could still be limited by respect for his power and fear of retribution, but towards defenseless criminals, whether real or imagined cruelty knew no bounds. In civilized Athens, even before any inquest, those accused of ordinary criminal offenses were tortured as the first order of business after being taken into custody.

All these phenomena—war, slavery, execution—were regular⁵⁵ occurrences in the ancient world in the sense that they logically followed from an outlook on the world that everyone accepted and took shape from the general state of consciousness. If the significance of a human being as an independent person, if the full nature of his worth and rights were dependent solely on belonging to a certain civil union, then [303]the natural consequence of this would be that people who do not belong to this union, who are foreign and hostile to it, or, although belonging to it, break its laws or threaten the general security are thereby deprived of human dignity and rights. Everything is thereby permitted towards them. However, this state of mind in antiquity changed. Ethical thought developed first among the Sophists and Socrates; then came the Greco-Roman Stoics and the work of Roman jurists. Indeed, the very character of the Roman state embraced many and was international. It, therefore, willy-nilly extended the intellectual and practical outlook.⁵⁶ All this gradually smoothed over⁵⁷ the old borders and established in personal consciousness the moral principle as formally infinite and universal. Meanwhile, from another, an Eastern shore, the religio-moral preaching of Israeli prophets elaborated a living ideal of unconditional human dignity. At the same time as one Roman in a theater of the eternal city proclaimed through the mouth of an actor the new expression “*homo sum*” (“I am a man”)⁵⁸ to convey the highest stage of personal dignity instead of the earlier “*civis romanus*” (“Roman citizen”), another Roman in a remote Eastern province and at a more tragic scene supplemented this statement of the new principle by simply pointing to its actual personal embodiment: *Ecce homo* (Behold the man!).⁵⁹

⁵⁵ C] regular] normal **AB**.

⁵⁶ C] It, therefore, willy-nilly extended the intellectual and practical outlook] *Absent in AB*.

⁵⁷ C] smoothed over] eliminated **AB**.

⁵⁸ E] “*homo sum*”] A reference to a line in the play *Heauton Timoroumenos* by Publius Terentius Afer (184 B.C.—159 B. C.), better known in English as Terence. In his *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant also quotes this line. See Kant 1996a: 577.

⁵⁹ E] A reference, of course, to the words of Pontius Pilate when he presented the tortured Jesus to the crowd. The Latin is from the Vulgate translation of John 19: 5—“*et dicit eis ecce homo*.” The English translation, of course, is from the King James Version.

It would seem that the internal revolution that occurred in humanity from the interaction of events in Palestine with Greco-Roman theories was bound to start an entirely new order of things. A complete renovation of the physical world was even expected. Instead, the socio-moral world of paganism still remains without fundamental and definitive changes. If we⁶⁰ picture to ourselves the entire scope of what is involved in the moral regeneration of humanity, we will not complain and be astonished in this regard. A gradual process must prepare the resolution of the task confronting us before the final catastrophe.⁶¹ This much is clear from the essence of the matter and was foretold in the Gospels themselves.⁶² This preparatory⁶³ process has not yet been completed, but is being completed. Yet, it is indubitable that from the fifteenth century and especially from the end of the eighteenth the course of history has accelerated at a significantly progressive rate. In the moral and practical sense, it is important⁶⁴ [304] to come to a clear understanding for ourselves of what has already been done and what still remains to be done in certain, definite respects.

IV

When people of various nationalities and social classes were spiritually united in worshipping *an indigent*⁶⁵ *foreigner*—a Galilean, who was executed as a *criminal* in the name of national and class interests—international wars, the deprivation of the rights of social classes and the execution of criminals were all *internally* undermined.⁶⁶ Yes, this internal change⁶⁷ needed 18 centuries to reveal itself even in part, and, yes, this manifestation has become noticeable just when its first motivating force, the Christian⁶⁸ faith, is weakening and apparently disappearing from the superficial consciousness. Nevertheless, this change of attitude towards the old pagan foundations of society⁶⁹ has internally penetrated the soul of humanity and is being revealed all the more in our lives. Whatever be the thoughts of individual people,

⁶⁰ C] If we] If only we **A**.

⁶¹ C] A gradual process ... final catastrophe.] Not a sudden catastrophe, but only a gradual process can resolve this task. **AB**.

⁶² F] In the parables of the leaven, of wheat and weeds, of the mustard seed, etc.

⁶³ C] preparatory] regenerative **AB**.

⁶⁴ C] Yet, it is indubitable ... it is important] We have no definitive and reliable standard by which to recognize it as slow or fast. Since it is not some foreign concern but our own, it is much more useful **AB**.

⁶⁵ C] *indigent*] *Absent in A*.

⁶⁶ C] international wars, ... all *internally* undermined.] international wars, class advantages and oppression, and the cruel punishment of criminals were all rendered impossible internally. **A**] international wars, the deprivation of the rights of social classes and the execution of criminals were all rendered impossible internally. **B**.

⁶⁷ C] change] impossibility **AB**.

⁶⁸ C] the Christian] *Absent in A*.

⁶⁹ C] this change of attitude towards the old pagan foundations of society] this impossibility **AB**.

progressive humanity as a collective whole has reached a level of moral maturity such that our consciousness and feelings are starting to make impossible what was natural in antiquity. Indeed, the moral principle that does not accept the legalization of collective crimes exerts an obligatory force on those individuals, if not in the form of religious belief, then in the form of a rational conviction⁷⁰ for those who have not renounced reason. The very fact of becoming acquainted with the farthest reaches of humanity, of getting to know and developing connections with them to a significant extent eliminates the mutual barriers and estrangement that were a natural outlook in antiquity. At that time, the Straits of Gibraltar were the extreme boundary of the universe,⁷¹ and along the Don and Dnieper Rivers lived people with the heads of dogs.⁷²

International wars have not yet been eliminated, but our specific attitude towards them, particularly in recent years, has changed strikingly. The *fear* of war has become the predominant motive in international politics, and not a single government will dare admit having aggressive intentions.⁷³ Slavery, properly speaking, has been unconditionally and definitively abolished. Other crude forms of personal dependence that have endured until the last century, and in some places up to the middle of the present century, have also been abolished. Only [305]an indirect economic slavery remains, but it too is a question whose time has come. Finally, our attitude towards criminals has sharply changed from the eighteenth century in line with the Christian moral principle.

And to think that precisely this quick and decisive progress, even though late, on the path laid out 19 centuries ago arouses concern for the moral foundations of society! In fact, a false understanding of these principles is the chief obstacle delaying a fundamental moral revolution in social consciousness and life. Religion, family, property—none of these in themselves, i.e., by their factual existence alone, can be, as we know, the normal moral⁷⁴ foundations of society. Our task is not to uphold these institutions at any cost *in statu quo*, but to make them commensurate with the unique moral norm in order to imbue them fully with the one true principle.⁷⁵

By its essence, this principle is universal, the same for everyone. Religion, as such, may not be universal. Indeed, all ancient religions were narrowly national ones. Christianity, though, as the embodiment of the absolute moral ideal is as uni-

⁷⁰ C] a rational conviction] an abstract consciousness **A**.

⁷¹ C] were a natural outlook in antiquity. At that time, the Straits of Gibraltar were the extreme boundary of the universe,] in antiquity were inevitable. Then, the Straits of Gibraltar were Herculean pillars, **AB**.

⁷² E] people with the heads of dogs] Cynocephaly does appear to be as old as antiquity. Herodotus writes of “dog-headed” men in northern Africa. See Herodotus 1996: 276 (book 4, 191).

⁷³ C] The *fear* of war ... aggressive intentions.] Judging by the unprecedented universal glorification that the peaceful, external politics of our late Sovereign deserved, we should think that those who seek to provoke a European war would be buried under an avalanche of world condemnation. **AB**.

⁷⁴ C] as we know, the normal moral] as we saw, the moral **A**] as we know, the moral **B**.

⁷⁵ C] to make them ... one true principle.] to give them the true moral foundation, so that they be entirely imbued with the one true moral principle. **AB**.

versal as the moral principle itself. And it appeared as such from the start. However, the historical institutions associated with it during the course of centuries did not remain universal, and they, thereby, lost the purity and richness of their moral character.⁷⁶ While we affirm our religion, *first* in the form of a particular denomination and *then* as universal Christianity, we deprive it not only of its sound logic but also of its moral significance⁷⁷ and make it an obstacle to the spiritual rebirth of humanity. Furthermore, universality is expressed not only through the absence of barriers, be they external, national, denominational, etc., but even more through freedom from internal limitations.⁷⁸ In order to be truly universal, a religion must not isolate itself from intellectual enlightenment, from science, from social and political progress. A religion that fears⁷⁹ all this, obviously, does not believe in its own strength. It is intrinsically imbued with disbelief, and with its claim to a monopoly on the moral norm for society⁸⁰ it lacks the most elementary condition, namely, sincerity.

The positive significance of the *family*, by virtue of which it can serve⁸¹ in a certain sense as the moral norm of society [306] lies in the following. It is really physically impossible for a *single* individual⁸² to implement his or her moral attitude towards *everyone* in daily life. Even with the most sincere recognition of the unconditional demands of the moral principle a person cannot in reality apply these demands to *every* individual, for the simple reason that this “everyone” does not really exist for this person. We cannot demonstrate *in practice* our respect for the human dignity in billions⁸³ of people of whom we have no idea. We cannot make them *in concreto*⁸⁴ the positive end of our activity. Nevertheless, without the *complete* realization of the moral principle in *palpable*⁸⁵ personal relations, it remains an abstract principle, enlightening our consciousness, but not regenerating our personal life. The way out of this contradiction lies in the fact that the full realization of moral relations for each of us actually takes place within the specific, intimate environment that constantly and actually surrounds us. This is precisely the true purpose of the family. Each family member is actually an end for the others, not just intentionally thought and wished to be so but in fact.⁸⁶ The unconditional significance of each member is palpably⁸⁷ recognized; each is irreplaceable. From this point of view, the

⁷⁶ C] lost the purity and richness of their moral] lost their moral **AB**.

⁷⁷ C] significance] foundation **AB**.

⁷⁸ C] but even more ... from internal limitations.] but also, and even more, in the absence of internal obstacles. **A**] but even more in the absence of internal limitations. **B**.

⁷⁹ C] that fears] that would fear **A**.

⁸⁰ C] to a monopoly on the moral norm for society] to be the moral foundation of society **A**.

⁸¹ C] serve] become **AB**.

⁸² C] really physically impossible for a *single* individual] actually physically impossible for a real, individual **AB**.

⁸³ C] billions] millions **A**.

⁸⁴ C] *in concreto*] *Absent in* **AB**.

⁸⁵ C] *in palpable*] *Absent in* **AB**.

⁸⁶ C] , not just intentionally thought and wished to be so but in fact] *Absent in* **AB**.

⁸⁷ C] palpably] *Absent in* **AB**.

family is the elementary, exemplary and formative cell of universal brotherhood or of human society as it should be. However, in order to maintain this significance the family obviously must not become a unit of satisfied mutual egoism. From this first stage, each family member must always be open to the further, ascending path leading to the realization of the moral principle in the world to the extent that that is possible for each of us. The family is either the *pinnacle* of egoism or the *rudiment* of a universal union. To protect the family, understood in the first sense, does not mean to protect the “moral foundation” of society.

Property in general has⁸⁸ no moral significance. No one is obliged to be wealthy, and no one is obliged to enrich others. The equality of all possessions is just as impossible and unnecessary as everyone having the same color or quantity of hair. There is, however, one condition under which the property status of an individual becomes a moral issue. It is simply contrary to human dignity and the moral norm of society⁸⁹ when we as people cannot provide for our own existence or when in order to provide we must spend so much effort and so much time that there is not enough left either to care for or to increase our human, intellectual [307]and moral perfection. A person in such a situation ceases to be an end for oneself and others, becoming only a material instrument of economic production on a par with a soulless machine. The moral principle unconditionally demands that we respect human dignity in everyone and in each one, that we look on everyone and each one as an end, not simply as a means. Thus, a society wishing to be morally normal⁹⁰ cannot remain indifferent to the situation of any of its members that runs counter to this. It directly obliges us to insure a certain minimum level of welfare for all and for each of us, namely what is necessary to maintain a worthy human existence. How to do this is an issue not of morality, but of political economy. In any case, it should be, and therefore it can be done.

Every human society and, in particular, a society that calls itself Christian can consolidate its existence and elevate its dignity only by aligning itself with the moral norm. It is not a matter of externally protecting certain institutions, which can be good or bad, but only of a sincere and consistent effort to improve intrinsically *all* institutions and social relations that can become good. This is done by increasingly subordinating all of them to the one, unconditional moral ideal of a *free union of all in the perfect moral good*.

Christianity posed this ideal as a practical task for all people and nations. It was entrusted with fulfilling this task, assuming a good will, and promised that there would be help from a higher power for its fulfillment. Both personal and historical experience sufficiently informs about such help. However, by the very essence of the Christian task as moral, and consequently free, the help of the supreme Moral Good offered to us cannot be such as to constrain the evil will or the external elimination of obstacles placed by that will on the road to the realization of the Kingdom of God. The people and nations comprising humanity must themselves experience

⁸⁸ C] in general has] in general and in itself has **A**.

⁸⁹ C] and the moral norm of society] *Absent in* **AB**.

⁹⁰ C] to be morally normal] to have a moral foundation **AB**.

and overcome these obstacles that appear not only in the form of the evil will of an individual but also in the form of the complex results of a *collective evil will*. Here, we find the reason for the actual slow progress seen in the Christian world and the *apparent* inactivity and stagnation of Christianity.^{91, 92}

⁹¹ C] Every human society ... stagnation of Christianity.] If our religion believes in the maxims of its Founder and becomes in reality, and not just nominally, the religion of all humanity, if the family clearly takes itself to be the model and embryo of universal brotherhood, if the economic system takes as its chief task to provide a dignified human existence for everyone and each one, then our social crisis will certainly lose its fatal significance. And when the one, true moral principle is understood as applying to all problems of social life, then there will be no need to protect the pseudo moral foundations of society with futile efforts. **A.**

⁹² C] by aligning itself ... stagnation of Christianity.] by actually placing itself on a moral foundation. This is achieved not through externally defending these or those institutions, which can be good or evil, but only through sincere and consistent efforts to make all institutions and social relations internally good, subordinating them to the one, unconditional moral principle and filling them with the spirit of Christ. **B.**

[308]Chapter 14

The National Question from the Moral Point of View

In addition to personal passions and vices, the ingrained forms of collective evil, which act endemically, hamper the task of embodying perfect morality in the collective whole of humanity. Despite the undisputed, though sluggish, progress of human social life,¹ this evil even now, just as it did in antiquity, takes the form of a threefold enmity, a threefold immoral relation, viz., between different nations, between society and the criminal, and between the different social classes. All we need do is listen to how the French speak about the Germans, the Portuguese about the Dutch, the Chinese about the English and the Americans about the Chinese. Pay attention to the feelings and thoughts of the spectators at a criminal trial or the behavior of a lynch mob in America or our own lynching of sorcerers and horse thieves here in Russia. Finally, hear or read the exchanges of socialist workers in meetings, assemblies and in the newspapers with representatives of the bourgeoisie. It then will become clear that, apart from the anomalies of the personal will, we must still consider the power of superpersonal, collective enmity in its three forms. National, criminal and socio-economic questions have, apart from considerations of domestic or international politics, a special significance for moral awareness. From this point of view, the answer to them is all the more pressing, because to the distress of a hereditary moral infirmity is now added a worse evil, viz., a reckless attempt to treat the ailment by preaching a passive disintegration of humanity into its individual elements, on the one hand, and new forms of social violence, on the other.^{2, 3}

C] This chapter originally appeared in 1895 under the title “Nationality from the Moral Point of View.” In **B**, this, the 11th chapter, spans pp. 359–389.

¹ C] Despite the undisputed ... human social life.] *Absent in B*.

² C] In addition to ... on the other.] *Absent in A*.

³ C] , on the one hand, and ... on the other] *Absent in B*.

[309]I

In our day, the human attitude towards nationality is categorized in our social consciousness⁴ in two ways: as *nationalistic* and as *cosmopolitan*. In the realm of feelings and tastes, there can be transitions and nuances, but in this matter there are only two clear and definite points of view before us. The first can be reduced to the formulation: *We must love our nation and serve its good with all the means available to us, but towards other nations we have a right to be indifferent. In the case of a conflict between their national interests and ours, we ought to deal with these other nations in a hostile manner.* The essence of the other, the cosmopolitan point of view is this: *Nationality is only a natural fact, devoid of any moral significance. We have no obligations to the nation as such (neither to our own, nor to others) but only to particular individuals without any distinction of nationality.*

It is easy to see at once that neither of these views expresses the proper attitude towards the fact of national differences. The first view ascribes to this fact an unconditional significance, which cannot belong to it, whereas the second withholds any significance to it. It is also easy to note that each of the two views finds its justification solely in the *negative* aspect of the opposing view.⁵

Certainly every sensible cosmopolitan reproaches adherents of nationalism not because they love their nation, but only because they consider it permissible, and in other cases even obligatory, to hate and despise aliens and foreigners. In precisely the same way, the most ardent nationalist, who is not devoid of reasoning, attacks the cosmopolitans not because they demand justice for foreigners, but only because they are indifferent to their own nation. That is, in each of these views even its direct opponents tacitly distinguish a good side from the bad, and naturally the question arises whether these two sides are necessarily connected. That is, (1) Does it follow from the love for one's own nation that for the sake of its interests all means are permissible and that an indifferent and hostile attitude towards foreigners should be lawful? (2) Does it follow from standing in an identical *moral* relation [310]to all people that there should be an indifference towards nationality in general and to one's own in particular?

The first question can easily be answered if only we would analyze what is contained in the idea of true patriotism, or love for a nation. The need for such an elementary investigation should be recognized by everyone, because everyone will admit that there happens to exist an *irrational* patriotism, which instead of the desired benefit results in harm and⁶ leads the nation to ruin. Everyone will also admit that there happens to exist an *empty* patriotism, which expresses only an unfounded pretension and, finally, that there happens to exist a patently *false* patriotism, which

⁴ C] in our social consciousness] *Absent in AB.*

⁵ C] It is easy to see ... the opposing view.] Is it necessary to choose between these two contradictory views? Or is it possible to adopt a third point of view, which sets us above this contradiction and allows us to combine love and obligation to one's nation with a positive moral attitude towards other nationalities? **A.**

⁶ C] instead of the desired benefit results in harm and] *Absent in AB.*

serves only as a guise for base, self-interested motives. What, then, is genuine, or true, patriotism?

Genuine love for someone is expressed in the fact that we wish and seek to give this loved one all good things, not only moral but also material, the latter, however, certainly on condition of the former. Furthermore, to everyone whom I love I wish material well-being, provided, of course, only that it is attained by honest means and used well. If my friend is in need and I, for this reason, help him to acquire a fortune by fraudulent means even though he has a guarantee of impunity for his crime, or if he is a writer and I advise him to enhance his literary fame by successful plagiarism, everyone would rightly consider me either a madman or a scoundrel, but by no means a good friend.

Therefore, it is clear that the good things that love makes us desire for another person differ not only in their external attributes but also in their intrinsic significance for the will. By their very idea, spiritual goods exclude the possibility of being acquired in some evil manner, since moral dignity cannot be stolen, justice obtained through robbery nor human love through a lawsuit. These goods are *unconditionally* desirable. On the other hand, material goods, which by nature allow for evil means, are desirable *on⁷ the condition* that such means are not used, i.e., on the condition that material goals are subordinate to the moral goal.

To a certain extent, everyone agrees with this elementary truth. Everyone agrees that it is impermissible to enrich oneself, a friend, one's family, the friend's family, [311] or even one's own city or the entire region in which one lives through crime. However, this clear-as-day moral truth suddenly becomes dim and murky as soon as it becomes a matter of *one's own nation*. When it is a matter of the nation's supposed good or in the service of its supposed interests, everything suddenly turns out to be permissible, the end justifies the means, black becomes white, a lie is preferred to the truth, and violence is extolled as valor. Nationality here becomes the unconditional and ultimate goal, the highest good and the criterion of the moral good for human activity. Such an unwarranted exaltation is merely illusory and, in fact, amounts to an abasement of nationality. Since the highest human goods cannot be attained by immoral means, by accepting the use of evil means in our service to the nation and *legitimizing* them, we limit the national interest to only those lower material goods that can be obtained and retained by evil and false⁸ means. This is, above all, an *insult* to the very nationality we wish to serve. It is a transference of the center of gravity of a nation's life from a higher sphere to a lower one. Under the guise of service to the nation, it is only a service to national *egoism*. The moral bankruptcy of *such* nationalism is also revealed by history, which loudly enough shows that nations prosper and are praised only as long as they do not take themselves as an end but serve higher, *universal* ideal goods. Moreover, history also

⁷ C] desirable *on*] desirable only *on A*.

⁸ C] and false] *Absent in B*.

shows that the very idea of the nation or of nationalities as the basic and definitive bearers of the collective life of humanity is, in fact, groundless.^{9, 10}

II

The segregation of the human race into definite and stable groups with national characteristics is not a universal and original fact. Leaving aside those savages and barbarians who even up to now live in separate tribes, gentes and roving bands, national divisions have never exclusively predominated in the civilized part of humanity, not even in the era of the state way of life, when the “gens” ultimately ceded its place to the “city” or “country.”¹¹ The fact is that, although country and nation are more or less mutually connected, they do not completely coincide. [312]In antiquity, we almost never encounter a clear division by nationality.¹² There, we see either independent civic communities, i.e., groups much smaller than nations united not nationally, but only politically, such as the cities in Phoenicia, Greece, and Italy. Or, on the contrary, we find larger groupings than nations, namely, the multinational states or so-called “world empires,” from the Assyro-Babylonian to the Roman. These are crude precursors of a panhuman union, in which ethnic distinctions have merely a material, but not a decisive significance.¹³ The principle¹⁴ of nationality as the supreme principle of life was applied at almost no time or place in antiquity. The contrast between one’s own people and others existed in that era even more powerfully and ruthlessly than now, but it was not determined by nationality. In the kingdom of Darius and Xerxes, people of different tribes and countries looked on these kingdoms as *their own*, as equally subject to one common power and one supreme law. Foreigners and enemies were, for them, only those people who had not *yet* submitted to the “great emperor.” On the other hand, although the Greek Athenians

⁹ C] Nationality here becomes ... in fact, groundless.] Instead of being indignant with this change, it is better to give a clear account of its sense, i.e., of what such a point of view logically presupposes. If the interests of one’s nation allow what in general the moral law forbids, such as deceit, mental coercion, and even murder, then the moral principle lacks unconditional significance. Such significance passes entirely to nationality, which turns out to be the highest, unconditional, absolute principle. Everything that should be is subject to it. The moral worth of actions is, then, determined not by the moral principle but by nationality, which has all the force of a supreme practical criterion. However, can such significance essentially belong to the fact of nationality? Logically, the answer is clear: There is nothing absolute and super-moral in the concept of nationalism. However, let us look at what history says about this. **A**.

¹⁰ C] The moral bankruptcy ... in fact, groundless.] However, history already shows loudly enough that nations prosper and are praised only as long as they do not take themselves as an end but serve higher, *universal* ideal goods. **B**.

¹¹ C], not even in ... “city” or “country.”] *Absent in AB*.

¹² C] almost never encounter a clear division by nationality.] encounter almost nowhere such a division. **A**] almost never encounter such a division. **B**.

¹³ C] in which ethnic distinctions ... decisive significance] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁴ C] principle] idea **AB**.

and Spartans spoke one language, had identical gods and clearly had a sufficient awareness of their national community, this did not prevent them throughout the course of their entire history from regarding each other as foreigners and even mortal enemies. Similar attitudes also existed between other cities or civic communities in Greece. Only once in a thousand years did a genuine national or pan-Greek patriotism actually appear, namely, at the time of the Persian invasion. However, this coincidence (and, incidentally, it was only an approximate one)¹⁵ between practical solidarity and national peculiarity did not even last 40 years and gave way to the long¹⁶ and bitter slaughter of the Greeks by the Greeks in the Peloponnesian War. This state of bloody struggle between small communities within one nation, which was considered quite normal, continued right up to the moment when all these communities together lost their independence. However, this loss was not for the sake of national unity, but only so that, out of political division and under the authority of foreign rulers, the Greek nation could immediately turn to the role of cultural unifier of the whole world at the time. The opposition between fellow citizens and foreigners (i.e., between inhabitants of another, albeit also Greek, city) now lost all its significance [313] (in the sense of a supreme practical principle). However, an opposition between their own nation and that of the foreigner's did not replace it. There remained another, a broader opposition, namely, that between Hellenism and barbarism, by which membership in the former was certainly not determined by one's birth or even by one's language, but only by assimilating the higher intellectual-aesthetic culture. Certainly even the most pretentious of the Greeks did not regard Horace and Virgil, Augustus and Maecenas as barbarians. Indeed, before this, the Macedonian kings Phillip and Alexander,¹⁷ the founders of the Hellenic "world monarchy," were not ethnically Greek. It was thanks to these two foreigners that the Greeks passed directly from a narrow, parochial patriotism of separate civic communities to a universal-cultural self-consciousness, without ever returning to the time of the national patriotism of the Persian wars.

As for Rome, all of Roman history was an uninterrupted transition from the politics of the city to the politics of a world monarchy—*ab urbe ad orbem*¹⁸—without pausing at a purely national moment. When Rome defended itself against the Punic invasion, it was still only the strongest of the Italian cities, but when it destroyed its adversary, it imperceptibly crossed the ethnographic and the geographic frontiers of the Latin world and recognized itself as a world-historical force, anticipating by two centuries the poet's reminder:

Remember your fate, O Rome, to rule over nations mightily,
to give protection humbly, subduing the proud by arms.¹⁹

¹⁵ C] (and, incidentally, it was only an approximate one)] *Absent in A.*

¹⁶ C] long] longer A.

¹⁷ C] Phillip and Alexander] *Absent in A.*

¹⁸ E] Latin: from the city to the world.

¹⁹ E] Remember your fate ... proud by arms] The English translation here is from Solov'ëv's own Russian translation of Virgil. Cf. Virgil 1982: 166–167.

Roman citizenship soon became generally accessible, and the formulation “Rome for the Romans” seduced no one on the banks of the Tiber: Rome was for the world.

While the Alexanders and the Caesars politically abolished the insecure national frontiers in the East and the West, cosmopolitanism as a philosophical principle was elaborated and disseminated by representatives of the two most popular schools—the wandering Cynics and the imperturbable Stoics. They preached the supremacy of nature and reason, that a single essence underlies all that exists and the insignificance of all artificial and historical divisions and borders. They taught that the human being by one’s very nature, consequently *any* human being, has a higher dignity and purpose, [314]which lies in freedom from external attachments, delusions and passions, in the unflinching valor of the man, who

Were the vault of heaven to break and fall upon him,
its ruins would smite him undismayed.^{20, 21}

Hence, we have the inevitable recognition of all externally given divisions—civic, national, and so forth—as conditioned and illusory. In its sphere and from its point of view, Roman jurisprudence supported this philosophical idea of a natural, and therefore universal, reason, of virtue the same for all and of equal rights.^{22, 23} And, as a consequence of this collective intellectual labor, the concept “Roman” became identified with the concept of the “world” not only in its outward extension, but also in its inner intension.²⁴

III

By the time of Christianity’s appearance within the borders of the ancient cultural world, the Jewish nation alone had manifested a strong national consciousness. However, here it was indivisibly connected with a religion, with a correct feeling of the intrinsic superiority of their religion, and with the presentiment of its²⁵ world-historical purpose. The national consciousness of the Jews found no realistic satisfaction; it lived on hopes and expectations. The brief greatness of David and Solomon was idealized and transformed into a golden age. However, the enduring historical sense of the nation that had created the first philosophy of history in the world (in the book of Daniel concerning world monarchies and the kingdom of the

²⁰ F] *Si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient ruinae.* C] Footnote absent in AB.

²¹ E] Horace 1968: 179 (book 3, ode 3).

²² F] For corroboration of these latter points, see my *National Question* (Part 1, last chapter). C] For corroboration of these latter points, see my second article “Rossija i Evropa,” *Vestnik Evropy*, April 1888 and my *National Question* (Part 1, 3rd edition, last chapter). A E] SS, vol. 5: 82–147.

²³ C] of virtue the same for all and of equal rights] of virtue and of rights A

²⁴ F] Although Stoic philosophy arose in Greece independently of Rome, it developed only in the Roman era and spread particularly among the Romans. It manifested its practical influence primarily through Roman jurists.

²⁵ C] religion, and with the presentiment of its] religion above paganism and their religion’s A.

truth of the Son of Man²⁶) did not allow it to rest on an embellished image of the past. Instead, the Jewish nation was forced to put off its ideal into the future. This ideal, however, having from the outset several traits of world significance, which [315]the inspiration of the prophets carried forward, were decisively free of everything of narrowly national significance. Isaiah already proclaims the Messiah as the banner around which all the nations have to gather,²⁷ and the author of the book of Daniel fully adopts the point of view of *universal* history.

However, this messianic universalism, which expressed the true national self-consciousness²⁸ of the Jews as the blossom of the highest ideal of the national spirit, was held only by select sages, and when the banner predicted by the prophets was raised in Galilee and Jerusalem for all nations, the majority of the Jews with their official leaders (the Sadducees) and partly also with the unofficial teachers (the Pharisees) turned out to be on the side of national religious exclusivity against the highest realization of the prophetic ideal. The inevitable conflict and break between these two aspirations, as though between the “two souls”²⁹ of the Jewish nation, adequately explains (from a purely historical point of view) the great tragedy of Golgotha, out of which Christianity arose.³⁰

It would be, however, an obvious error to associate the principle of cosmopolitanism with Christianity. There was no occasion for the Apostles to preach the idea of non-nationality. The harmful, immoral aspect of national divisions, namely, mutual hatred and malicious³¹ struggle, no longer existed within the borders of the then “universe”³²—the “Roman Peace” (*pax Romana*) abolished the warring of nations. The spearhead of Christian universalism was directed against other, deeper divisions, which retained all their practical force despite the ideas of the prophets, philosophers and jurists. A religious division remained in force between Judaism and paganism; then there was the cultural division between Hellenism (which also included educated Romans) and barbarism; and finally, there was the worst division, a socioeconomic one, between slave and the free, which retained its full force in real life despite [316]the theoretical protests of the Stoics.³³ These divisions were in direct contradiction with the moral principle, which was not at all the case with the national differences of the time (these were as innocent in the Roman Empire as, for

²⁶ E] Cf. “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven....” Daniel 7: 13.

²⁷ E] See Isaiah 11: 10.

²⁸ C] self-consciousness] consciousness **AB**.

²⁹ F] “Oh! Two souls live in my breast, They strive to separate, and crave to be parted.” Goethe E] Cf. Goethe 2001: 31. Solov’ëv’s friend, Afanasij Fet, translated *Faust* into Russian in the 1880s.

³⁰ F] On the fact that the greater part of the Pharisees did not participate at all in the persecution of J. Christ and were favorable to primitive Christianity, see the excellent investigation of Prof. Khvolson in the *Annals of the Academy of Science* (1893). E] See Chwolson 1893.

³¹ C] malicious] armed **AB**.

³² F] *Οἰχομένη* (i.e., *γη*)—the Greek name for the Roman Empire.

³³ C] , which retained its ... of the Stoics] *Absent in A*.

example, the provincialism in Brittany and Gascogne is in contemporary France). There was a denial of any solidarity between Jews and pagans, between Hellenes and barbarians, between slaves and those who were free. It was an opposition of superior to inferior beings, in which the inferior were deprived of moral dignity and human rights.³⁴ This is why the Apostle had to proclaim that in Christ there is neither Jew nor pagan, neither Hellene nor barbarian, neither free human being nor slave, but a new creation.³⁵ A *new creation*, however, and not a simple reduction of the old to one denominator.³⁶ The Apostle replaces the negative Stoic ideal of the dispassionate human being who is indifferent to the ruin of the world with the positive ideal of the human being who commiserates and is in accord³⁷ with all of creation. A man who, having adopted as his own the sufferings and death that were endured by the universal man, Christ, for the world, now participates in His triumph over death and in the salvation of the entire world. In Christianity, consciousness passes from the abstract³⁸ *man in general* of philosophers and jurists, to the *real panhuman being*, and with this the old enmity and alienation between different categories of people is completely abolished. *Any* person, if only he or she will allow “Christ to be formed” in oneself,³⁹ i.e., if he or she is imbued with the spirit of the perfect human being⁴⁰ and determines one’s entire life and activity by His image as the ideal norm, will come to participate in the Deity by the power of the Son of God abiding in oneself. For a person in this reborn state, individuality—like nationality and all other particularities and distinctions—⁴¹ ceases to be a *boundary* but becomes the basis of a positive unification with a collective panhumanity or the church (in its true sense) which complements him. According to a well-known saying of the apostle Paul,⁴² a peculiarity in the structure and function of a certain organ, for example, the eye, distinguishes it from other organs. This does not, however, separate that organ from the others or from the entire body. On the contrary, it [317] constitutes the basis of its definite,⁴³ positive participation in the life of the entire body and its unique significance in relation to all the other organs and to the entire organism. Likewise, in the “body of Christ” individual peculiarities do not separate each of us from all others but unite each of us with all others, it being the

³⁴ F] Concerning the opposition between Judaism and paganism, I have in mind, of course, not the teaching of Moses, the prophets and the sages—all of whom in principle recognized that pagans had human rights—but only the frame of mind of the mob and its leaders.

³⁵ E] Cf. Galatians 6: 15—“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”

³⁶ C] A *new* creation ... to one denominator.] *Absent in AB.*

³⁷ C] who commiserates and is in accord] in intrinsic solidarity **AB.**

³⁸ C] abstract] *Absent in A.*

³⁹ F] “Until Christ be formed in you”—an expression of the apostle Paul. E] See Galatians 4: 19.

⁴⁰ C] the perfect human being] Christ **AB.**

⁴¹ C] —like nationality and all other particularities and distinctions—] *Absent in AB.*

⁴² C] According to a well-known saying of the apostle Paul,] *Absent in AB* E] See 1 Corinthians 12: 12–27.

⁴³ C] definite,] *Absent in AB.*

basis of its special significance for all and of the positive interaction with all others. However, the same thing obviously applies to nationality.⁴⁴ *Panhumanity* (or that church which the apostle preached) is not an abstract idea but the *harmonious plenitude of all positive attributes* of the new or reborn creation, i.e., *not only of personal attributes but of national ones as well*. The body of Christ, as a *perfect* organism, cannot consist of simple cells alone but must include more complex and larger organs, which are naturally represented here by different nationalities. National character differs from individual character not by something fundamental, but by its larger scope and by the stability of its bearer.⁴⁵ If Christianity does not require the *absence of individuality*, it cannot require an *absence of nationality*. The spiritual rebirth or renewal that it actually demands of persons and of nations⁴⁶ is not an elimination of natural attributes and powers, but only a transformation of them, a communication of new content and direction to them. After their rebirth with the Spirit of Christ, Peter and John [318] retained the positive aspects and distinctive features of their characters. Likewise, they were by no means deprived of their individuality; on the contrary, their individuality was strengthened and developed. In the same way must it be with entire nations that accept Christianity.

The actual adoption of the true religion with the unconditional principle that it contains⁴⁷ should eliminate much in national (as well as in personal) life. However, not all that is subject to elimination by virtue of a higher principle constitutes a positive attribute or characteristic. Historical sins, which weigh on the national conscience, occur, as does an evil collective will and an erroneous direction in national life and activity. It is necessary to be liberated from all this, but such liberation can only reinforce a nationality, and strengthen as well as enlarge the expression of its positive character.

Since there were almost no clearly defined, independent and self-conscious nationalities on the historical stage at the time, the first preachers of the Gospel had no reason to concern themselves with the question of nationalities, which had not yet entered the life of humanity. Nevertheless, we find in the New Testament definite⁴⁸

⁴⁴ C] However, the same ... applies to nationality.] *Absent in A.*

⁴⁵ F] It is all the more apparent that the single rational means of explaining genetically any stable national character, e.g., that of the Jews, which does not fall under any external influences of climate, history, etc., consists in recognizing within it the inherited individual character of the father of this nation. The inherent truth of the biblical characteristic of Jacob, the father of the Jews (and also of Ismail, the father of the northern Arabs) must be acknowledged by any impartial mind, regardless of what we make of the historical, factual aspect of these genealogies and legends. Let us just assume that a man with the name Jacob, having done what is told in the Book of Genesis, never existed. However, the Jews, or at least the chief branch of Judaism, must have had a common ancestor. In addition, proceeding from the given national character of the Jews, we must conclude that this father was distinguished by those typical attributes ascribed to Jacob in the Bible. On this, see S. M. Solov'ev, *Observations on the Historical Life of Nations* (*Works*, vol. 1), and also in my "Philosophy of Biblical History," i.e., "History of Theocracy." E] See Solov'ev 1882: 341, and for Vladimir Solov'ev see SS, vol. 4: 243–633.

⁴⁶ C] that it actually demands of persons and of nations], as the very word indicates, **A**.

⁴⁷ C] with the unconditional principle that it contains] *Absent in AB*.

⁴⁸ C] definite] clear **AB**.

indications of a *positive* attitude towards nationality. In his words to the Samaritan woman, “*salvation is of the Jews*,”⁴⁹ and in a preliminary admonition to his disciples, go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,^{50, 51} Christ sufficiently displays love for His own nation, and His final command to the apostles, “Go and teach *all nations*,”⁵² gives us to understand that for the future He thought not only in terms of separate individuals, but also of whole nationalities outside of Israel.⁵³ Furthermore, having become the apostle of tongues, Paul did not thereby turn into a cosmopolitan. Having distanced himself from the majority of his countrymen in the all-important matter of religion, he did not become indifferent to his nation and its special purpose: “I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish [319] that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, . . . Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.”⁵⁴

IV

Before they could realize the ideal of a panhumanity within themselves, nations had to be themselves established and take shape as independent bodies. Let us look at this process in particular⁵⁵ where it was fully achieved, namely, in Western Europe. The Apostolic successors, to whom the command to teach all nations was passed, soon had to deal with nations in their infancy, nations that were in need of an elementary education before they could really be taught. The Church reared them conscientiously and did so with much self-sacrifice. And later, continuing its tutelage, the Church forced them to pass through what was not a bad schooling, even though it was somewhat one-sided. The historical adolescence and youth of the Germano-Romantic nations under the tutelage of the Catholic Church—the so-

⁴⁹ F] John 4: 22.

⁵⁰ F] Matthew 10: 6.

⁵¹ E] go rather to the . . . Israel] Solov’ëv does not enclose these words within quotation marks, though he does, as we see, provide a footnote reference to their source!

⁵² F] Matthew 28: 19.

⁵³ F] We read in the Acts of the Apostles (I: 8)—“And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” This shows even more clearly that the Savior of the world recognized a definite starting point, a local place and nation for his universal work. C] Entire note absent in A.

⁵⁴ F] Romans 9: 1–5, 10: 1.

⁵⁵ C] in particular] *Absent in A.*

called Middle Ages—came to an end but by no means correctly. For the spiritual authorities failed to notice the advancing maturity of their pupils and, out of natural human weakness,⁵⁶ insisted on preserving the former attitudes. The anomalies and revolutions that occurred after this have no bearing on our subject. What is important for us is the one phenomenon that reoccurred in the national development of every European nation, notwithstanding the most diverse and, in other respects, antithetical conditions. Thus, this phenomenon undoubtedly indicates some general⁵⁷ ethico-historical law.

For obvious reasons, *Italy* acquired a national self-consciousness before all other European nations. The Lombard League in the first half of the twelfth century indicates this obvious⁵⁸ national awakening. However, this external struggle was only a jolt that called to life the true forces of the Italian genius. At the beginning of the next century, the newborn Italian language on the lips of St. Francis already expressed feelings and thoughts of world significance, equally understandable to both the Buddhist and the Christian. At this time, Italian painting began [320](Cimabue), and later (at the beginning of the 14th Century) appeared the all-embracing⁵⁹ work of Dante, which alone would be enough to make Italy great. In this and the following centuries (up until the 17th Century), Italy, torn apart by antagonistic cities and local rulers, by pope and emperor, by French and Spanish, produced everything that makes Italy significant and valuable to humanity, and of which the Italians could rightfully be proud. All these immortal philosophical and scientific works, as well as works of poetic and cultural genius, had the same value for other nations, for the whole world, as it did for the Italians themselves. The creators of Italy's true greatness were, without doubt, its genuine patriots; they attached the highest significance to their fatherland. However, this was not, on their part, an empty pretense that led to false and immoral demands—they actually embodied in works of unconditional value the supreme significance⁶⁰ of Italy. They did not consider the affirmation of themselves and of their nationality as something true and beautiful. Rather, they *directly* affirmed themselves in the true and beautiful. These works were not good because they glorified Italy, but, on the contrary, they glorified Italy because they were *in themselves* good—good *for everyone*. Under such conditions, patriotism has no need of defense and justification. In fact, in appearing as a creative *force* and not as a sterile reflection of “an irritation of idle thought,” it justifies itself. The wide dissemination of the Italian element corresponded to the intrinsic intensity of the creative process in this fruitful epoch. Its cultural influence in Europe extended from the Crimea in the east to Scotland in the northwest. The first European to break through to Mongolia and China was the Italian Marco Polo. Another Italian discovers the New World and a third, extending this discovery, leaves it his name. For several centuries, the literary influence of Italy predominates in all of Europe.

⁵⁶ C] out of natural human weakness.] *Absent in AB.*

⁵⁷ C] general] *Absent in A.*

⁵⁸ C] obvious] *Absent in AB.*

⁵⁹ C] all-embracing] *Absent in AB.*

⁶⁰ C] the supreme significance] the unconditional significance **AB.**

The Italians are imitated in epic literature, lyric poetry, and the novel. Shakespeare takes from them the subjects and the form of his dramas and comedies; the ideas of Giordano Bruno stir philosophical thought both in England and in Germany; the Italian language and Italian fashions dominate everywhere in the higher strata of society. During all this flowering of national creativity and influence, the Italians obviously were not concerned that Italy be kept for themselves (it was, on the contrary, for anyone who liked it), but only that what they make be something also for others and [321]add universal significance to it. That is, they worried about those objective ideas of beauty and truth, which through their national spirit received new and worthy expressions. What conception of nationality logically follows from this? With the national history of Italy in our hands one cannot claim that nationality is something that exists by itself and is self-contained, living in itself and for itself. For this glorious nationality turns out to be in fact only a particular form of universal content, living *in that content*, suffused with *it* and embodying it not for itself alone, *but for everyone*.⁶¹

The *Spanish* nation developed under quite peculiar conditions. For seven centuries, the Spanish represented the right forward flank of the Christian world in its struggle with the Islamic, and just after the left flank—Byzantium—was overthrown by the enemy, the Spanish on the right won a decisive and final victory. This stubborn and successful struggle was justifiably regarded as the national pride of the Spanish people. To detest and despise Moslems (as well as anyone else) and to seek their eradication is impermissible for a Christian nation. However, to defend oneself against the Moslem invasion of Europe was a direct Christian duty.⁶² Despite all its historical distortions, Christianity contains within itself absolute truth, and it is to that that the future belongs. To that extent, a defense, even if only of the external borders of the Christian faith and culture against the destructive force of the armed heretics,⁶³ is also an indubitable service to humanity. From a purely cultural point of view and apart from the issue of religious beliefs, if the fate of western Asia and the Balkan Peninsula had befallen Western Europe, would this have been conducive to historical progress?⁶⁴ In defending themselves against the Moors, the

⁶¹ C] What conception of nationality ... *but for everyone*.] *Absent in AB*.

⁶² C] was justifiably regarded ... a direct Christian duty.] formed the national pride of the Spanish people, and they were right. **AB**.

⁶³ C] against the destructive force of the armed heretics.] *Absent in A*.

⁶⁴ F] At one time, the culture of the Moors in Spain was not inferior, but in certain respects superior to the Christianity of the time. However, history sufficiently demonstrates the short life of any Islamic culture; and the fate that befell it in the Middle Ages in Damascus, Baghdad and Cairo without doubt would have been repeated in the West. Here, it would have been replaced by a lasting barbarism of the Turkish kind. However, if the Bashi-bazouks had settled down in London and Saxony had undergone continuous incursions by Kurds, what would have happened to the British Museum and to the Leipzig book trade? This is *ad homines*. However, seriously speaking and fully admitting the comparative merits of Islam and the historical tasks still awaiting it in Asia and Africa, we must remember that this religion has acknowledged renouncing the absolute height of the moral ideal, i.e., the principle of perfect divine humanity and cannot rightfully rule over Christian nations. Consequently, the European repulse of the Islamic invasion, being in general a historical necessity, was at the same time historically meritorious for the Christian nations that took a par-

Spaniards [322]served, and knew they were serving the common cause. It would not even have occurred to them to say, “Spain for the Spanish.” For then why not go further and say: “Castile for Castilians, “Aragon for the Aragonites,” etc.⁶⁵ They sensed, realized, and said: Spain is for all of Christianity, just as Christianity is for the whole world.⁶⁶ In this, they were quite sincere. They actually wanted to serve their religion as the universal one and the highest good for all. They can be blamed only for having an incorrect or one-sided⁶⁷ conception of Christianity. Although for a common and just cause, the uninterrupted seven-century-long struggle was chiefly an external struggle⁶⁸ with weapons in hand,⁶⁹ which created both the strength and narrow-mindedness of the Spanish national spirit. More than other nations, the Spanish in their practical understanding and activity distorted the truth of Christianity; they allotted within it a more decisive role to violence than did other nations. Just like everyone in the Middle Ages, the Spanish constructed their world-view on the distinction between the two swords—one spiritual, by which the monks ruled under the command of the Pope, and the other secular, by which knights ruled under the command of the king. However, with the Spanish these two swords were more closely associated with each other than in other nations to the detriment of an essential distinction. In the end, the spiritual sword turned out to be just as violent and used as openly as the secular sword, but was even more painful and less noble. The special role of the Spanish element [323] in this matter is sufficiently clear from the dual foundation of the Spanish Inquisition—by the monk Dominic in the thirteenth century and King Ferdinand in the fifteenth.⁷⁰

The struggle of the Spanish knights with the bellicose Islamic invaders was to the merit of Christianity and the basis of Spain’s greatness. The actions of the

ticularly active part in the struggle. C] in the Middle Ages] *Absent in AB* C] This is *ad homines*. ... in the struggle.] *Absent in AB*.

⁶⁵ C] For then why ... the Aragonites,” etc.] *Absent in A*.

⁶⁶ C] , just as Christianity is for the whole world] *Absent in A*.

⁶⁷ C] or one-sided] *Absent in AB*.

⁶⁸ C] an external struggle] a one-sided struggle **AB**.

⁶⁹ F] Mainly, but not exclusively, because Spain also had truly spiritual advocates of Christianity, for example, Ramon Lull, who dedicated his life to disseminating the true religion by rational persuasion. For this purpose, he first devised a special method, by means of which, it seemed to him, the dogmas of the faith could be imparted with the same obviousness as the truths of pure mathematics and formal logic. Later, he became a missionary and was killed in barbarian lands for peacefully preaching the Gospels.

⁷⁰ F] Let us note, as a curious coincidence, that in Byzantium in the East the first inquisition in matters of faith, namely against the Manichean heresy, was instituted already in the 4th century by a *Spaniard*, Theodosius. It is also curious that Albigensianism, against which the Dominican inquisition was originally directed, was a direct branch of the same Manichean heresy, for the sake of which nine centuries earlier Emperor Theodosius had appointed his “inquisitors.” Shortly before that, the sad historical role of the Spanish nation with regard to religious persecutions was foreshadowed by the fact that the first execution for faith (that of the Priscillian heretics) was inspired by the secular power of two Spanish bishops. As a completely unheard of action, it aroused protests both in Italy (St. Ambrose of Milan) and in France (St. Martin of Tours). C] already in the 4th century] *Absent in A* C] Shortly before that ... Martin of Tours.] *Absent in AB*.

“spiritual sword” against the *vanquished* Moors and Moriscos and against the defenseless Jews, was certainly treasonous to the spirit of Christ, a disgrace to Spain and the first cause of its downfall. The bitter fruits of the fatal historical sin did not ripen at once. Following⁷¹ its own path of external service to Christianity, namely by disseminating it over the ocean, Spain rendered a positive service to the common cause. The Spanish oceangoing knights and oceangoing pirates acquired the greater part of the New World for Christian culture, whatever its form. They saved an entire country (Mexico) from the horrors and terrors of satanic paganism,⁷² before which even the horrors of the Inquisition (which soon was abolished) pale. They established in South and Central America a dozen new states, which, participated, albeit weakly, in the general historical life of humanity. At the same time, Spanish missionaries (among them was a genuine saint, the Jesuit Francis Xavier) were the first to carry the Gospels into India and Japan. But Spain continued to consider its true vocation to be the defense of Christianity (as she understood it, the Catholic Church) from its closest and most dangerous enemies. In the fifteenth century, the Protestants [324] appeared in place of Islam. We can now see the Reformation as a necessary moment in the history of Christianity itself. However, such a view was impossible for the contemporaries of this revolution. People either became themselves Protestants or saw in Protestantism a hostile attack arising from the devil against Christian truth, embodied in the church. For Spain, whose entire history was connected with⁷³ the Catholic idea, there was no choice. All the forces of the mightiest power at the time were directed to suppressing the new religious movement. This work was incorrect in principle, shockingly bloody in execution and hopelessly unsuccessful in its outcome. The moral guilt of Spain, which found its national and “Christian” hero in the Duke of Alba,⁷⁴ is indubitable, and we can only point to extenuating circumstances in support of the Spaniards. They were sincerely, though blindly, convinced⁷⁵ that they stood for the universal good, for the most important and dearest good of humanity—for the one true religion, which godless apostates, afflicted with the spirit of evil, wanted to take away from the people. In their national struggle against Protestantism, the Spanish stood for a certain universal principle, namely, the principle of the external guardianship of the divine institution over humanity. It was a false and unfounded universalism, but its defenders believed in it sincerely and unselfishly and served it in spite of any egoism based in national politics or even in spite of personal egoism. At this time, the Spanish genius Ignatius

⁷¹ C] The struggle of ... not ripen at once. Following] However, behind this notorious reputation we do not forget that after its triumph over Islam following **AB**.

⁷² F] For an impartial exposition of the facts related here, see the book of A. Réville on the religion of the Mexicans and Peruvians. E] See Réville 1983.

⁷³ C] whose entire history was connected with] from the beginning of its history had lived only by **AB**.

⁷⁴ E] Duke of Alba] Fernando Álvarez de Toledo (1507/1508–1582), Spanish general and, for a time, administrator of the Netherlands.

⁷⁵ C] was incorrect in ... though blindly, convinced], incorrect in principle, shockingly bloody in execution and hopelessly unsuccessful in its outcome, was, however, quite honestly undertaken by the Spaniards. They were sincerely convinced **AB**.

Loyola founded the Jesuit order to combat Protestantism by peaceful means. Everyone can think whatever he or she likes about it, but it is impossible to take away one thing from it—its universal, international character. Thus, its national idea having emerged from the struggle with Protestantism, the Spanish did not separate it from the interests of the general good, as they understood it.⁷⁶ The unsuccessful external struggle for Catholicism, which undermined the Spanish government,⁷⁷ did not exhaust the spiritual forces of the Spanish nation. The moral energy, revealed in the defense of the general, though badly understood cause, found another, better ideal expression for itself. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Spain made significant national contributions to the general treasury of higher culture in the spheres of art, poetry and contemplative mysticism. In all of these, the Spanish genius concerned itself with objects that were important not for this nation alone, but for all, and its works were [325]national in character to the highest degree. They acquired this character naturally, without any forethought on the part of its creators. They undoubtedly were of worldwide interest⁷⁸ and supported the glory of Spain at a time when its external power was collapsing and its armed forces were suffering just defeats. Precisely during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Spanish cultural influence rivaled that of the Italians and not unsuccessfully, this despite the natural enmity that had been aroused in half of Europe against the cruel defenders of the old religion.

The highest⁷⁹ flowering of the *English* national spirit can, in short, be designated by five names: Bacon, Shakespeare, Milton, Newton and Penn.⁸⁰ That which is important and dear to all of humanity is connected with these names. All nations are indebted to England for them, and the claims and demands of exclusive nationalism have nothing in common⁸¹ with them. The people who created the national greatness of England did not even think of this. One thought about the true knowledge of nature and of the human being, about a better scientific method and system; another concerned himself with the artistic representation of the human soul, passions, characters and fate, not hesitating to borrow plots from foreign literature and to transfer the scene of action to other countries. The great leaders of the Puritan movement, who found a prophet of genius in Milton,⁸² thought, above all, of organizing life in accordance with the biblical ideal, which, in their opinion, was equally obligatory for all nations. These Englishmen did not hesitate to recognize as their *own* an ideal which was *Jewish* in its original manifestation, German in its Protestant form and carry it across an ocean.⁸³ The greatest representative of modern science with the

⁷⁶ C] Thus, its national ... they understood it.] *Absent in AB.*

⁷⁷ C] , which undermined the Spanish government,] *Absent in A.*

⁷⁸ C] They undoubtedly were of worldwide interest] They were necessarily of universal interest A] They undoubtedly were of universal interest B.

⁷⁹ C] highest] first A.

⁸⁰ C] Milton, Newton and Penn] Cromwell, Milton and Penn AB.

⁸¹ C] have nothing in common] are incompatible A.

⁸² C], who found a prophet of genius in Milton,] *Absent in AB.*

⁸³ C] and carry it across an ocean] *Absent in AB.*

English constitution of his mind discovered a universal truth about the physical world as a solid body containing what he called the “sensorium of the Deity”⁸⁴ as the principle of its unity.^{85, 86}

A vast world of scientific experience, open on all sides, a deep artistic humanism, high ideas of religion and civic freedom and a sublime conception of the physical unity of the universe⁸⁷—these are what the English nation created in the person of its heroes and geniuses. “England for the English” would be too little for them. They thought that the whole world was for the English, and they had a right to think this, because they themselves were for the whole world. The external dissemination of the English element corresponded to the dignity of its internal content. Certainly, British merchants looked out [326]and are looking out for their own interests. However, not all merchants would succeed in colonizing North America and form a great new nation on it. The United States was founded not on red-skinned Indians nor on Negroes, but on the English people and on English religious and political ideas—ideas of universal significance. Not just any merchants could firmly hold India and, finally, create a cultured Australia on quite savage soil.^{88, 89}

The culminating point (if not in terms of content, then by the inner intensity of its national life and the breadth of its external influence) in the national development of *France* is represented by the epoch (of the great Revolution and of the Napoleonic Wars), when the world historical significance of this country was expressed most clearly. Certainly, the rights of man and of the citizen proclaimed to the whole world turned out to be semi-fictitious. Certainly, the all-embracing revolutionary trinity: *liberté, égalité, fraternité* were realized in a rather strange way. However, in any case the enthusiastic passion of the nation for these universal ideas showed most clearly that it was foreign to a narrow nationalism. Did France want to be only “for the French” when it surrendered itself to a half-Italian⁹⁰ so that he, directing its forces, challenged the old order in the whole of Europe and introduced everywhere the universal principles of civic equality and of religious and political freedom? Apart from this epoch, France always distinguished itself by a universal sensitivity

⁸⁴ E] Cf. Newton 1952: 403. Newton does not explicitly use this expression commonly attributed to him.

⁸⁵ C] The great leaders of the ... principle of its unity.] There is no more external nationalism here than in the biblical ideas of Cromwell and Milton, who, if they had in mind some national element, it was only an ancient-Jewish one, but by no means English. A.

⁸⁶ C] The greatest representative ... of its unity.] *Absent in AB.*

⁸⁷ C] and a sublime conception of the universe] *Absent in AB.*

⁸⁸ F] Hindus who were taught in English schools are now beginning to talk (in English newspapers and in their own modeled on the English pattern) about the burden of English rule and of the need for national unification and liberation. Why did they not surmise this earlier? The fact is that they obtained such ideas as nationality, national spirit, national dignity, patriotism, solidarity, and development from the English alone. In spite of their ancient wisdom, they themselves could not come up with all these ideas during the course of their two and a half thousand-year history.

⁸⁹ C] finally, create a cultured Australia on quite savage soil] create on quite savage soil a cultured Australia **AB.**

⁹⁰ C] to a half-Italian] to Napoleon **A.**

and communicativeness⁹¹ of a special kind, by an ability and aspiration, adapting foreign ideas, to give them a finished and popular form and to put them back into circulation for the whole world. This peculiarity, which allows the history of France to serve as a vivid and accentuated résumé of general European history, is too striking and has been pointed out too often to make it necessary for us to linger on it.

[327] Having shown the great power of its national spirit in the Reformation, *Germany* has in modern times (from the middle of the eighteenth up to the middle of the nineteenth century) acquired in the sphere of higher culture—intellectual and aesthetic—the superiority which had belonged to Italy at the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of modernity. The universal character and significance of the Reformation, of the poetry of Goethe, of the philosophy of Kant and Hegel have no need of proof and clarification. Let us note only that for Germany as well as for Italy, the period of the highest spiritual blossoming of its national powers coincided with an era of political impotence and dismemberment.

The broad idealism of the *Polish* spirit, sensitive to foreign influences to the point of passion and enthusiasm, makes up its characteristic trait and is quite obvious. The universalism of the Poles earned them the reproach from narrow-minded nationalists of “treason to Slavdom.” However, anyone who is familiar with the luminaries of Polish thought—Mickiewicz, Krasinski, Tovianski, Slowacki—knows how the great power of the national genius showed itself in their universalism. As for our fatherland, the Russian national spirit up to now has been embodied most strikingly and forcefully not in the tsar who has forever destroyed our national exclusivity with a powerful arm, nor in the poet who had a special gift of “reincarnating” himself with all foreign geniuses while remaining entirely Russian.⁹² Peter the Great and Pushkin—these two names are enough to show that the dignity of our national spirit is found only in open intercourse with all of humanity and not in our alienation from it.⁹³

Without enumerating all the other nations, we will mention here only Holland and Sweden.⁹⁴ For the former, national glory and prosperity were the result of its ideological struggle for the faith against Spanish coercion, after which the small state did not isolate itself in its dearly procured independence but became an open refuge of free thought for all of Europe. Sweden manifested, in turn, its national significance when under Gustavus Adolphus its forces were devoted to serve the common cause of religious freedom against the politics of forced unification.

⁹¹ C] universal sensitivity and communicativeness] universality and expansiveness **AB**.

⁹² F] The well-known remark of Dostoyevsky, who was himself equally all-encompassing at the best moments of his creativity. E] See Dostoyevsky’s “Pushkin Speech” in Dostoyevsky 1960. C] *Entire footnote absent in A*.

⁹³ C] The broad idealism ... alienation from it.] *Absent in A*.

⁹⁴ C] Without enumerating all ... Holland and Sweden.] Of the smaller nations of Europe, we should mention here Holland and Sweden. **A**.

[328]V

The history of all nations—ancient and modern—that have had a direct influence⁹⁵ on the fate of humanity tells us one and the same thing. During the era that they flourished and prospered,⁹⁶ all of them assumed their significance and asserted their nationality not in itself, taken abstractly, but in something universal, *supranational*, that they believed in, and that they served and that they realized in their creativity, a creativity that was national in origin and mode of expression but quite universal in terms of its content and its objective results. Nations live and act not for themselves or for their material interests, but for the sake of their idea, i.e., for the sake of what to them is the most important thing of all and *by which they can be of service to the entire world, which needs it*. They live not only for themselves, but for all. What a nation believes and what it does on faith, it certainly recognizes as good *unconditionally*, not as its own good, but as good in itself, consequently for all, and it usually turns out to be such. The historical representatives of a nation can sometimes incorrectly understand this or that aspect of the national-universal idea they serve, and then their service turns out to be bad and unsuccessful. Philipp II and the Duke of Alba had a poor understanding of the idea of church unity. The Paris Convention had no better understanding of the idea of human rights. However, while a poor understanding passes, an idea remains. And only if it is actually rooted in the soul of a nation does the idea receive clarification in its new and better manifestations.⁹⁷

National creativity, i.e., what a nation actually accomplishes, is universal to the extent that the object of true, national *self-consciousness* is universal. A nation is not aware of itself abstractly, as some empty subject, and separately from the content and meaning of its life. It is aware of itself precisely in or with respect to what it does and wants to do, in what it believes and what it serves.

However, as history clearly shows, a nation does not set itself, taken abstractly, as the goal of its existence. That is, if it does not set its material interest separately from a higher ideal condition as a goal, then none of us has the right out of love for one's nation to separate it from the meaning of its existence and to place service to its material interests above moral demands. And **[329]**if the nation affirms itself by its true creativity and self-consciousness in the universal—in what is important for everyone or in which it is in solidarity with all, then how can the true patriot sever his solidarity with other nations, hating or despising foreigners for the sake of some alleged “benefit” to⁹⁸ his nation? If a nation itself sees its genuine good in a universal good, then how can patriotism posit the good of the nation as something separate from and opposed to everything else? Obviously, it will not be the ideal moral good that the nation itself desires, and this pseudo-patriot turns out to be opposed not to other nations, but to his own nation in its best aspirations. However, do national

⁹⁵ C] a direct influence] an influence **AB**.

⁹⁶ C] During the era that they flourished and prospered,] *Absent in A*.

⁹⁷ C] an idea remains. . . .and better manifestations] an idea remains only if it is actually rooted in the soul of a nation. **AB**.

⁹⁸ C] some alleged “benefit” to] the interests of **AB**.

hostility and antagonism exist? They certainly exist just as cannibalism once existed everywhere. They exist as a zoological fact, condemned by the better human consciousness of the nations themselves. Elevated into an abstract principle, this zoological fact weighs upon the life of nations, obscuring its meaning and crushing its inspiration, *because the meaning and the inspiration of an individual lies only in his connection and accord with the universal.*⁹⁹

Demanding the absolute application of the moral law without any regard for national differences, cosmopolitanism is right as opposed to false patriotism or nationalism, which upholds the predominance of animal instincts in nature over a higher national self-consciousness. However, if pursued consistently to the end, the moral principle does not permit us to be satisfied with this negative demand of cosmopolitanism.

Let the individual person be the immediate object of the moral relation. However, one of the essential peculiarities of this very person—a direct continuation and expansion of his individuality—is one’s own nationality (in the positive sense of character, type and creative force).¹⁰⁰ This is not only a physical fact, but also a psychological and moral trait. At the stage of development that humanity has now attained, that a given person is of a certain nationality is strengthened by one’s own self-consciousness and will. Therefore, nationality is an intrinsic and inseparable attribute of this person; for him or her, it is something dear and cherished¹⁰¹ to the highest degree. How [330] is a moral attitude to this person possible if we do not recognize the existence of what for that person is so important?¹⁰² The moral principle does not allow us to change an actual person, a living human being with inseparable and essential national characteristics into some empty, abstract subject arbitrarily removed from one’s particular traits. If we must recognize the personal dignity of this person, this obligation extends to everything positive¹⁰³ with which he or she connects one’s dignity. And if we love a person, then we must love that person’s nationality, which he or she loves and which he or she is a part of. This highest moral idea demands that we love all people just as we love ourselves. However, since everyone has a nationality (just as there is no nationality apart from separate individuals) and since this connection has already become a moral and intrinsic one and not solely physical, the direct logical conclusion from this is that *we should love all nationalities as we do our own.* This commandment affirms patriotism as a natural and basic feeling, as a direct obligation of a person to one’s nearest collective whole. At the same time, this feeling is freed from the zoological

⁹⁹ C] Elevated into an abstract ... with the universal.] *Absent in A.*

¹⁰⁰ C] one of the essential ... and creative force.)] one of the most important positive peculiarities is his nationality. **A]** the basic peculiarity is his nationality (in the positive sense of character, type and creative force). **B.**

¹⁰¹ C] cherished] important **AB.**

¹⁰² C] How is a moral ... is so important?] How can I stand in a moral relation to this person if I do not want to recognize the existence of what for him or her is so important? **AB.**

¹⁰³ C] If we must ... to everything positive] If I must recognize the personal dignity of this person, then I am obliged to recognize everything that is positive **AB.**

properties of national egoism or nationalism, becoming the basis of and the standard for a positive relation to all other nationalities in accordance with the unconditional and all-encompassing moral principle. The importance of this demand to love other nationalities by no means depends on the metaphysical issue of nations as independent collective entities. Even if a nationality existed only in the form of its visible individual representatives, it, in any case, constitutes *in them* a positive trait that can be valued and loved in foreigners just as well as in one's own countrymen. If such a relation actually becomes a rule, national *differences* are retained and even strengthened; they grow livelier, and only the hostile *divisions* and offenses that form a fundamental obstacle to the moral organization of humanity disappear.¹⁰⁴

The demand to love other nationalities as one's own does not signify a *psychological equivalence* of feeling, but only the *ethical equality* of the volitional relation: I should wish the same true good for all other nations as I do for my [331]own. This "love of kindness" is the same, because the true good is one and indivisible. Of course, such ethical love is connected with both a psychological understanding and an approval of the positive traits of all foreign nations. Once the moral will has surmounted senseless and ignorant national hostility, we begin to know and value foreign nationalities and we begin to *like* them. However, this "love of approval" cannot be identical with what we feel towards our own nation just as the most sincere love for one's neighbor (in accordance with the Gospel commandment), although ethically equal to the love for oneself, can never be psychologically identical with it. Just as one's *own* self, one's *own* nation invariably remains the best starting point. And with the elimination of this misunderstanding any serious objection to our principle, *love all other nations as one does one's own*, is eliminated.^{105, 106}

¹⁰⁴ C] This commandment affirms patriotism ... of humanity disappear.] This point of view eliminates both nationalism and cosmopolitanism, preserving what is positive in them. However strange this seems, it is a sign that humanity appears on the path leading to the realization of this ideal. A.

¹⁰⁵ F] I cannot take seriously the objection of one critic that equal love for one's own and for other nations is impossible, because in war one must fight for one's nation against others. It seems clear that the *moral norm* of international relations should be deduced not from the fact of war, but from something else. Otherwise, perhaps, we would have to recognize as the norm for personal relations such facts as, for example, the bloody fight between a certain artist and a government official, to which the newspapers recently devoted much attention. C] *Entire note absent in AB.*

¹⁰⁶ C] The demand to love other ... *own*, is eliminated.] *Absent in AB.*

[332]Chapter 15

The Penal Question from the Moral Point of View

In accepting the unconditional moral principle as the norm of all of our relations, we encounter no intrinsic, essential obstacle to applying the principle to international morality, i.e., to resolving the issue of how we *should* relate to foreigners, as such. Neither in the traits of this or that nationality nor in that of being a foreigner in general is there any moral limitation, owing to which we would have to think *in advance* that a given foreigner is a worse person than any of our fellow countrymen. Thus, there is no moral basis for national inequality. The general demand of altruism retains its full force here: Love another as you do yourself and another nation as you do your own. *International hostility* as a fact must be unconditionally condemned as simply contrary to the unconditional norm, as, in essence, anti-Christian.¹ Our proper or normal relation to other countries is only that which is simply demanded by the unconditional moral principle. If great difficulties, both psychological and historical, are encountered in carrying out this principle, then there are, on the other hand, no inner moral difficulties, complications or problems here. Difficulties appear, however, when instead of the morally indifferent fact of simply being a foreigner [333] we are concerned with a fact that undoubtedly belongs to the moral sphere, namely *criminality*.

The intension and the extension of the concept of criminality varies in its particulars over time and from one place to another. Although much that was earlier regarded as criminal no longer is so, the very trait of criminality, which once embraced

E] This chapter originally appeared in 1895 under the title “The Principle of Punishment from the Moral Point of View.” A footnote to the title there reads: “A chapter from my ‘Moral Philosophy.’ Legal questions are examined here only insofar as they are connected to the moral principle.” In **B**, this, the 12th chapter, spans pp. 390–428. Many passages in this chapter were also included in a separately published work, Solov’ev 1899a, that itself went through two editions in Solov’ev’s lifetime, the first in 1897 and the second in 1899. Clearly, then, Solov’ev held this topic to be of great importance. For an English translation of Solov’ev 1899a, see Soloviev 2000b: 131–212.

¹ F] Although historically connected with the fact of international hostility, this connection does not exhaust the problem of *war*. In addition to international wars, there have been civil wars, both of a religious and of a social sort, that are now taking place and can be expected to take place in the future. Therefore, the problem of war requires a special examination, and one of the following chapters will be devoted to it. C] *This entire note absent in AB.*

the criminal's family and gens, came to be understood at a certain stage of spiritual development as exclusively a personal trait. These historical changes, however, do not alter the essence of the matter. Regardless of the *alleged* criminality of various kinds in all human societies, there always have been, always are and always will be to the end of time real criminals, i.e., people with an evil will strong and resolute enough to realize it in practice whatever the price to the detriment of their neighbors and the security of the entire community. How should we treat such indubitably *evil* people? It is clear from the viewpoint of the unconditional moral principle that we should extend to them the demands of altruism definitively expressed in the Gospel commandments of love. However, the first question is how do we combine love for someone evil with love for the victim and, second, in what way can we *in fact* show our love for this evil person, this criminal, given his indubitably abnormal moral state? It is impossible for any of us to avoid these moral questions. Even if someone never personally happens to come across crimes and criminals, he surely knows from living in society that there exist very complex enforcement, judicial and penal organizations devoted to combating crime. In any case, he must determine his moral relation to these institutions, a relation that ultimately depends on how he regards crime and criminals. How *should* we view this matter from the purely moral viewpoint? In discussing this important question, we will begin with the simplest case, which is the foundation of all further complications.²

I

When one person injures another, for example when a stronger person beats someone weaker, a witness to this offense—if he [334] takes the moral point of view—experiences a *double* feeling and is motivated to act in two ways. First, he feels a need to *protect the injured party* and, second, to *reason with the offender*. Both of these needs spring from the same moral source: a recognition of the other's life and a respect for the other's dignity that rests psychologically on a sense of pity or compassion. We immediately pity this individual, who suffers both physically and mentally. The mental suffering, of which he is more or less aware, consists in the fact that his personal human dignity has been impugned. However, this external violation of the victim's human dignity is certainly connected with the inner degradation of the offender's dignity. Both require restoration. Psychologically, our feeling for the offended is very different from that aroused in us by the offender. The former is pure pity; whereas in the latter case outrage and moral indignation predominate. However, in order for this indignation to be moral it must not become an injustice toward the offender, a denial of his rights, even though his rights are (materially) of a different sort than those of his victim. The latter is entitled to be defended by us, whereas the offender is entitled to our guidance. The moral basis of these two relations (insofar as we are dealing with rational beings), though, is the same, namely, the unconditional value or dignity of the human individual, which

² C] In accepting the ... all further complications.] *Absent in AB.*

we have recognized in others as in ourselves. What occurs in a criminal offense is a double violation of this dignity, passive in the case of the victim and active in that of the offender. A moral reaction is aroused in us, a reaction,³ the essence of which in both respects is the same despite the difference and even contradiction in their psychological manifestation. Certainly in those cases in which the offense directly or indirectly results in physical suffering to the offended, *it* immediately evokes a stronger sense of pity, but, generally speaking, the offender, inwardly losing moral dignity, should be pitied to the highest degree. Whatever the case, the moral principle requires that we recognize the right of both to our help in order to restore the violated right in both cases.⁴

However, this very conclusion from the moral⁵ principle, which requires [335] (in the case of a crime, i.e., of an offense by a person against a person) a moral relation to both parties is still by no means universally recognized, and we have to defend it from two sorts of opponents. Some (and their opinion still predominates) recognize a right of the hurt or injured party (or society) only to defend or avenge, and the offender or criminal (after his guilt is proven) as (at least in practice) without rights, a passive object of retribution, i.e., to be completely suppressed or destroyed. "Hanging is too good for him," and "Live like a dog, die like a dog," are popular and sincere expressions of this viewpoint. Its direct contradiction of the moral principle and its incompatibility with even the slightest modicum of developed human sensibility (which, by the way, is expressed in the fact that the same people, or at least the Russian people, call criminals the *unfortunate ones*) explains and psychologically excuses the opposite extreme view, which is beginning to be disseminated in our time. The right of the offender to verbal persuasions alone is recognized, and no compulsory action towards him is acceptable. In practice, this amounts to eliminating the right of the injured party or society to a defense. Their safety depends upon the *success* of the persuasion, i.e., on something problematic over which no one has control and no responsibility. Let us examine closely these two contradictory doctrines, which for the sake of brevity we will call one the *doctrine of retribution* and the other the *doctrine of verbal persuasion*.⁶

II

In its support, the doctrine of retribution has a real explanation and alleged evidence. It is very important when analyzing it not to confuse one with the other. A beast under attack by another that seeks to devour it will, out of a sense of self-preservation, defend itself with its teeth and claws, if they are strong enough, or it

³ C] What occurs in a ... a reaction,] A violation of this dignity by someone towards another arouses in us a moral reaction, **A**.

⁴ C] in both cases.] in both cases. As we will see later, the true concepts of right, the state and the moral tasks of society logically follow from this moral point of view. **A**.

⁵ C] conclusion from the moral] *Absent in AB*.

⁶ C] Let us examine ... of verbal persuasion.] *Absent in A*.

will flee. No one will look here for a moral motive just as in the case of the physical self-defense no one would of a person whose natural means of defense are supplemented by or replaced with artificial weapons. However, a person, even a savage, does not usually live alone but belongs to some [336] social group—a gens, a clan, a gang. This is why when he meets an enemy the encounter does not end with a single instance of combat. A murder or some other offense incurred by one member of the group is felt by the entire group and arouses in that group a desire⁷ for vengeance. Since we have here a sense of pity for the victim, we must recognize the presence of a moral element. Undoubtedly, however, of predominant importance in this instance is the instinct of collective self-preservation, as it is in bees and other social animals. In defending the member, the gens or the clan defends itself. Avenging the member, it avenges itself. However, the offender's gens or clan is similarly motivated to defend him. Isolated clashes pass in this way into wars between entire societies. Homeric poetry has preserved for our eternal recollection this stage of social relations by immortalizing the Trojan War, which sprang from the personal injuries on Menelaus by Paris. The history of the Arabs before Mohammad is full of such wars. The concepts of crime and punishment, properly speaking, do not exist at this stage: The offender is here the enemy, who is to be avenged, not a criminal who is to be punished. The place of the future criminal justice system is occupied at this time by the universally recognized and unconditionally obligatory custom of *blood feud*. This, of course, applies to the offenses between members of different gentes and tribes. However, offenses of another kind, generally speaking, do not happen at this stage of social life. The bonds within close gentile groups are too strong, and the authority of patriarchal power is too imposing for a single individual to dare to rise up against them. It is almost as unbelievable as a conflict of a single bee with its entire hive. Certainly, people in the gentile way of life maintained their faculty of personal choice, which manifested itself in a few rare cases, but these exceptional instances were suppressed by the exceptional actions of the patriarchal power without provoking general measures. The situation changed with the transition to life in a state, i.e., when many gentes and tribes in one way or another for one reason or another or under duress united in a permanent way around a single common leader with more or less organized power and eliminated the autonomy of individual gentes and tribes, ending the custom of blood feud.

It is rather curious that philosophers and jurists from antiquity [337] down almost to the present have devised a priori theories about the origin of the state as if all actual states arose in some antediluvian period. This certainly can be explained by the extremely imperfect status of the historical discipline. However, what was still permissible for Hobbes and even Rousseau is unacceptable in contemporary thinkers. The gentile way of life, which all nations experienced in one way or another, presents nothing mysterious: The gens is a direct manifestation of a natural, blood bond.⁸ The problem, then, amounts to the transition from the gentile way of life to that of the state, and this can be the object of *historical observation*. It

⁷ C] a desire] a natural desire A.

⁸ C] The gens is ... blood bond.] The gens is only an extended family. A.

is enough to mention⁹ the transition of the disparate gentes and tribes of northern Arabia into a powerful Muslim state that was effected in the full view of history. Its theocratic character is no exception. Such was more or less also the case with all the other major states of antiquity. Let us recall how a state usually comes to be.¹⁰ A leader who is preeminent owing to his personal strengths—be it military or religious, but most often both together—led by an awareness of his historical calling and also by personal motives,¹¹ gathers around himself people from various gentes, or clans, forming with them a certain *inter-gens* nucleus.¹² Around this nucleus, entire tribes and gentes then assemble either voluntarily or through force, receiving laws and offices from the newly formed sovereign power and losing their independence to a greater or lesser degree. When we find in any social group a hierarchically organized central government with a supreme power at the top, a standing army, a financial system based on taxes and duties and finally laws enforced by penal sanctions, we recognize this group as having the genuine character of a state. All of these characteristic signs were evident in the Muslim community in the last years of Mohammad's life. It is remarkable that the history of the original formation of this state confirms social contract theory to a certain extent. All of the chief steps taken by the Arab prophet¹³ in this matter are marked by formal treaties beginning with the so-called "Oath of Women" and ending with the later conditions that he ordered at Mecca after his final victory over the Qureshite gens and their allied tribes.¹⁴ We should note [338] also that in all of these treaties the fundamental point is the abolition of the blood feud between tribes and gentes entering the new political union.

From this arises a distinction that did not exist earlier¹⁵ between public and private law: Concerning the laws of blood vengeance, as in other important respects, the collective interests of the group directly agreed with those of separate individuals. This was all the more so in that in a small social unit such as a gens or a clan all, or at least most, of the fellow members could personally know each other. In this way, all for one and one for all represented, generally speaking, something of real value. However, with the formation of the state the social group embraces hundreds of thousands or even millions of people, and a real personal relation between the parts and the whole becomes impossible. There is a clear distinction between public and private interests and between the corresponding areas of the law. Usually at this stage of development and in spite of our current legal concepts, such

⁹ C] mention] recall **AB**.

¹⁰ C] Let us recall how a state usually comes to be.] In general, government arises originally in this way. **A**] In general, government comes to be in this way. **B**.

¹¹ C] personal motives] ambition **A**.

¹² C] *inter-gens* nucleus.] inter-gens, or inter-tribal, nucleus. **AB**.

¹³ C] the Arab prophet] by Mohammad **A**.

¹⁴ E] For Solov'ëv's extended treatment of these matters, see his "Magomet, ego zhizn' i religioznoe uchenie" ["Mohammad, his life and religious teaching"] from 1896 in SS, vol. 7: 201–281 especially 273.

¹⁵ C] From this arises a distinction that did not exist earlier] A new phenomenon in the sphere of law is directly connected with this. Earlier there was no distinction **A**.

things as murder, robbery, and grievous physical injury are treated within private law.¹⁶ Earlier, in gentile life, all such crimes were considered as directly affecting the common interest and the entire gens sought vengeance against the perpetrator and his relatives. With the formation of a wider political union, this right and the obligation of blood vengeance was taken away from the gens but did not pass (in the old sense and scope) to the state. The new common authority, from which laws and government emanate, could not immediately enter into the interests of all its many subjects to such an extent as to protect them as if they were its own. The head of state cannot feel and act like a gentile elder. Here we see that in protecting individuals and property the state's authority is limited at first to the least oversight. Not only in cases of injury or other violence to a free person but even in those of murder the murderer or his family pays the family of the victim a monetary penalty, which is generally quite moderate, determined by mutual agreement (*compositio*).¹⁷ A listing of such fees (which differ depending on the individual's sex and other circumstances) fill all the old statute books or law manuals (e.g., the laws of the Salian Franks or our own *Russkaya Pravda*), which are monuments to a just established [339] life in a state (in a given nation). The direct and rapid transition from ruthless blood vengeance, often accompanied by many years of destructive wars between entire tribes, to simple monetary compensation is remarkable. However, from the mentioned point of view such a leap is quite understandable.

At this stage of the development of the state system only political crimes have, properly speaking, a criminal character.¹⁸ All the others, including even murder, are seen not as crimes, but as private quarrels.¹⁹

However, such an elementary bifurcation between public and private law cannot be sustained. A monetary fine for any offense committed by an individual does not satisfy the injured party (e.g., the family of the murdered victim) and does not deter the offender, particularly if he is rich, from further criminal activity. Under such circumstances, blood vengeance for private offenses, repealed by the state as contrary to its essence, actually resumes and threatens to eliminate the very reason for the existence of the state system. If everyone has to avenge offenses done to him, why should he bear the burdens imposed by a new political way of life? To justify its demands on private individuals, the state must actually accept to defend their interests. In order to abolish permanently the private right of blood vengeance, the state must transform it into a public right, i.e., take its execution upon itself. In this new, higher

¹⁶ C] private interests and ... treated within private law.] private interests and, corresponding to this, between public and private law. The former chiefly concerns war and diplomatic relations. The latter, in spite of our current legal concepts, concerns such things as murder, robbery and grievous physical injury. **A**.

¹⁷ C] , determined by mutual agreement (*compositio*)] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁸ F] The scope of this concept expanded and contracted depending on the historical conditions. In the Middle Ages, when the criminal character of a simple murder was not yet clear in the legal mind, a painful death penalty ensued from counterfeiting money, which was taken as a crime detrimental to all of society, violating the privileges of the state authority and was, in this sense, political.

¹⁹ C] At this stage ... but as private quarrels.] *Absent in A*.

stage, the solidarity of state authority with the individuals under it is expressed more clearly. The distinction between crimes committed directly against its authority (political crimes), and those simple ones, which affect only private interests, is still preserved, but only in terms of their importance and not in their essence.²⁰ Every free person becomes a citizen, i.e., a member of the state itself, which accepts the task of protecting the safety of every such person. Any breach of a citizen's safety is seen by the state authority as [340] an attack on its own right, i.e., as a hostile act against the social whole. All violence whatsoever directed towards an individual or property is seen not as a private offense, but as a violation of state law and therefore on a par with political crimes subject to the *state's retribution*.

III

The doctrine of retribution in criminal law, thus, has a historical foundation in the sense that criminal penalties, still in widespread use today, are a historical transformation of the primitive principle of vendetta. At first, a closer social unit, called the gens, avenged the wronged party; then the broader and more complex unit, called the state, did the avenging. At first, the offender lost all human rights in the eyes of the offended gens; then he became an object of punishment devoid of rights in the eyes of the state, exposed to retribution for violating its laws. The difference lies chiefly in the fact that in the gentile way of life the very act of revenge is executed simply. The offender in this case is killed like a dog. The consequences, however, can turn out to be very complex in the form of endless wars between tribes. In life within a state, on the other hand, the very act of retribution that the public authorities have taken on themselves, proceeds slowly and through various procedures, though without any further complications. The particular criminal now has no one sufficiently powerful to avenge him; he is defenseless against the power of the state.

However, from the indisputable fact that punishing criminals is an historical alteration of the vendetta, does it follow that we should support these punishments, support retribution? On the basis of history must the concept of revenge, i.e., repaying evil with evil and suffering with more suffering, ultimately define our relation to the criminal? In general, logic does not permit us to draw such conclusions from a genetic connection between two phenomena. As far as I know, not a single Darwinist in accepting the origin of the human being from lower animals deduces that we must be beasts. From the fact that the urban community of Rome was originally [341] created by a gang of robbers, no historian has yet concluded that the true principle of the Holy Roman Empire should have been²¹ to rob. With regard to our topic, once it is a matter of the *transformation* of the vendetta, what reason is there to consider this transformation *completed*? We know that the attitude of society and the law towards criminals has undergone very sharp changes. Ruthless gentile revenge

²⁰ C] The distinction between ... not in their essence.] *Absent in A.*

²¹ C] should have been] was A.

was replaced by monetary fines, and they gave way to “civil punishments,” which, while at first were extremely brutal, from the eighteenth century became more and more relaxed. There is not even a shadow of reason to claim that the limits of this relaxation have been reached and that the gallows and the guillotine, a life-sentence to hard labor and solitary confinement should remain forever in the criminal statutes of educated countries.²²

However, while historical progress obviously tends to restrict ever more the application of the principle of retribution or exact recompense leading finally to its elimination²³ from our legal attitude towards criminals, many philosophers and jurists²⁴ who support this principle have continued and still continue to present abstract arguments. Owing to their extremely inadequate nature, these arguments will certainly be the object of amazement and derision for posterity just as we are astonished by Aristotle’s arguments in support of slavery and by certain ecclesiastic writers in support of a flat Earth. In themselves, the pseudo-arguments employed by proponents of the doctrine of retribution do not deserve analysis, but since they are still repeated by authors who are, in general, worthy of respect²⁵ and the topic is of vital importance, they and their refutation should be repeated.

“A crime is a violation of a right; that right must be restored. Punishment, i.e., an equal violation of a right of the individual criminal, is carried out by a public authority (as opposed to private revenge) citing a specific law and which redresses the first violation, thus restoring the violated right.” This pseudo-argument revolves around the term “right.” However, the actual right is always *someone’s*. (There must be a *subject of the right*.) But “Whose right?” is the question here. Above all, it is apparently the right of the victim. Let us put an actual case in place of the abstract term. The peaceful shepherd Abel undoubtedly has a right to exist and enjoy all the pleasures [342] of life, but the evil-natured Cain comes along and effectively deprives him of that right by killing him. The violated right must be restored. To do this, the public authority appears and contrary to the direct warning of the Holy Scriptures (Genesis 4: 15) hangs the murderer. Is Abel’s right to life thereby restored or not? Since no one except the inmates of Bedlam would argue that the execution of a murderer revives the dead person, we must understand the word “right” here to mean not the right of the victim, but someone else’s. Another whose right is violated by a crime may be society itself, or the state.²⁶ All individual rights (e.g., that to life, to property, etc.) are guaranteed by the state. It vouches for their inviolability, placing them under the protection of its laws. A law prohibiting individuals from killing at their own discretion their fellow countrymen is rightfully enacted by the state. Consequently, a violation of it (through a murder) is a violation of a right of the state, and in executing the murderer restores the right not of the dead person, but

²² C] forever in the criminal statutes of educated countries.] without further mitigation in the criminal statutes of Christian nations. A.

²³ C] leading finally to its elimination] *Absent in A.*

²⁴ F] The former primarily in Germany, and the latter especially in France.

²⁵ C] by authors who are, in general, worthy of respect] *Absent in A.*

²⁶ F] Concerning the present subject, these two terms can be used interchangeably.

of the state and the significance of law.²⁷ What in this argument that is correct is of no concern to this issue. There is no doubt that once laws exist, consequences must follow from their violation, and upholding laws belongs to the state. However, the problem is not the general principle behind whether crimes, taken as violations of the law, can be punished. For in this respect all crimes are equal. If [343] the law in itself is sacred, as coming from the state, then all laws have this property to an equal extent. All laws equally express a right of the state, and all violations of the laws without exception are violations of this supreme right. The material difference between various crimes concerns only the interests²⁸ that are violated. On the formal side, with respect to what is *general*, i.e., the state *as such*, its authority and the law, each crime (of course, each sane crime) presupposes a will that disagrees with the law and rejects it, i.e., the criminal will. From this point of view, all crimes logically would require the same punishment. However, the variety of punishments for different crimes that actually exists in all jurisdictions obviously presupposes besides a general principle of punishability some other, specific principle that determines the special connection between *this* violation and *this* punishment. The doctrine of retribution sees this connection in the fact that the right violated by certain criminal acts is restored by a corresponding or *equal* counteraction. For example, the killer must be killed. Where, however, is the correspondence or equality? The most famous proponents of this doctrine present the matter as follows: A right is something positive. Let us call it + (a “plus”). A violation is something negative—(a “minus”). If a negative in the form of a crime takes place (e.g., the taking of a human life), then it should cause an equal negation in the form of punishment (the taking of the life of the murderer). Such a double negation, a negation of the negation, produces again a positive state, i.e., a restoration of the right: *A minus times a minus makes a plus*. It is difficult to be serious in view of such a “mind game.” Let us note, however, that the concept of *a negation of a negation* logically expresses a direct intrinsic relation between two opposing acts. For example, if the impulse of an evil will in a person is a “negation,” namely the negation of a moral norm,²⁹ then the opposing act of the will, which inhibits this impulse will actually be a “negation of the negation,” and the result will be positive—an affirmation of this person in a normal state.³⁰

²⁷ F] In the opinion of one critic, my assumption that a crime is necessarily a violation of *someone's* right is erroneous. Regardless of the subject of the law (be it individual or collective, private or public) and also independently of the moral norm, of the unconditional Moral Good, there exists supposedly right in itself as an independent objective essence and the proper goal of punishment consists, supposedly, of redressing this self-existent right. The critic wrongly thinks that this metaphysical guise of ancient Moloch is unknown to me. However, I have no reason to concern myself with it, since for a long time there has not been a single, serious criminologist who has defended it. It is only too clear that the term “right” conceptually is a relation between subjects conditioned by these or those practical moral norms and that consequently a subject-less and relation-less right is an *Unding*—a thought in which nothing is thought. C] *Entire note absent in AB* E] ancient Moloch] an ancient Semitic god to which child sacrifices were made. Cf. Lev. 18: 21; 2 Kings 23: 10. The term Moloch has come to mean extreme sacrifices.

²⁸ C] the interests] the private interests A.

²⁹ C] a “negation,” namely the negation of a moral norm] a “negation” (of the moral law) A.

³⁰ C] —an affirmation of this person in a normal state] *Absent in A*.

Likewise, if a crime, as the active expression of an evil will, is a negation, then the expression of the criminal's active repentance will be a negation of the negation (i.e., certainly not of the fact, but of the inner [344] cause that produces it). Again, the result will be positive—its moral rebirth. However, the execution of a criminal is, obviously, devoid of such significance. The negation here is directed (as in a crime) to something positive, namely a human life. In fact, we cannot possibly recognize that in executing the criminal the object of the negation was his very crime. For it is an irrevocably accomplished fact, and according to the remark made by the holy fathers God Himself cannot make what was accomplished, unaccomplished.³¹ However, what is negated here is not the evil will of the criminal. It is one of two things: Either he repented for his evil deed, and then there is no longer an evil will, or he is adamant to the end, which means that his will is incapable of being influenced. In any case, the external, violent action cannot exclude or alter the internal state of the will. If, therefore, the execution of the criminal actually negates not the evil will but the positive good things of life, then this again will only be a simple negation and not³² a “negation of the negation.” A single sequence of two simple negations cannot yield anything positive. The abuse of an algebraic formula gives the entire argument a frankly comic character. After all, in order that two minuses, i.e., two negative values, produce a plus it is not enough to put them one after another; they must be *multiplied*. However, what does it mean *to multiply a crime by a punishment*?³³

IV

The intrinsic absurdity³⁴ of the doctrine of retribution, of “avenging justice,”³⁵ is clearly seen in the fact that with a few exceptions, it does not have any relation to penal laws that now exist. Strictly speaking, there is only one case in which it seems applicable: the death penalty for murder. This is why the pseudo-arguments used to support this doctrine—the essence of which was given earlier—refer precisely only to this single case. Such is a bad reference³⁶ for a principle that claims to have universal significance. For those of us in Russia, where capital [345] punishment remains enforced only for certain political crimes, there is apparently no conformity even in this one matter. Where do we find the equal retribution—even if only the

³¹ E] Cf. Aquinas 2007: 139 (part 1, quest. 25, art. 4).

³² C] again will only be a simple negation and not] is only a simple negation and not a “double” one or A.

³³ F] Obviously, we can go no further here than addition (of the substantial results). We can add the corpse of the murdered person with that of the hanged murderer to obtain two corpses, i.e., two negative values.

³⁴ C] absurdity] error A.

³⁵ E] “avenging justice”] In addition to being found frequently in theological works, Hegel too speaks of “*die rächende Gerechtigkeit*” in his *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, § 104. See Hegel 2003: 131.

³⁶ C] reference] sign AB.

appearance of such—in a life sentence to hard labor for the crime of patricide or 12 years of hard labor for a simple murder out of some selfish motive? The best refutation of this doctrine is the fact that its use is found most in the criminal laws of several semi-savage peoples or in the laws in force during barbaric times, when, for example, a party guilty of a certain injury to another was subject to the same injury, or where a guilty party's tongue was cut out, for impudent speech, etc. Any principle whose application turns out to be incompatible with a certain level of educational³⁷ development is a principle to be condemned.

In the modern era, if I am not mistaken, abstract philosophers more than jurists have come out in defense of the doctrine of restoring a right by means of equal retribution. Jurists accept the equation of punishment with the crime only in a relative quantitative sense (the *measure* of punishment). That is, they demand that the more serious the crime the heavier the punishment, so that in general there should be a scale of punishments corresponding to the scale of crimes. However, the basis (and consequently the top) of the punitive scale remains open, and this is why the character of the punishments themselves can be whatever, ranging from inhuman cruelty to, on the contrary, extreme leniency. Thus, a scale of penalties existed in the jurisdictions where all or almost all simple crimes received only a monetary fine, whereas a more serious crime was meted a large fine and the murder of a man a harsher penalty than that of a woman, etc. On the other hand, in another place the crime of larceny resulted in hanging, and those who perpetrated more serious crimes received a qualified death penalty, i.e., death combined with various degrees of torture. What is immoral here, of course, is the very cruelty of the punishments and not their gradually increasing nature.

The important point for us in penal law is that although it can be seen as growing weaker, there is still³⁸ a tendency, that has not quite been eliminated, to preserve cruel punishments as much as possible. Not finding a sufficiently firm foundation in the pseudo-rational principle of a "restored right," this tendency seeks empirical support in [346] the principle of *deterrence*. In essence, this motive is always combined with that of retribution. The popular aphorism, "Who lives by the sword, dies by the sword," has always been accompanied and is accompanied by the supplement, "as a warning to others." It is impossible to say that this principle is unconditionally true even on a utilitarian and empirical basis. Certainly, fear is one of the important motives of human nature. However, it does not have a decisive significance.³⁹ The ever increasing number of suicides proves that death is not feared by many. Long periods of solitary confinement or hard labor, in themselves, can arouse more fear, but such means have no clear deterring effect. I will not dwell on these and other such well-known objections to the theory of deterrence (as, for example, the claim that the criminal always hopes to hide from justice or avoid punishment or that the enormous majority of crimes are committed under the influence of some passion, which smothers the voice of discretion). We can dispute the relative strength of all

³⁷ C] educational] mental and cultural **A**.

³⁸ C] that although it can be seen as growing weaker, there is still] *Absent in* **AB**.

³⁹ C] have a decisive significance] distinctly predominate in that nature **AB**.

of these considerations. The theory of deterrence can indisputably be refuted only on moral grounds: (1) fundamentally by its direct contradiction with the fundamental moral principle, and (2) by the fact that this contradiction forces the supporters of deterrence to be inconsistent and to reject, little by little,⁴⁰ the most effective and clear demands of theory out of moral considerations. Of course, here it is a matter of deterrence in the sense of a fundamental principle of criminal justice and not in the sense of only a psychological phenomenon,⁴¹ which naturally accompanies any means of resisting crime. Thus, even if we have in mind only the reform of criminals by means of educational suggestions, then on people of willful and self-absorbed perspective such tutelage, though brief and rational could avert criminal action and restrain them from crime. However, this obviously does not concern the theory that sees in deterrence not an indirect consequence, but the very essence and direct job of punishment.⁴²

The⁴³ moral principle asserts that human dignity must be respected in each person and consequently that it is impossible to treat anyone only as a *means* or *instrument* for [347] some use. However, according to the theory of deterrence the criminal being punished is seen only as a means for instilling fear in others and for maintaining the security of society. Certainly an element in the intent of penal law can be the benefit of the criminal: to restrain the criminal from committing a crime by way of a fear of punishment. However, once a crime is already committed this motive obviously disappears, and the punished criminal from this point of view serves only as a means for deterring others, i.e., for an end external to him, which directly contradicts the unconditional moral norm.⁴⁴ From this point of view, the deterring punishment would be permissible only as a threat, but a threat which never leads to action makes no sense. Thus, the principle of penal deterrence could be moral only if it is useful, and it can be useful in practice only if it is applied immorally.⁴⁵

In fact, the theory of deterrence completely dulled the edge of the principle, since all civilized and semi-civilized countries have eliminated cruel corporeal punishments⁴⁶ and the qualified death penalty. Clearly, if the aim of punishment is to deter both the criminal as well as others, then this means would be effective and expedient. Why then do the advocates of deterrence reject the genuine and only reliable means of deterrence? We must suppose because they consider such means to be immoral and contrary to the demands of pity and philanthropy. However, if this is so, then deterrence already ceases to be the *defining* principle of punishment. It is one of two things: Either the sense of punishment lies in deterrence, and then we must

⁴⁰ C] little by little] more and more **AB**.

⁴¹ C] phenomenon] fact **B**.

⁴² C] Of course, here it is ... job of punishment.] *Absent in A*.

⁴³ C] The] As is well known, the **A**.

⁴⁴ C] which directly contradicts the unconditional moral norm] which is directly immoral **A**.

⁴⁵ C] From this point of view, ... is applied immorally.] *Absent in A*.

⁴⁶ C] cruel corporeal punishments] torture **A**.

permit cruel⁴⁷ executions as the chief means for deterring crime, or the character of punishment is subordinate to the moral principle, and then we must completely reject deterrence as an essentially immoral motive.⁴⁸

[348]V

As a matter of fact, in contemporary penal legislation the most consistent forms of retribution and deterrence have disappeared. From the first of these points of view, what has disappeared are those forms which must be recognized as the most just⁴⁹ and from the second the most effective. This fact alone adequately shows that another, a moral point of view, has already penetrated into this sphere and has made significant conquests in it. Standing apart from this indubitable and rather rapid progress, there remains only the penal law of savage and barbarian peoples, such as the Chinese and Abyssinians, who are, by the way, on the eve of losing their isolated way of life.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, in all of our penitentiary systems, i.e., in Europe and America,⁵¹ there still remains much unnecessary violence and cruelty which can be explained only as a dead legacy⁵² of the obsolete principles of retribution and deterrence. The indefinite deprivation of freedom, hard labor, exile in remote countries under pernicious⁵³ living conditions, and the death penalty, which, although it has lost its grounding, is still stubbornly defended, etc. are all examples of this dead legacy.

Our moral awareness finds all of this systematically applied⁵⁴ cruelty to be revolting and changes our original feeling towards the criminal. Pity for the injured party or victim and the desire to defend him stirs us against the offender (the criminal). However, when society, which⁵⁵ is incomparably stronger than the single criminal, turns on this already disarmed person with its insuperable hostility and makes him the object of prolonged cruelty, *he* then becomes the injured party or victim

⁴⁷ C] then we must permit cruel] in such a case we must permit torture and cruel A.

⁴⁸ F] At the height of the movement against the cruelties of penal law in the eighteenth century, some writers tried to show that the torture of criminals was not only inhuman but also useless even for the sake of deterrence. They claimed that such torture did not prevent anyone from committing a crime. This opinion, if it were proven, would, in addition to its immediate intentions, deprive the theory of deterrence in general of any sense. In fact, if cruel executions were insufficient to deter criminals, it is clear that more mild punishments would deter such actions even less so. C] torture of criminals was] torture and the qualified death penalty was A.

⁴⁹ C] just] logical AB.

⁵⁰ C] Standing apart from this ... way of life.] *Absent in AB.*

⁵¹ C] and America] *Absent in AB.*

⁵² C] a dead legacy] an experience A.

⁵³ C] pernicious] impossible A.

⁵⁴ C] systematically applied] *Absent in A.*

⁵⁵ C] when society, which] when the entire society, which A.

stirring in us pity and a need to defend him.⁵⁶ Juridical consciousness and practice decisively rejected only the *consistent implementation* of the principles of retribution and deterrence, but not these very ideas.⁵⁷ The system of punishments that exists in civilized countries represents a senseless and lifeless arrangement between these worthless principles,⁵⁸ on the one hand, and certain demands of philanthropy and justice, on the other. In essence, [349] we find here only various degrees of the extenuated vestiges of the old brutality⁵⁹ with no encompassing idea, no guiding principle.

The fundamental question of moral awareness cannot be solved on the basis of such an arrangement.⁶⁰ Does the fact that a crime was committed deprive the criminal of his human rights? If it does *not* so deprive him, how can he be stripped of the first condition of any right, viz., the right to life, as is done with the death penalty? If the fact of committing a crime deprives the criminal of his natural rights, why are there all these juridical ceremonies with creatures who have no legal rights? Empirically, this dilemma is eliminated by the fact that there is supposed to be a distinction between the crimes, in which some are thought to deprive the criminal of human rights, while others are thought to *limit* these rights to some greater or lesser extent. However, not only do the principle and the degree of these limitations remain indefinite and alterable but the distinction itself between the two kinds of crime turns out to be arbitrary and unequal, depending on the time and the place. So, for example, in the West political crimes are not accompanied by the deprivation of human rights, while in Russia the earlier view is completely retained in that these crimes are considered to be the most serious.⁶¹ It would seem, however, that such an important fact as the transformation of a human being from an independent person replete with rights into passive material for punitive exercises⁶² must rest on some objective basis or definite principle, the same always and everywhere. However, in fact, it turns out that for such a transformation of a person into a thing a man in one country must commit a simple murder, while in another it is a murder under extenuating circumstances and in a third some political crime,⁶³ etc.

Such an utterly unsatisfactory state in this important matter, such a relaxed attitude to life and to the fate of people is deplorable both to the mind and to our conscience and already long ago evoked a reaction of our moral sense. Unfortu-

⁵⁶ C] a need to defend him] interest **A**.

⁵⁷ C] , but not these very ideas] *Absent in A*.

⁵⁸ C] a senseless and lifeless arrangement between these worthless principles] only a compromise between these principles **A**] a senseless and lifeless compromise between these worthless principles **B**.

⁵⁹ C] brutality] savagery **A**.

⁶⁰ C] an arrangement.] a compromise. **AB**.

⁶¹ C] So, for example, in ... the most serious.] *Absent in AB*.

⁶² C] exercises] measures **A**.

⁶³ C] and in a third some political crime] *Absent in A*.

nately, in many moralists it passes into the opposite extreme, prompting them⁶⁴ to reject the very idea of punishment in a broad sense, i.e., as a practical counteraction to crime. According to this recent⁶⁵ doctrine, any violence or force exercised on anyone is impermissible. This is why we should turn exclusively to verbal persuasion. The value⁶⁶ of this doctrine lies in **[350]** the moral purity of its intent, and its shortcoming is that its intent is not realized by the proposed means. The principle of adopting a passive attitude towards the criminal, rejects any form of compulsion in general, including not only retributive and deterrent measures (which is the correct approach),⁶⁷ but also measures to *prevent* crimes and impart education to criminals.⁶⁸ From this point of view the state has no right to incarcerate, even temporarily, a malicious murderer even though it is clear from the circumstances that he will continue his evil deeds. Likewise, it does not have the right to place the criminal into a more normal environment, even though it would be only for his own good.⁶⁹ In this view, it is impermissible⁷⁰ for an individual to use force to prevent a criminal from throwing himself on his victim. What is permitted is only to address him with words of admonition. In analyzing this doctrine, I will focus precisely on this example of individual opposition to the evil deed, since it is simpler and more fundamental.

Only in extremely rare and exceptional cases are words of rational persuasion effective on depraved people who deliberately⁷¹ commit crimes. To attribute such an *exceptionally* powerful effect, in advance,⁷² to one's own words would be a sickly conceit, but to limit oneself to verbal expression without confidence in its success, when it is a matter of mortal danger to a neighbor, would be inhuman. The offended person has a right to all possible help from us and not merely a verbal defense alone, which in the vast majority of actual cases could only be comical. Likewise, the offender has a right to all of our help to prevent him from doing what for him is an even greater disaster than it is for the victim. Only having *prevented* first his action can we then with a clear conscience *warn* him with our *words*. When seeing the raised arm of the murderer over the sacrifice, I grab it. Will my use of force be immoral? Undoubtedly, it will be force, but not only is there nothing immoral in

⁶⁴ C] such a relaxed attitude ... prompting them] such a relaxed attitude to life and to the fate of people, which our moral feeling finds unsatisfactory, compels some profound moralists, succumbing to the other extreme, **A]** such a relaxed attitude to life and to the fate of people is deplorable to our moral sense and evokes a natural reaction from the moral sense, which as usually happens produces the opposite extreme prompting some moralists **B.**

⁶⁵ C] recent] *Absent in A.*

⁶⁶ C] value] advantage **A.**

⁶⁷ C] (which is the correct approach)] *Absent in A.*

⁶⁸ C] to *prevent* crimes and impart education to criminals] of prevention **A**

⁶⁹ C] Likewise, it does ... for his own good.] *Absent in A.*

⁷⁰ C] is impermissible] is morally impermissible **A.**

⁷¹ C] deliberately] *Absent in AB.*

⁷² C], in advance.] *Absent in AB.*

it, on the contrary, it is *in all good conscience obligatory*, since it follows directly from the demands of the moral principle. Preventing a person⁷³ from committing a murder, I *actively* respect and preserve his human dignity, which, if his intentions are carried out, he significantly threatens to lose. It would be strange to think that the very fact [351] of applying this force, i.e., the application of the muscles in my hand to the muscles in the murderer's hand, with the consequences that necessarily follow from this,⁷⁴ contains something immoral. If it were, then it would be immoral to rescue someone drowning in water, for it cannot be done without a great exertion of muscle power and without some physical suffering to the saved individual. If it is permissible and morally obligatory to rescue a drowning person from the water, even if this person resists my efforts, then it is even more so to drag the criminal away from his intended victim even though there are in this case scratches, bruises and even dislocations.⁷⁵

There are two possibilities. The first is that the criminal we have stopped has not yet lost his human feelings, and then, of course, he will only be thankful that he has been saved from sin in the nick of time. He is no less thankful than is the drowning person rescued from the water. That is, in this case the force that he suffered is accomplished with his own taciturn agreement. There was no violation of his rights, and so there was, properly speaking, no force,⁷⁶ since *volenti non fit injuria*.⁷⁷ The second possibility is that the criminal has lost his human feelings, that he is dissatisfied with being prevented from slaughtering his victim. However, it would be the height of absurdity to address a person in such a state with words of rational persuasion. It would be like talking with a person who is dead drunk about the benefits of abstinence instead of throwing cold water on him.

If the very fact of physical force, i.e., the application of strong-arm tactics, were something wrong or immoral, then, of course, the use of this wrong means, even with the best of intentions, would be impermissible. It would be a recognition of the immoral⁷⁸ rule that the end justifies the means.⁷⁹ To counteract evil with evil is impermissible and useless. To hate the evil-doer for his evil deed and therefore to *avenge* him is [352] moral childishness. However, if *without hatred* of the evil-doer, I prevent him, for his own good, from committing a crime, where is the evil in this? Since there is nothing wrong in the use of strong-arm tactics in itself, the moral or immoral character of its application is decided in each case by the intention of the

⁷³ C] Preventing a person] Because preventing a person **AB**.

⁷⁴ C] , with the consequences that necessarily follow from this,] *Absent in A*.

⁷⁵ F] However, what if, while holding the murderer, we accidentally in the ensuing struggle cause him a more serious injury and even death? This would be a great misfortune for us, and we will grieve about it, just as we do an accidental sin. In any case, though, unexpectedly killing a criminal is less a sin than were we arbitrarily to allow the intentional murder of an innocent person. C] arbitrarily] *Absent in A*.

⁷⁶ C] and so there was, properly speaking, no force] *Absent in A*.

⁷⁷ F] "To a willing person, no injury is done," i.e., an action done to someone willingly cannot be a violation of that other person's rights.

⁷⁸ C] immoral] *Absent in AB*.

⁷⁹ C] the means.] the means—a principle which true morality firmly condemns. **AB**.

person and on the merits of the case. Rationally used for the actual good of one's neighbors, understood both morally and materially, a strong-arm tactic is a *good* instrument and not at all bad. Its use is not prohibited, but is directly *prescribed* by the moral principle. Perhaps there is a thin but completely precise and clear line here between the moral and the immoral use of physical coercion. The whole point is that in counteracting evil how do we see the evil-doer? Do we retain a human, moral attitude towards him? Do we keep in mind what is his own good? If we do, then in our necessary use of force there is obviously nothing immoral, no trace of retribution or cruelty. Essentially, our use of force will be simply an unavoidable condition of our helping him, just as a surgical operation or imprisoning a violent madman.

The moral principle prohibits us from taking a person only as a means for any other end whatever (i.e., including one's own good). Therefore, if in counteracting a crime we see the criminal only as a means for the defense of or to satisfy a victimized individual or society, then we act immorally even if our motive was unselfish pity for the victim and genuine concern for the public safety. From the moral point of view, this is still not enough. Compassion for both is needed, and if we follow this, if we actually have in mind their common good, then reason and conscience will suggest to us the extent and the forms of physical compulsion that are necessary here.

Our conscience ultimately decides moral issues, and I boldly suggest each of us turn to our inner experience (an imaginary one, if no other). In which of these two cases does our conscience reproach us more: When we have the possibility of preventing an evil deed, passing it by indifferently, saying a few useless words; or actually [353] preventing the deed even at the price of *some* physical damage? Everyone understands that in a *perfect society* there must be no compulsion, but surely this perfection must first be *achieved*. It is quite clear that to grant evil and insane people complete freedom to exterminate normal people is by no means the correct path to realize the perfect society. What is desirable is not freedom for evil, but the organization of the moral good. "However," modern sophists say, "society has often taken as evil what later turned out to be morally good and prosecuted innocent people as criminals. Hence, penal law is nowhere useful, and we need to reject any and all compulsion." I did not invent this argument. I have heard and read it many times. By such logic, the erroneous astronomical system of Ptolemy is a sufficient reason to abandon astronomy, and from the errors of the alchemists we could conclude that chemistry is worthless.⁸⁰

It is incomprehensible, it would seem, how, in addition to the explicit sophists, others of a different mind-set and character⁸¹ can defend such an untenable doctrine. But the fact is that its genuine foundation lies, as I understand it, not in the realm of ethics but in mysticism. The principle thought here is: "What seems to us to be evil may not be evil at all. The Deity or Providence knows better than we do of the true connection between things and how to deduce the actual moral good from

⁸⁰ C] What is desirable is ... chemistry is worthless.] *Absent in A.*

⁸¹ C] in addition to the ... and character] people with a considerable intellect and a high moral character A.

the apparent evil. We ourselves can know and value only our inner states and not the objective meaning and effects of our own actions and those of others.” I must confess that to the religious mind this view looks very tempting, but it is deceptive. The veracity of any view is checked by whether it can be logically and completely maintained without falling into contradictions and absurdities. The mentioned view does not meet this test. If our ignorance of all the objective consequences of our own actions as well as those of others were a sufficient reason for refraining to act, then in this case we should not oppose our own passions and evil inclinations. Who knows what beautiful consequences the all-good Providence can extract from someone’s licentiousness, drunkenness, rage towards a neighbor, etc.?

For example, take someone who for the sake of abstinence refrains from going to a tavern. However, let us suppose he yields to his inclination, [354] goes there and on the way back finds a half-frozen puppy. At the time, being emotionally inclined, he picks it up and takes care of it. This puppy might one day become a big dog and save a girl from drowning in a pond, a girl who later becomes the mother of a great man. Actually, however, as a consequence of his inappropriate abstinence, which thwarted the plans of Providence, the puppy freezes to death, the girl drowns and a great man is doomed to remain forever unborn. Another person, prone to anger, wants to slap her interlocutor but thinking it wrong to do so instead resists. Let us assume, however, she does not resist, but he turns the other cheek, which touches her heart much to the triumph of virtue, and the conversation ends in nothing. The standpoint that unconditionally rejects any forcible counteraction to evil or to the defense of one’s neighbors essentially rests on such an argument. Let us suppose someone forcibly saves the life of a person by disarming a robber who attacked this other person. However, later the saved person becomes a terrible villain, worse even than the robber. Does this mean it would have been better for the saved person not to have been saved? Precisely the same disappointment could have arisen if the saved individual had been menaced not by a robber but by a rabid wolf. Why not? Does no one need to be defended from wild animals? Moreover, if I save someone in a fire or from a flood, then it can also easily happen that those saved will then be extremely unhappy or turn out to be terrible villains. It would have been better for them had they burned to death or drowned. Does this mean that no one in trouble need be helped? But surely to render active⁸² assistance to a neighbor is a direct and positive⁸³ moral demand. If the obligation to love one’s fellow human being is dropped owing to the fact that the actions suggested by this feeling *could* have evil consequences *unknown* to us, then for this reason why not drop altogether the obligation to abstain from drink and every other one? They too can move us to actions, the consequences of which could turn out to be disastrous, as in these cited examples. But if what appears to us to be morally good leads to evil, then this also means that, vice versa, what appears to us to be evil can spawn the morally good. So, do we simply do what is evil so that the moral good will subsequently arise? [355]Fortu-

⁸² C] active] *Absent in AB.*

⁸³ C] and positive] *Absent in AB.*

nately, this entire⁸⁴ point of view annuls itself. A series of unknown consequences can go further than we think. Thus, in my first example when having conquered his alcohol addiction Mr. X thereby indirectly prevented the future birth of a great man, how do we know that this great man would not cause great disasters to humanity? In such a case, it would be better had he not been born. Consequently, Mr. X constrained himself splendidly in remaining at home. Likewise, we do not know what the further consequences would be should virtue triumph as a result of a generously bestowed slap. It is quite possible that this act of extreme generosity would later result in spiritual pride, worse than all other sins, and destroy this person's soul. If this should turn out to be the case, Mr. Y did well in forcibly constraining his anger and preventing the appearance of generosity in his companion. In general, we have the same right to make any sort of assumption about the possibilities of both cases, since we know nothing for certain. However, from the fact that we do not know what the consequences of our actions might be it does not follow that we should refrain from acting at all. Such a conclusion would be correct if, on the contrary, we knew for sure that these consequences were evil. However, since they can be equally evil or good this means we have as much reason (or, more accurately, as many lack of reasons) for acting as for not acting.⁸⁵ Therefore, all of these concerns over the indirect results of our actions can be of no practical value. In order for them actually to have a decisive effect on our lives we would need to know not just the next links in this series of consequences. Beyond the closest links, we always have the right to presuppose further ones of the opposite character that annul our conclusions. Therefore, we would need to know the *entire series of consequences* all the way to the⁸⁶ end of the world, and this is beyond our grasp.

Thus, our actions or refrains from acting must be determined not by considering their possible but unknown indirect consequences, but by motives that *directly* result from the positive prescriptions of⁸⁷ the moral principle. This is true not only from the properly ethical point of view but also [356] from the mystical. If everything is ascribed to Providence, then certainly it is not outside Providential knowledge that human beings possess reason and a conscience, which suggest to us the direct moral good we need to do in each case, independent of any indirect consequences. If we believe in Providence, then we also certainly believe in the fact that it will not allow someone's actions, consonant with reason and conscience, that could definitely have bad consequences. If we are aware that to intoxicate ourselves with strong drink is contrary to human dignity, or is immoral, then our conscience will not allow us to consider whether in an intoxicated state we could do something that later could lead to good consequences. Likewise, if from purely moral motives, without malice or revenge, we prevent a robber from killing a person, then it would

⁸⁴ C] entire] *Absent in A.*

⁸⁵ C] as for not acting.]. That is, from this point of view we cannot know whether it is better for us to act or not to act. **A.**

⁸⁶ C] the way to the] the way to and at the **AB.**

⁸⁷ C] the positive prescriptions of] *Absent in AB.*

not even occur to us whether anything bad would come from this and whether it would not be better to allow the murder.

Thanks to reason and our conscience we have complete confidence that carnal passions—drunkenness and debauchery—are in themselves bad and that we should abstain from them. On the basis of the same reason and conscience, we have complete confidence that active love is good in itself and that one must act in the spirit of such love, i.e., really help our neighbors and defend them from the elements of nature, from wild beasts and also from evil and crazy people. Thus, if someone motivated purely by love for one's fellow human being snatches the knife from a murderer's hand and saves this person from a superfluous sin and the intended victim from a violent death, or if someone uses physical force to prevent someone with a contagious disease from freely spreading it on the street, one's conscience and the general consensus will always justify this action as in fact fulfilling the moral demand to help everyone as much as possible.

Providence certainly derives moral good from our evil, and from our moral good It draws an even greater moral good. Most importantly, though, this second sort of good is obtained with our direct and active participation, whereas the moral good that is derived from our evil is not our concern and does not belong to us. It is better to assist than to be a purely passive instrument⁸⁸ of the all-good Providence.

[357]VI

Punishment, as a *detering retribution* (the typical form of which is the death penalty), cannot be justified from the moral point of view, since it denies what is human in the criminal, deprives him of the right to existence and⁸⁹ moral re-birth inherent in each person and makes him a passive instrument of another's security. Likewise, however, what is not justified from the moral point of view is an indifferent⁹⁰ attitude towards crime, leaving it without a counteraction. The rights of the offender to a defense would not be taken into account nor those of the entire society to a secure existence. Everything is made to depend on the arbitrary will of the worst people. The moral principle demands a real counteraction to crime. It defines this counteraction (or punishment in the broad sense of the word not to coincide with the concept of retribution) as *a legitimate means of active love for one's fellow human being, which legally and forcibly restricts external manifestations*⁹¹ *of an evil will not only for the sake of public safety and its peaceful members but certainly also in the interests of the criminal himself.* Thus, the punishment, true to its concept, is something multifaceted, but its various sides are equally conditional upon the general moral principle of love for one's fellow human being, which includes both

⁸⁸ C] a purely passive instrument] the simple material **AB**.

⁸⁹ C] existence and] *Absent in A*.

⁹⁰ C] indifferent] passive **A**.

⁹¹ C] *external manifestations*] *a manifestation A*] *manifestations B*.

the offender as well as the victim. The one who suffers from a crime *has a right* to protection and the possibility of recompense. Society *has a right* to security. The criminal *has a right* to instruction and reform. Opposition to crime in accordance with the moral principle must realize, or in any case intend, the equal realization of these three rights.

The protection of the individual, the security of society and the furtherance of the good of the criminal himself demands, above all, that someone guilty of a crime be deprived of freedom for some period of time.⁹² If it is rightfully in his own interest as well as that of his family that a spendthrift be deprived of freedom to manage his assets, then it is all the more just and necessary that a murderer or child molester be deprived of freedom to engage in his activities. The deprivation of the criminal's freedom is important particularly [358] *to break* the development of the criminal's will, to provide an opportunity for him to come round and change his mind.

At the present time, the fate of the criminal is ultimately decided by a court, which not only determines his guilt but also prescribes his punishment. However, with the active and progressive elimination of retribution and deterrence from penal law, the concept of punishment in the sense of a *predetermined beforehand* (and in essence *arbitrary*) measure must also disappear. The consequences of the crime for the criminal must be found in a natural and inner connection with his actual state. Having established the defendant's guilt, the court must then determine the type of crime, the degree of the criminal's responsibility and his possible danger to society. That is, the court must make⁹³ a diagnosis and prognosis of the moral illness. To prescribe, however, the unalterable means and duration of the treatment is contrary to reason.⁹⁴ The course and the methods of treating the disease must vary in response⁹⁵ to the changes in its progression, and the court must leave this matter to the prison system into whose authority the criminal passes. This idea, which until recently would have seemed to be an unheard of heresy, has recently received its rudimentary implementation⁹⁶ in several countries (e.g., Belgium and Ireland), where *conditional sentences* are permitted. Although sentenced to a definite punishment, the criminal, in certain cases, actually serves it only after repeating the same crime. If he does not relapse, he remains free, since his first crime is regarded as accidental. In other circumstances, the conditionality of the sentence means that the term of the prison confinement is reduced in accordance with the subsequent behavior of the criminal. These conditional sentences constitute a step of enormous fundamental importance in the criminal process.⁹⁷

⁹² C] for some period of time] *Absent in A.*

⁹³ C] must make] must, like a physician, make **A.**

⁹⁴ C] reason.] the nature of things. **A.**

⁹⁵ C] vary in response] vary, as a physician does, in response **A.**

⁹⁶ C] received its rudimentary implementation] been implemented to a certain degree **B.**

⁹⁷ C] This idea, which ... criminal process.] *Absent in A.*

VII

There was a time when the mentally ill were treated like beasts that had to be subdued: They were chained, beaten with sticks, etc. Only 100 years ago (and even less), this was considered completely in accordance with the order of things. Now, we recall this in horror. Since the historical process moves all the more faster [359]and faster, I still hope to live to the time⁹⁸ when our present penal system and system of hard labor will be seen in the way everyone now looks at old psychiatric institutions with their iron cells for the sick. Despite its indubitable successes in recent years, the present prison system is still to a significant degree determined by⁹⁹ the ancient conception of punishment as torment, deliberately applied to a criminal according to the principle¹⁰⁰ “He gets what he deserves.”

According to the true sense of punishment, its positive aim with respect to the criminal is not his physical torment but his reform or to cure his moral disease. This idea has already for a long time been accepted by various writers (primarily by theologians, partly by philosophers but only by a few jurists). It evokes resolute opposition from two sides: jurists and a well-known school of anthropologists. The jurists maintain that to reform the criminal means to intrude into his inner world and that neither society nor the state has a right to do this. However, there are two misunderstandings here. In the first place, the task of reforming criminals represents, in the analyzed respect, only one of the opportunities¹⁰¹ where society (or the state) ought positively to influence its, in some sense, needy and therefore disenfranchised members. Rejecting such an influence in principle as an intrusion into the inner world, we would have to deny¹⁰² the public education of children, the treatment of the insane in public hospitals, etc.

Where is the intrusion into an inner world? In fact, the criminal by the mere fact of committing a crime *has revealed or laid bare* his inner world and needs the reverse influence in order to get within the normal bounds. This objection is particularly strange in that it recognizes society as having a right to place a person in *corrupting* conditions that lead to his or her corruption (which even these jurists do not deny of today’s jails and hard labor),¹⁰³ but it denies society the right and the obligation to place a person in conditions that will make him or her moral.

The second misunderstanding is that the reform is understood as an external imposition of some ready-made moral principles. Why, however, make ineptitude a principle? Of course, for the criminal, who in general is capable of reform, it is chiefly *self-reformation*, while external [360] assistance should, strictly speaking,

⁹⁸ C] I still hope to live to the time] perhaps we will live to see the time A.

⁹⁹ C] determined by] connected with A.

¹⁰⁰ C] the principle] the popular principle A.

¹⁰¹ C] represents, in the analyzed respect, only one of the opportunities] represents not the sole instance A.

¹⁰² C] to deny] to go further and reject A.

¹⁰³ C] (which even these ... hard labor),] (which today’s jails and hard labor can be) and is not denied by jurists, A] (which today’s jails and hard labor are) and is not denied by jurists, B.

only put the person into the most favorable conditions to do this, to help him and to support him in this internal process.

Anthropologists object, maintaining that criminal propensities are innate and therefore incorrigible. That there are hereditary criminals and born criminals can be regarded as indubitable. That among them there are incorrigible ones is rather hard to deny. However, to maintain that all or even the majority of criminals are incorrigible is completely arbitrary and does not deserve a critique. If we can admit only that some criminals are incorrigible, then no one has the opportunity and right to say in advance with certainty whether a given criminal belongs among these. Therefore, *all of them* should¹⁰⁴ be placed in the most favorable conditions for possible reformation. The first and most important condition is certainly that penitentiary institutions should be headed by people capable of such a high and difficult task—the best jurists, psychiatrists and people with a religious vocation.¹⁰⁵

Public guardianship over the criminal by competent people assigned with the job of his possible reformation is the sole concept of “punishment.” It is the positive counteraction against crime allowed by the moral principle. A penitentiary system based on this would be more just and more loving to one’s neighbor than the present system¹⁰⁶ and undoubtedly be more effective.

¹⁰⁴ C] should] must **AB**.

¹⁰⁵ C] The first and most important ... religious vocation.] Of course, the implementation of the indicated principle is connected with a fundamentally changed view on much that was considered and still is considered criminal. It also supposes important transformations of the court and the penitentiary institutions. Moreover, that the latter are undoubtedly changing in a way corresponding to the view expressed here serves as the best confirmation of its accuracy. **A**.

¹⁰⁶ C] than the present system] *Absent in* **AB**

[361]Chapter 16

The Economic Question from the Moral Point of View

I

Let us assume people and nations learned to appreciate the national peculiarities of others as they do their own. Furthermore, let us also assume the individual criminal elements were reformed as much as is possible through re-education and rational supervision, from which all vestiges of criminal savagery were completely eliminated. Even with such moral solutions to the national and criminal questions¹ an important cause of both crime and hatred of other nationalities, namely, the economic cause, would still remain. What is the chief reason behind the American hatred of the Chinese? Certainly, it is owing neither to their hair nor their Confucian morality. Rather, the hatred stems from a dangerous rivalry in the material sphere. The reason Chinese workers in California are persecuted is the same as why Italians are beaten in the south of France, Switzerland and Brazil. These feelings, like that against the Jews—whatever their deepest reason may be—explicitly rest upon and find their obvious explanation² in economic considerations. Additionally, crimes against individuals do not arise from, but for the most part are nourished and supported by, an environment of poverty, excessive physical work and the savagery that is inevitable in such an environment. For this reason even the most rational and humane penal system would in general have little impact³ on the characters of individual criminals. Certainly the negative impact⁴ of contemporary humanity's economic conditions⁵ on national and criminal issues is a result of the fact that these conditions [362]in themselves are a moral ailment. Their abnormality is situated in the economic sphere itself. More and more, there appears here a hatred between social

E] In **B**, this, the 13th chapter, spans pp. 429–483.

¹ C] moral solutions ... and criminal questions] *Absent in AB*.

² C] obvious explanation] plausible justification **B**.

³ C] in general have little impact] be in general only a palliative **B**.

⁴ C] impact] influence **B**.

⁵ C] conditions] circumstances **B**.

classes because of possessions, a hatred that threatens to become an open struggle⁶ to the death in many countries of Western Europe and America.

For someone adopting the moral point of view, it is just as impossible to share in this socio-economic hatred as it is in the hatred between nations and races. Yet at the same time it is impossible for this person to remain indifferent to the material position of one's neighbors.⁷ The elementary moral feeling of pity, which received its highest sanction in the Gospels, demands that we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty⁸ and provide warmth to those who are cold.⁹ This demand certainly does not lose any of its force when those who are hungry and cold number not just a few, but in the millions. If I *alone* cannot help these millions, and consequently am not obligated to do so, then I can and should help them *along with others*. My personal obligation becomes a collective one—not someone else's, but my own. It becomes a broader obligation as a participant in the collective whole and its general task.¹⁰ The very fact of economic suffering shows that economic relations are not tied to the principle of the moral good as they should be. They are not morally organized. The entire pseudo-scientific school of economic anarchists and conservatives has rejected outright and still¹¹ rejects, although without its earlier self-confidence,¹² all ethical principles and any organization dealing with economic relations. Its dominance has contributed in no small degree to the emergence of revolutionary anarchism.¹³ On the other hand, the numerous varieties of socialism, not just the radical ones but also the conservative,¹⁴ more reveal the presence of the disease than they represent a real means to cure it.

The bankruptcy of orthodox (liberal or, more precisely, anarchistic)¹⁵ political economy is due to the fact that it *separates* in principle the economic sphere from the moral. The bankruptcy of any socialism is due to the fact that it more or less completely *confuses*, or incorrectly identifies these two different, though inseparable, spheres.

⁶ C] struggle] war **B**.

⁷ C] Let us assume ... one's neighbors.] *Absent in A*.

⁸ C] , give drink to the thirsty] *Absent in A*.

⁹ E] Cf. Matthew 25: 35.

¹⁰ C] general task.] general task as a member and servant of my state. **B**.

¹¹ C] economic anarchists and conservatives has rejected outright and still] anarchists **A**] economic anarchists rejected outright and still **B**.

¹² C] , although without its earlier self-confidence,] *Absent in AB*.

¹³ C] degree to the emergence of revolutionary anarchism.] degree to intensify the struggle between the social classes. **A**.

¹⁴ C] conservative] pseudo-conservative **A**.

¹⁵ C] (liberal or, more precisely, anarchistic)] *Absent in A*.

[363]II

Any practical expression of something outside its proper connection or correlation to everything else is essentially immoral. So the claim that a particular, conditional, and therefore contingent activity by itself is an unconditionally independent and integral sphere of life is theoretically speaking false and practically speaking immoral. It can yield only suffering and sin.¹⁶

To see a human being as merely an economic actor¹⁷—a producer, an owner and a consumer of material goods—is a false and immoral point of view. The functions just mentioned by themselves have no¹⁸ significance for humans and do not express in any way our essence and dignity. Productive labor, the possession and utilization of its results represent one aspect of human life, one sphere of our activity, but the truly human concern¹⁹ is with *how* and *why* human beings act in this particular sphere.²⁰ Just as a free play of chemical processes can take place only in a lifeless corpse whereas in a living body such processes are connected and determined by the organism's goals,²¹ so the free play of economic factors and laws²² is possible only in a dead and decomposing society. In a living society with a future, the economic elements are connected and determined by moral goals. To proclaim "*laissez faire, laissez passer*,"²³ is to say to a living society "Die and decompose!"

Of course, underlying the entire economic sphere is something simple and unavoidable, something that does not follow from the moral principle by itself—the need to work in order to support one's existence. There is not now nor has there ever been such a brutish time in the life of humanity when this simple material²⁴ necessity was not complicated by a moral issue. Necessity forces a half-animal savage to earn his livelihood, but while doing so he can either think of himself alone or he can also include the needs of his spouse and children. If the hunt proves to be unsuccessful, he can share his sparse prey with them, remaining half-starved himself. Or he can keep everything for himself, leaving them to the mercy of fate. Or finally, he can kill them in order to eat their flesh. Whichever [364] course of action he chooses, however, hardly a single orthodox practitioner of the science would see²⁵ here the inevitable effect of the "laws" of political economics.

¹⁶ C] Any practical expression ... suffering and sin.] *Absent in A.*

¹⁷ C] actor] actor par excellence **A.**

¹⁸ C] false and immoral ... themselves have no] false point of view in theory, and the practice of this lie cannot lead to the moral good. In fact, the functions just mentioned have no independent **A.**

¹⁹ C] truly human concern] proper human concern **A.**

²⁰ C] particular sphere.] particular sphere, what they seek in it and what they realize. **A.**

²¹ C] organism's goals,] goals of a higher organic or biological order, **A.**

²² C] and laws] *Absent in A.*

²³ E] A French expression ("Let be, let pass") commonly attributed to Vincent de Gournay in the eighteenth century.

²⁴ C] material] *Absent in A.*

²⁵ C] would see] would sincerely recognize **A.**

Although the need to work in order to earn a livelihood is actually something unavoidable, independent of the human will, it serves merely as a stimulus to get us to be active. One's further course of activity is determined by psychological and ethical factors, and not at all by those of an economic nature. When the structure of society reaches a certain degree of complexity not only the fruits of work and the manner of using them—not only “distribution” but also “consumption”—but work itself is undertaken for reasons other than life's necessities. These reasons may have nothing to do with physical force or need—to mention, for example, just the most common, the passion for possessions and a thirst for pleasures. Not only is there is no economic law that determines the degree of greed and lust in all people, but there is no law dictating that these passions be, in general, inescapably inherent in human beings and necessarily motivating them to act. This means, then, that since these mental dispositions determine economic activities and relations, the latter are *not* rooted in the economic sphere and are *not* necessarily subject to any “laws of economics.”²⁶

Let us take the most elementary and least disputed of the so-called laws of economics, namely, that according to which the price of goods is determined by²⁷ the relationship between supply and demand. This law states that the more a particular item is demanded and the less of it available, the more expensive it is and vice versa.²⁸

Let us imagine, however, a rich but charitable commodities trader, who having a constant supply of some necessary consumable, nonetheless, decides that despite a rising demand for it he will not increase his prices or even lowers the prices in order to benefit his needy neighbors. Such an act would violate²⁹ the alleged “law” of economics. Yet despite the novelty of his action, certainly no one would find it impossible or supernatural.³⁰

²⁶ C] “laws of economics.”] “laws of economics.” Moreover, the fact that human beings are economic actors by virtue of our moral qualities, or defects, makes any economic “laws” in the rigorous scientific sense of the word impossible. **AB.**

²⁷ C] is determined by] changes depending on **A.**

²⁸ C] vice versa.] vice versa. Without doubt, *this ordinarily happens*, but if the customary course of phenomena already constitutes a scientific law, it is not obvious why the same significance is not attributed to the valid results of the following observations: “If you do not deceive, you will not sell,” “Honest work will get you nowhere,” etc. Piously establishing and accepting the “law” of market value and other “natural” laws that govern, as it were, all economic relations obviously fails to realize clearly the meaning of the very term: *law*. A law in the rigorously scientific sense, as opposed to simple given observations, is a connection between phenomena that have universality and necessity within their sphere. That is, this connection is invariably revealed in each case included within the scope of the law. A natural law expresses not what usually happens, but what happens *invariably*. It does not allow for any exceptions. An actual exception to a law shows the invalidity of the law itself. That is, it shows that the connection between the phenomena was *mistakenly* taken to be universal and necessary. Otherwise, we would have to take this exceptional phenomenon to be a supernatural event. **AB.**

²⁹ C] an act would violate] a change would directly violate **AB.**

³⁰ C] supernatural.] supernatural. Consequently, the law itself must be recognized as a sham. One can, perhaps, reject the rigorous sense of the term, insisting that exceptions to economic “laws”

Let us further assume that if the matter depended solely on the good will of particular individuals, we could look at these magnanimous motives in the economic sphere [365] as a *quantité négligeable* and construct everything on the firm foundation of self-interest. However, we know that in every society a general necessary function of government is to limit private self-interest. We know many historical examples in which the government, exercising this function, eliminated from the ordinary and natural order—as seen from the viewpoint of self-interest—this ordinary and natural character.³¹ It even transformed what earlier was ordinary into something simply impossible and what was earlier exceptional into, in effect, a universal necessity. So, for example, for two and a half centuries landowners in Russia who freed their entire peasant communities and supplied them with parcels of land were the rarest and most unusual exception. The usual order, or “law,” between³² the landowners and the peasants was that the latter were the property of the former together with the land. However, with remarkable speed and thoroughness the good will of the government transformed what was previously a general³³ law into a practically impossible illegality, and what earlier was a rare exception was made an unconditionally obligatory rule allowing no exceptions. Likewise, the exceptional case of the commodities trader who fails to raise the price of necessary goods in the face of a strong demand is transformed into a general rule as soon as the government finds it necessary to regulate³⁴ the price of goods. This direct violation of a pseudo “law” becomes a real law, albeit a positive or state law instead of a “natural” one.

Despite all the differences between the two conceptions of a law of nature and a positive, or state, law, it should be noted that, although the latter is a human handiwork, it is likened to the former in that it has an incontestable force permitting *no* unexpected³⁵ exceptions within the range of its applicability.³⁶ However, the pseudo-economic laws never have such a sense and can at any moment be violated with impunity and revoked by a person’s moral will. [366] *By virtue of* the 1861 law, *not a single* landowner in Russia can now buy or sell a peasant except in his dreams. On the other hand, though, *contrary* to the “law” of supply and demand, nothing prevents a landlord even when awake from lowering the rent of his apartments out

have no practical significance, that in this sphere we should allow approximate laws that express the normal course of things that one can expect in life with sufficient certainty. A “law” in this sense clearly has a conditional character, expressing only the dominant tendency in the given phenomenal order. A.] supernatural. Consequently, the law itself must be recognized as a sham. One will in vain reject the rigorous sense of the term, insisting that exceptions to economic “laws” have no practical significance, that in this sphere we should allow approximate laws that express the normal course of things that one can expect in life with sufficient certainty. But apart from the unscientific nature of this view, it is also completely untenable in practice. **B.**

³¹ C] character.] character (though it once had an artificial origin).

³² C] “law,” between] “law,” in fact, between **A.**

³³ C] general] natural **AB.**

³⁴ C] necessary to regulate] necessary to one degree or other to regulate **A.**

³⁵ C] unexpected] *Absent in AB.*

³⁶ F] Indeed, a direct violation of the law by an evil will is foreseen by the law as a crime that calls for a corresponding punishment.

of pure philanthropy. That very few take advantage of doing so demonstrates not the power of economics but only the weak virtue of these people. For as soon as this lack of personal philanthropy is compensated by the demand of a state law, prices immediately drop and the “iron” necessity of economic laws becomes at once as fragile as glass. This obvious truth is recognized at present by writers who are quite far from any form of socialism, such as, for example, Laveleye.³⁷ Even earlier John Stuart Mill, who sought to preserve the character of political economics as an exact science while at the same time avoiding too obvious a contradiction with reality, proposed³⁸ the following compromise. Assuming that the economic *distribution* of the products of labor depends upon the human will and can be subject to its moral intentions, Mill insisted that *production* is entirely subject to economic laws that have in this sphere the force of natural laws, as if production does not take place under the same general conditions and does not depend on the same human forces and actors as distribution.³⁹ Furthermore, this anti-scientific, scholastic distinction had no success and was rejected equally by both sides between which Mill intended⁴⁰ to occupy a middle position.⁴¹

Of course, human freedom—either on the individual or the societal level—from the alleged natural laws of the material-economic order is not directly connected in any way with the metaphysical question of freedom of the will. In arguing, for example, that the St. Petersburg landlord is free from a law that supposedly determines rents⁴² by the relation of supply to demand, I do not mean that any of these landlords, *no matter what they are like* in themselves, can now lower the rents of their apartments in spite of an increased demand for them. I stand only for the obvious truth that if the moral convictions are *sufficiently strong* [367] in a given individual, be they privately and even more so governmentally held,⁴³ no alleged economic necessity prevents this person from subordinating material considerations to moral ones in this or that case.⁴⁴ Hence, it logically follows that in this sphere there are no natural laws that act independently of the will of the given individuals. I do not deny the regularity of human actions. I only object to that special sort of material-economic regularity, conceived 100 years ago, that supposedly holds independently of the general conditions that motivate us psychologically and morally. Everything

³⁷ E] Émile Louis Victor de Laveleye (5 April 1822–3 January 1892), Belgian economist.

³⁸ C] proposed] resorted to **A**.

³⁹ E] Cf. Mill 2008: 5—“The laws and conditions of the Production of wealth partake of the character of physical truths. There is nothing optional or arbitrary in them.” Mill’s *Principles of Political Economy* was translated into Russian by Nikolaj Chernyshevskij.

⁴⁰ C] intended] wished **B**.

⁴¹ C] natural laws, as if ... middle position.] natural laws. If by “laws of production” Mill understood the conditions that follow from the general physical properties of the very material of production and the producers, as physical creatures, then, although the need for *such* laws is indisputable, they can no more be called economic laws than the fact that people die and generations succeed one another can be called historical laws. **A**.

⁴² C] rents] fluctuations in rent **A**.

⁴³ C] be they privately and even more so governmentally held,] *Absent in* **AB**.

⁴⁴ C] to moral ones in this or that case.] with respect to the renters. **AB**.

that exists in the objects and phenomena of the economic sphere originates, on the one hand, from external nature and accordingly is subject to material necessity (to mechanical, chemical and biological laws) and, on the other hand, is determined by human action, which is subject to psychological and moral necessity. Since it is impossible to find in the objects and phenomena of the economic sphere any sort of causality other than natural and human, there is not and cannot be another special independent necessity and regularity in that sphere.

Legislation by the state regulates economic relations in the moral sense in pursuit of the common good, and it successfully supplements the insufficiency of moral motivation in particular individuals. This, however, does not prejudge the question of the extent to which and in what form such regulation is desirable in the future. It is only without question that the facts themselves concerning state interference in the economic sphere (for example, the legislative regulation of prices⁴⁵) indisputably show that a given set of economic relationships do not themselves express any natural necessity. For it is clear that the laws of nature cannot be rescinded by state laws.

III

The subordination of material interests and relations in human society to certain special economic laws that *function on their own* is a mere fabrication of bad metaphysics⁴⁶ that has not the slightest foundation in reality. Therefore, the general demand of reason and conscience remains in force, that this [368] sphere be subordinate to the highest moral principle, that the economic life of society be organized towards the realization of the moral good.

There are no independent economic laws, no economic⁴⁷ necessities, and there cannot be any. For the phenomena of the economic order are conceivable only as human actions, of moral beings who are capable of subordinating all their actions to the motives of the pure moral good.⁴⁸ There is one independent and unconditional law for human beings as such, and it is the moral law. There is one necessity, and it is moral necessity. The peculiar and independent nature of economic relations lies not in the fact that it has its unavoidable laws, but in the fact that, owing to the essence of its relationships, it presents a special and peculiar *field* for applying the unique moral law. In the same way, the Earth is different from the other planets not by the fact that it has some original⁴⁹ light source of its own (which in reality it does not), but only by the fact that owing to its place in the solar system it receives and reflects the single, common light of the sun in a certain special way.

⁴⁵ C] prices] the work day **A**.

⁴⁶ C] bad metaphysics] bad and childish metaphysics **AB**.

⁴⁷ C] no economic] no separate economic **A**.

⁴⁸ C] For the phenomena ... moral good.] *Absent in AB*.

⁴⁹ C] original] separate **AB**.

This truth collides with and crushes not only the theories of academic economists but also the aspirations of the socialists, who at first glance appear to be opposed to them. In their critique of the existing economic order, in their rants against the inequality of wealth and against the selfishness and inhumanity of the wealthy classes, the socialists, as it were, take the moral point of view and are inspired by a moral sense of pity towards those who toil and carry a heavy burden. However, if we turn to the positive side of their position, we will see that it happens to have at first an ambiguous attitude and then turns directly into a hostile one towards the moral principle.

The most profound basis of socialism is that first expressed in the remarkable doctrine of Saint Simon's disciples, who proclaimed as their motto the restoration (rehabilitation) of matter in the life of humanity.⁵⁰ Certainly, matter has rights, and the less these are respected in principle the more they make themselves known in practice. However, what are these rights? They can be understood not only in different but also in directly contradictory ways. The sphere of material relations (more proximally, economic ones) [369] has a right to become the object of a human moral action. It has a right to have the highest spiritual principle realized or embodied in it. *Matter has a right to spiritualization*. Such is the first sense of this principle—the quite true sense and that is of the greatest importance. It would be unfair to claim that this sense is completely foreign to the original socialist systems. However, they neither dwelled on it nor developed it. This glimmer of a higher awareness quite soon turned out to be only a deceptive light over the swamp of carnal passions that gradually swallowed up so many noble and inspired souls.⁵¹

Another and more common sense given to the proposed idea of the rights of matter justifies the factual collapse of the Saint-Simonist school and raises it to a principle:⁵² The material life of humanity is not just a special sphere of activity or of the application of moral principles. Our material life has in us and for us its own, quite independent material principle, which has the same rights, namely the principle of instinct or passion and must be given its full⁵³ scope in order that the normal social order will naturally follow from the mutual completion and alternation of personal passions and interests (Fourier's basic idea).⁵⁴ With this, there is neither the possibility nor the necessity for the "normal" order to be moral. Alienation from higher, spiritual interests becomes necessary as soon as the material aspect of human life is recognized as having a special independent and fundamental

⁵⁰ E] For further information on this transformation of Saint Simon's doctrines, see Tresch 2012: 208.

⁵¹ C] carnal passions that ... inspired souls.] ordinary practical materialism. A] carnal excesses and self-interest. B.

⁵² C] Another and more ... a principle:] According to another and more prevalent sense of the fundamental socialist principle, AB.

⁵³ C] full] unrestricted A.

⁵⁴ E] A reference to the utopian socialist ideas of Charles Fourier (1772–1837).

significance.⁵⁵ One cannot serve two masters, and socialism naturally accords dominance to a principle under the banner of which the entire movement appeared, namely, the material principle. The sphere of economic relations is entirely subordinate to this principle, and it, in turn, is recognized as the principal, the definitive and the sole real sphere in human life. The intrinsic⁵⁶ difference between socialism and the bourgeois economics hostile to it disappears at this point.

In truth,⁵⁷ if the present state of the civilized world is morally abnormal, the blame for this belongs not on this or that institution⁵⁸ in itself but on the general understanding and direction of life in contemporary society. By virtue of this feature, the main concern is becoming all [370] the more material wealth, and the social order itself is being transformed decisively into a *plutocracy*. Our social immorality lies not in personal or hereditary⁵⁹ property, not in the division of labor and⁶⁰ capital, and not in the inequality of possessions, but simply in a plutocracy which is a perversion of the proper social order. This plutocracy elevates the lower and essentially subordinate sphere—the economic—to the highest and decisive level relegating everything else to serve as a means and instrument for material benefit.⁶¹ Socialism, however, also leads to this perversion, only from another direction. From the standpoint of the plutocracy a normal person is above all a capitalist and only then, *per accidens*, a citizen, a family man or woman, an educated person, a member of some religious organization. Likewise, from the socialist point of view all other interests surely lose their significance and are placed on the back-burner, if they do not completely disappear before the economic interest. Also, the (naturally) lower material sphere of life, viz., industrial activity, becomes⁶² decisively predominant enveloping everything else. Even in its most idealistic forms, socialism from the start makes the moral⁶³ perfection of society directly and entirely dependent on its economic system and wants to achieve a moral transformation or rebirth exclusively by means of an economic revolution. This fact clearly shows that in essence socialism too is based on the supremacy of the material interest just as the petty-bourgeois rule that is hostile to it. Both sides have one and the same motto: “Man lives on bread alone.”⁶⁴ If from the plutocratic standpoint the worth of an individual is dependent on the amount of one’s material possessions, on the owning and acquisition of things, then for the consistent socialist this same person has worth only as a producer of material prosperity. In both cases, the human being is taken as an eco-

⁵⁵ C] the material aspect of ... and fundamental significance.] a special, independent material principle is recognized in human life. **A**.

⁵⁶ C] intrinsic] fundamental **A**.

⁵⁷ C] In truth,] *Absent in AB*.

⁵⁸ C] that institution] that social institution **A**.

⁵⁹ C] or hereditary] *Absent in AB*.

⁶⁰ C] and] from **A**.

⁶¹ C] benefit.] interest. **AB**.

⁶² C] becomes] appears to be **AB**.

⁶³ C] moral] *Absent in A*.

⁶⁴ E] Cf. Matthew 4: 4 and Luke 4: 4—“man shall not live by bread alone.”

economic agent in abstraction from the other aspects of one's existence. In both cases, economic prosperity is seen as the ultimate goal and the supreme good. The struggle between the two hostile camps is not over a difference of principle, i.e., not over the content of contending principles, but only over how far the same principle is implemented. The material [371] interest of the capitalist minority concerns some, whereas others are concerned with the material interest of the working majority. To the extent that this majority, the working class itself, begins to care only about its material interest,⁶⁵ it turns out to be obviously just as selfish as its opponents and loses all of its moral advantage.⁶⁶ In a certain respect, socialism thereby implements the principle of material interest more consistently and more completely than the opposing side. Although sincerely⁶⁷ devoted only to its economic interest, the plutocrat ascribes to it a lower value and assumes the existence of other principles in life together with their corresponding independent institutions, such as the state and the church. In its pure form, socialism decisively rejects all of this. The human being for it is only a producer and a consumer. Human society is only an economic union, a union of workers, each society having its own master without any other essential differences. On the one hand, the *predominance* of material interests—of commercial, industrial and financial elements—constitutes the distinctive trait of the rule of the bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie. On the other hand, consistent socialism, which seeks ultimately to limit the life of humanity to these lower interests alone,⁶⁸ is not in any way the antithesis but only the most extreme expression, the final conclusion, of a one-sided bourgeois civilization.

The socialists and their apparent opponents—the plutocrats—unwittingly shake each others' hands on the most essential point. Out of self-interest, a plutocracy subjugates the nation's masses using them for its own benefit, seeing them only as a labor force, only as producers of material wealth. Socialism protests against such "exploitation," but this protest is superficial, lacking as it does a principled foundation. For socialism ultimately⁶⁹ sees the human being as *only* (or, in any case, above all)⁷⁰ an economic agent, and as such there is nothing that *in essence* should be done to protect a person from any exploitation. On the other hand, the exceptional importance that today's petty-bourgeois regime attaches to material wealth naturally encourages the direct producers of this [372] wealth—the working classes—to demand an equal share of these goods, which, without them, would not exist and which they were taught to look upon as the most important thing in life. In this way, the ruling classes themselves by their practical materialism⁷¹ and their subjugation of the working classes arouse and justify the latter's socialistic aspirations. When

⁶⁵ C] care only about its material interest,] place its material interest above all else, **A**.

⁶⁶ C] advantage.] superiority. **A**.

⁶⁷ C] sincerely] ultimately **A**.

⁶⁸ C] ultimately to limit ... interests alone,] to reduce the life of humanity entirely to some of these inferior interests, **A**.

⁶⁹ C] ultimately] *Absent in AB*.

⁷⁰ C] (or, in any case, above all)] *Absent in AB*.

⁷¹ C] practical materialism] exclusively materialistic attitude **AB**.

the fear of a social revolution is aroused in the plutocrats their appeal to ideal principles turns out to be a useless game. The hastily affixed masks of morality and religion do not deceive the nation's masses, who sense quite well what their masters truly worship,^{72, 73} and having learnt this form of worship from their masters the workers naturally want to be part of it, but as priests and not victims.

The two hostile parties are mutually responsible for the other and cannot escape a vicious circle as long as they do not recognize and accept the factually simple and indubitable thesis they have forgotten, namely, that human worth, and consequently human society, is, in essence, not determined by economic relationships, that the human being is not above all a producer of material goods or market values, but is something of much more importance. Consequently, society too is something more than an economic union.⁷⁴

[373]IV

In order to truly solve the so-called "social question," we should recognize, above all, that the norm of economic relations is not contained in these relationships themselves, but that they apply to a special sphere of the general moral norm. The triadic⁷⁵ moral principle, which determines our proper attitude towards God, people and

⁷² F] Several years ago, there appeared a characteristic, though surprisingly overlooked, example of plutocratic hypocrisy. The article by the well-known but now deceased Jules Simon concerned the three chief calamities of contemporary society: the decline of religion, the family and ... *rents!* What he said about religion and the family is listless and vague, but his lines about the fall of interest on capital (if I am not mistaken from 4 to 2 ½%) were written, as it were, with blood drawn from the heart. C] *Entire note absent in AB.*

⁷³ C] what their masters truly worship] that their masters and teachers worship not God but mammon **A**] that their masters and teachers worship not God but mammon, not Christ but Baal **B E**] Cf. Matthew 6: 24.

⁷⁴ F] I expressed these observations that socialism and plutocracy share a common materialist principle some 18 years ago (in Chap. XIV of my *Critique of Abstract Principles*, which first appeared in 1878 in *Russkii vestnik*). They prompted accusations against me of presenting socialism incorrectly and of unfair assessments of it. I need not now respond to these accusations, since they were brilliantly refuted by the subsequent history of the socialist movement itself, the mainstream of which has now decisively identified itself as *economic materialism*. C] *economic materialism*. The dissemination of this doctrine, which is (logically) incompatible with any moral ideal, aroused against it our Russian writers N. K. Mikhajlovskij, Prof. N. I. Kareev and V. A. Gol'cev, who cannot possibly be suspected of insufficient devotion to social progress. For a refutation of Marxism with respect to its logical and politico-economic aspects see in particular L. Z. Slonimskij and K. F. Golovin, who agree in their evaluation of the phenomenon despite their quite different points of view. **A**] *economic materialism*. The dissemination of this doctrine, which is (logically) incompatible with any moral ideal, aroused against it our Russian writers N. K. Mikhajlovskij, Prof. N. I. Kareev and V. A. Gol'cev, who cannot possibly be suspected of insufficient devotion to social progress. For a refutation of Marxism with respect to its logical and politico-economic aspects, see in particular L. Z. Slonimskij and K. F. Golovin. **B.**

⁷⁵ C] triadic] *Absent in A.*

material nature, is entirely and wholly applicable in the economic sphere. Moreover, owing to a special⁷⁶ property of this sphere the final member of the moral trinity—our relation to material nature or to the *Earth* (in the broad sense of the word)—is of special importance. This third relation can have a moral character only in combination with the first two but is dependent on them in their normal condition.

In terms of its content, the sphere of economic relations exhaustively includes the general concepts of *production* (work and capital), *distribution* of property and the *exchange* of values. Let us turn to these basic concepts from the moral point of view beginning with the most basic of them, namely, the concept of *work*. We know that material necessity provides the first jolt to work, but for a person who recognizes the unconditionally perfect principle of reality, the will of God, above oneself, every necessity is an expression of that will. Viewed in this way, work is a *commandment* from God. It requires that we expend effort (by the sweat of one's brow⁷⁷) to cultivate the land, i.e., to process material nature. For whom? First of all,⁷⁸ for oneself and for one's neighbors. This answer, though clear at the most elementary stages of our moral condition, retains, of course, its strength with our further development, the concept of "neighbor" alone expands in scope. At first, my neighbors are only those with whom I am related by blood or have a personal relationship. At the end, this includes everyone. The most talented representative of economic individualism, Bastiat,⁷⁹ in defending the principle of "everyone for himself," avoids the reproach of egoism by pointing to the economic harmony by which everyone caring only for oneself (or for themselves) unwittingly, owing to the very nature of social relations, works for the benefit of all. In this way, one's self-interest in fact [374] harmonizes with the common interest. In any case, though, this would be only a natural harmony, one by which, for example, certain insects thinking only of sweet food for themselves unwittingly contribute to the fertilization of plants by passing pollen from plant to plant.

Such harmony certainly says something about the wisdom of the Creator, but it does not turn insects into moral creatures. A human being *is* a moral creature, and for this reason natural solidarity is insufficient for us. We must not only work for everyone, participate in our common concerns but even *know* and *want* to participate. A person who refuses to recognize this truth in principle will feel its actual force in financial crashes and economic crises. Surely, the perpetrators and victims of these anomalies are precisely those who work for themselves. Why does the natural harmony neither reconcile their interests nor improve their well-being? The natural connection of economic relations is inadequate to make those who work for themselves work at the same time for everyone. They need to be *consciously directed to the common good*.

⁷⁶ C] a special] the very A.

⁷⁷ E] Cf. Genesis 3: 19.

⁷⁸ C] First of all,] Undoubtedly, A

⁷⁹ E] See Bastiat 1850. A Russian translation appeared shortly before Solov'ev wrote this chapter: Bastia 1896. Of course, it is possible that Solov'ev was acquainted with the work in the original French or from some secondary source.

To propose selfishness or self-interest to be the fundamental reason to work means to eliminate the significance of work itself as a universal commandment, to make it into something fortuitous.⁸⁰ If I work only for my own welfare and for that of my family, then (from this point of view) once I have the opportunity to achieve this welfare apart from working the only reason⁸¹ to work is lost. If it should turn out that an entire class or group of people can prosper through theft, fraud and the exploitation of the work of others, how could we in principle oppose this from the point of view of unrestrained selfishness? Where is the natural harmony that eliminates such misuses? Where was this natural harmony in the long centuries when slavery, feudalism and serfdom reigned? Or was it that the bloody internecine wars that abolished feudalism in Europe and slavery in America were just an expression, though just a little late, of the natural harmony? However, if this is the case, it is unclear in what way this harmony is different from disharmony and how the unrestrained guillotine is better than the constraints of state socialism. If natural harmony, seriously understood, proves to be unable to prevent the economic misuses of [375] unrestrained selfishness among individuals or classes but must resort to restrictions on this freedom in the name of a higher⁸² truth, then is it permissible and noble to appeal to justice only as a last resort and to put it at the end and not at the beginning of the social system? Not only is it impermissible and ignoble, but it is also useless. For such a morality *ex machina* has no power that is either imposing or captivating. No one will believe it; no one will heed it.⁸³ Naked force alone will remain—today applied one way, tomorrow another.

The principle of individualistic⁸⁴ freedom of interests, when adopted by the powerful, does not make them work harder but engenders the ancient practice of slavery, the medieval seigniorial law and contemporary economic servitude, or plutocracy. This principle, when adopted by the masses, who as the majority are powerful, does not make them more amenable to work, but creates only the ground for envious resentment⁸⁵ out of which arise the anarchists' bombs. If he were alive today, Bastiat, who gladly expressed his thoughts in the form of popular dialogues, might himself have played a major role in a conversation such as this:

Anarchist: Out of a special benevolent feeling for you, Mr. Bastiat, I warn you to go somewhere far away, for I intend right now to blow up this place on account of the presence in it of tyrants and exploiters.

Bastiat: What a terrible situation! But just consider that you are ultimately compromising the principle of human freedom!

⁸⁰ C] fortuitous.] fortuitous, and consequences follow from this that are destructive for this economic theory. A] fortuitous, and consequences follow from this that are fatal to "liberal" economists. B.

⁸¹ C] reason] motive AB.

⁸² C] higher] universal A.

⁸³ C] is it permissible . . . will heed it.] this truth and not personal self-interest is the true principle of the social system. Only a destructive class war is possible outside it. A.

⁸⁴ C] of individualistic] of unlimited individualistic A.

⁸⁵ C] envious resentment] envious, self-interested resentment AB.

Anarchist: On the contrary, we are realizing it.

Bastiat: Who filled you with these infernal ideas?

Anarchist: You did.

Bastiat: What improbable slander!

Anarchist: No, it is completely true. We are your students. Have you not shown that the root of all evil is the intervention of public authority into the free play of individual interests? Do you not relentlessly condemn any intended organization of labor, any compulsory social order? And what is condemned as evil must be destroyed. We translate your words into deeds and spare you from the dirty work.

Bastiat: I fought only state [376] intervention in economic life and the artificial organization of labor invented by the socialists.

Anarchist: We have nothing to do with the socialists. If they phantasize, so much the worse for them. *We* are not phantasizing. We are simply opposed to one organization alone, the one that actually exists, and it is called the social order. These cities and factories, stock exchanges and academies, the administration, the police, the army and the church. Did they all really spring from the ground? Are they not really products of an artificial organization? So, by your own argument all of them are evil and must be destroyed....

Bastiat: Even if this is true, they should not in any case be destroyed through violence and disasters.

Anarchist: And what is a disaster? You have perfectly explained that from apparent disasters an actual common good arises. In every instance, you have cleverly distinguished the unimportant, *which is seen*, from the important, *which is not seen*. In the present instance, what we see are flying sardine boxes, destroyed buildings, mutilated corpses. These are seen, but they are unimportant. What is not seen and what is singularly important is the future of humanity, which will have no “interference” and no “organization” after the extermination of those people, institutions and classes that could interfere and organize. You preached the principle of anarchy, and we will in fact create an anarchy.

Bastiat: Gendarme, gendarme! Quickly arrest this man before he blows up all of us. Why are you waiting? What are you pondering?

Gendarme: I am pondering over something. Adopting the point of view of the free individual, which I have taken after reading your eloquent arguments, the question is which course of action is more advantageous, what is in my best interest. Do I take this young man by the collar or do I as quickly as possible join with him to form a natural harmony of interests?^{86, 87}

⁸⁶ C] If he were alive today, ... harmony of interests?] *Absent in A.*

⁸⁷ C] harmony of interests] harmony of interests? *Bastiat:* Neither of them. Drop it for the time being and lead me to prison so that I may in leisure think and write a refutation of my works. I see my sin. I despised Rousseau, but my “economic harmonies” were a hundred times more stupid and harmful than his “social contract.” His optimism gave birth to Jacobin terrorists, but my optimism gave birth to anarchists with their sardine boxes. Gendarme! In the name of justice and common sense lead me to jail quickly! **B.**

V

Contrary to this imaginary economic harmony, the evidence forces us to admit that in basing one's private, material interest as the goal of work we come not to the common good but only to common dissension and destruction. On the contrary, the idea of a common good in its [377] true, moral sense, i.e., the good for all and for each of us and not just for the majority—the idea of such a good posed as the principle and goal of work—includes the satisfaction of every personal interest within its proper bounds.

If, from the moral point of view, each person—whether one be a farmer, a writer or a banker⁸⁸—must work consciously desiring thereby to contribute to the common benefit, if one must see work as an obligation to fulfill the will of God and serve the universal well-being of everyone, then this obligation, as universal, presupposes that everyone must therefore regard and treat this person not merely as an instrument but also as the object or goal of a common activity. Society too has an obligation to recognize and to protect the *right* of each person independently to a *decent* human existence for oneself and one's family. A decent existence is possible with voluntary poverty, as St. Francis preached and as is lived by our wandering pilgrims. However, this is rendered impossible with the kind of work that entirely reduces the significance of a human being to playing the role of a simple instrument for the production or transfer of material wealth. Here is an example.

“We look at the kriuchniks⁸⁹ working. Those miserable, half-naked Tatars are stripped of their strength. It is painful to see how quickly their backs straighten under the weight of 130 to 650 pounds (I am not exaggerating the last figure). This horribly hard work pays 5 rubles per 16,000 pounds. A kriuchnik can earn at most one ruble per day, working like an ox and always taxing his strength. Few can endure more than 10 years of such hard work and these two-legged beasts of burden become crippled or paralytic” (*Novoe vremja*, 7356).⁹⁰ Those who have not seen the Volga “kriuchniks” certainly have seen in large hotels the porters who panting and straining drag extremely heavy trunks to the fourth or fifth floor. And this in the age of machines and all sorts of refinements! The obvious incongruity of this strikes no one: arriving at the hotel with luggage, the guest gets in the elevator even though the climb up the stairs would be a useful exercise. Meanwhile, the things that it would seem the elevator car was designed to carry are loaded [378] onto the back of a porter who in this way turns out to be not even an instrument of another person, but the instrument of things, an instrument of an instrument!⁹¹

⁸⁸ C] banker] merchant A.

⁸⁹ E] Wage workers who used an iron hook, a “kriuchka,” to lift heavy loads, enabling them to haul the loads on their backs.

⁹⁰ E] “On” 1896: 3.

⁹¹ C] *Added here in A as a footnote*: It was recently reported in the newspapers that a groundskeeper carrying 18 bundles of wood (each weighing many pounds) to the fifth floor died from a burst heart!

Work that is exclusively and crudely mechanical and demands excessive muscular power is incompatible with human dignity. Likewise, so is work that even though not heavy and not humiliating yet consumes *all* the time and *all* the energy of the worker so that the few hours of interruption must be devoted to physical rest leaving neither time nor energy for thought and reflection on the ideal and spiritual order.⁹² In addition to hours of rest, there certainly are entire rest days, for example Sundays and other holidays. However, the exhausting and boring physical work that consumes all weekdays creates as a natural reaction a need for revelry and to unwind on holidays, which are devoted to doing just that.

“Let us not dwell, however, on the impression that individual observable facts create in us, even though they are numerous. Let us turn to the statistics, and ask to what extent does one’s salary meet the necessary needs of the worker? Leaving aside the actual salary figures in various kinds of work, the quality of food, and the size of one’s home, our concern is only with the life expectancy of people in various occupations. We get the following answers to this question: shoemakers live on average 49 years, printers 48.3 years, tailors 46.6, carpenters 44.7, blacksmiths 41.8, a lathe operator 41.6 and stone masons 33. The average life of bureaucrats, capitalists, clergy and merchants is 60–69 years.⁹³ If we take into account the data on mortality in relation to the size of dwellings and the rent in various parts of the city, we will find [379] that in the areas inhabited by the poor—primarily the working class—with low rent the mortality rate is much higher than in those parts of the city with a relatively large number of wealthy inhabitants. Villarmé determined this relationship for Paris in the 1820s. He calculated that during the 5 years from 1822–1826 in the 2nd arrondissement with an average annual rent for an apartment of 605 francs there was one death per 71 inhabitants, whereas in the 12th arrondissement with an average rent of 148 francs the death rate was one per 44 inhabitants. We have similar data for many other cities including St. Petersburg.”⁹⁴ We can draw the following conclusion from this: “Whoever does not regard the worker to be an instrument of production but recognizes him, as indeed every person, to be a free individual, an end in itself, cannot consider the average life span of 40 years to be normal, not when those from wealthier classes live on average to 60–70 years. Any downward deviation from such longevity that cannot be explained by the peculiarities of the given occupations must be attributed solely to excessive work and an insufficient income to cover the most essential needs and the minimal hygienic requirements of food, shelter and clothing.”⁹⁵

The unconditional significance of a person is based, as we know, on his innate reason and will, which make *possible* his infinite perfecting or, to use the expression

⁹² F] The conductors of the horse-driven trolleys, for example, in Petersburg work more than 18 hours per day for a wage of 25 or 30 rubles per month (cf. *Novoe Vremja*, No. 7357).

⁹³ F] The cited author refers here to Haushofer, *Lehrbuch der Statistik*. All of the figures presented here refer, obviously, to Western Europe. E] See Haushofer 1872.

⁹⁴ F] A. A. Isaev. *Nachala politicheskoi ekonomii*, 2nd edition, pp. 254–255. E] See Isaev 1894.

⁹⁵ F] Isaev 1894: 226.

of the Church Fathers, deification (*θεωσις*).⁹⁶ This possibility does not become a reality for us immediately in one complete act, because otherwise we would already be equal to God, which is not the case. This inner potentiality is becoming ever more a reality, but it requires specific⁹⁷ conditions be met in reality. An ordinary person, left on an uninhabited island for many years or in a state of absolute solitary confinement not only loses the chance to improve intellectually and morally but also, as is well known regresses towards an explicit bestiality. Thus, in essence, even if a person, entirely **[380]**absorbed in physical labor, does not fall into complete savagery, one cannot in any case think about⁹⁸ actively realizing one's highest human potential. So, the moral point of view demands that everyone have not only the means of subsistence (i.e., food, clothing, and shelter from the heat and the elements) and adequate physical *rest* but also *leisure time* to be used for increasing his spiritual perfection. This and *only this* is *unconditionally* demanded for every peasant and worker. *Anything more than this is from the devil.*⁹⁹

Those who oppose morally improving socio-economic relations assert that in order for the worker to have the leisure to secure intellectual and moral development there must be, in addition to a secure material existence, a reduction in the number of working hours without a lowering of wages. However, this would lead to a reduction in production, i.e., to an economic slowdown and recession. Let us assume *for a moment* that a reduction in working hours while retaining the same salary will actually lead inevitably to a reduction in productivity. But why does a *temporary* (*momentary*) reduction in production lead without fail to economic slowdown or recession? In fact, after the working hours have been reduced to a certain norm there are positive factors behind an increase in production. There will be technical improvements and a spatial diminution between regions and countries owing to new means of communication and the everyday interaction of the classes. These factors, which are partially or completely independent of wages and working hours, will continue to function, and the general quantity produced will begin to increase again. Even when the increase has not yet attained the earlier level, the production of life's basic necessities, be they for an individual as well as for the state, will obviously not be reduced and the entire reduction will only affect the production of luxury items.¹⁰⁰ But what threat is it to a society if the cost of gold watches, satin shirts and velvet chairs increases two or even three times? Let us assume a reduction in working hours with the same pay represents a straight loss to the entrepreneurs. In general, it is impossible to do anything without a loss to someone. However, can we really say it is a disaster and an injustice if certain capitalist manufacturers receive a half-million instead of a full million or a hundred thousand instead of **[381]** fifty

⁹⁶ C] , to use the expression of the Church Fathers, deification (*θεωσις*).] an assimilation in God. **A**.

⁹⁷ C] specific] some **A**.

⁹⁸ C] think about] concern oneself with **A**.

⁹⁹ C] *Anything more ... the devil.*] The rest depends on empirical conditions of time and place. **A**
E] from the devil] A Russian expression meaning uncalled for or unnecessary.

¹⁰⁰ C] luxury items.] luxury items. Thus, properly speaking, there is no change in production but only a displacement of production from certain departments to others. **AB**.

thousand? Although they are undoubtedly a necessary and important social class, must it necessarily consist of avaricious, greedy and selfish people? I know capitalists who¹⁰¹ are completely free of these vices, and those who are not have a right to society's pity. Society should not condone such an abnormal and dangerous mental state.

The common¹⁰² socialist tirades against the rich, inspired by a low envy, are disgusting to the point of nausea. Their demands for the equality of property are ridiculous to the point of absurdity.^{103, 104} It is one thing, however, to attack private wealth seen as an end in itself and another thing to demand that such wealth, as a relative good, conform with the common good in the sense of the unconditional moral principle. It is one thing to seek the impossible and unnecessary equalization of property and another to recognize everyone's right to the means necessary for a dignified human existence while retaining the advantages of owning more property for those who have it.

The opponents of the moral regulation of economic relations deduce incorrect conclusions from their fundamental assertion. Moreover, is this assertion correct? That is, will establishing working hours and wages inevitably reduce production (albeit of luxury goods) for a certain time and cause corresponding losses to the manufacturers? This would be the case if the quantity (not [382] to mention quality) of production was entirely dependent on the number of hours spent on it. But what intelligent and conscientious political economist would seriously dare to assert such an enormous absurdity?¹⁰⁵ It is easy to see that an exhausted and stupefied worker, embittered from overwork, might produce in 16 hours less than the same worker might in 8 hours if he works vigorously and diligently with recognition of his human dignity and with confidence in his moral solidarity with society or a state¹⁰⁶ that is concerned about him and does not exploit him. Thus, moral regulation of economic relations would yield at the same time economic progress.

¹⁰¹ C] I know capitalists who] Quite a number of capitalists **AB**.

¹⁰² C] common] *Absent in B*.

¹⁰³ F] The diametric opposition of socialism and Christianity has been noted many times, but its essence is for the most part incorrectly understood. More ingenious than profound, there is a popular remark that socialism demands the poor take from the rich, whereas the Gospels want the rich to give to the poor. The opposition, though, is much deeper. It lies in a moral attitude to those who are rich. Socialism *envies* them, but the Gospels *pity* them—pity because of the obstacles to moral perfection their connection with Mammon places. It is difficult for the wealthy to enter the Kingdom of God. Socialism itself considers this kingdom, i.e., the highest good and bliss, to lie in nothing other than wealth, only distributed differently. What for the one is an obstacle is for the other the goal. If this is not an antithesis, then I do not know what to call it. C] *This footnote is referenced to the sentence in the preceding paragraph ending in "dangerous mental state" in A* E] Mammon] a synonym for material wealth. See Luke 16: 13. E] It is difficult ... Kingdom of God.] Cf. Luke 18: 24.

¹⁰⁴ C] The common socialist ... of absurdity.] *Absent in A*.

¹⁰⁵ C] But what intelligent ... absurdity?] *Absent in A*.

¹⁰⁶ C] state] government **AB**.

VI

Concerning itself with the organization of human relations—for now, economic ones—moral philosophy is not concerned with particular definitions and formulas. These will be dictated by life itself and implemented by the activities of professionals and authority figures, theoreticians and practitioners. Moral philosophy is concerned only with the immutable *conditions* that follow from the very idea of the good without the implementation of which no given organization can be moral. For us, a social organization is interesting and desirable only to the extent that it embodies the social principle, to the extent that it *justifies the moral good*. Hare-brained schemes and prophesizing are not the concern of philosophy as a discipline. It can neither present specific plans for the organization of society nor even know whether, in general, people and nations want to organize their relations to conform to the demands of the unconditional moral principle. In seeking clarity and independence from any external facts, its task is like that of pure mathematics. Under what conditions is a segment of a triangular prism equal to three pyramids? Under what conditions do social relations in a given sphere conform to the demands of the moral principle and provide a given society with a secure existence and continuous improvement?¹⁰⁷

We already know two conditions under which social relations pertaining to the sphere of material work become moral. **[383]** The first, general condition lies in the fact that economic activity is neither isolated nor established as independent and self-contained. The second condition is more special. It states that production is accomplished not at the expense of the human dignity of the workers, that none of them should become merely an instrument of production and that each should be provided with the material means to a decent existence and development. The first requirement has a religious character: Do not replace God with Mammon; do not recognize material wealth as an independent good and the ultimate goal of human activity, not even in the economic sphere.¹⁰⁸ The second requirement is that of love for one's fellow human being: Pity those who labor and carry burdens, and do not view them as lower than mindless things. A third condition is necessarily connected to these two, and yet no one, to my knowledge, has turned serious attention to it in this regard. I have in mind the obligations we as economic agents have towards the same material nature that we are called upon in this sphere to till. This obligation is expressly stated in the commandment of work: Cultivate the land.¹⁰⁹ To cultivate the land means not to misuse it, not to exhaust and destroy it. It means to improve it, to infuse it with greater power and the full scope of being. So neither our neighbors

¹⁰⁷ C] and provide a given society ... improvement] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁰⁸ F] A recognition of material wealth as the *goal* of economic activity can be called the original sin of political economy, since Adam Smith was already guilty of this.

¹⁰⁹ F] The Hebrew words “*laobod ef gadaama*” (Genesis III: 23) literally means “to *serve* the earth”—to serve, of course, not in the sense of a religious cult (although the word “*obod*” is commonly also used in this sense), but in the sense in which angels serve humanity or a teacher serves children, etc.

nor material nature should be used merely as a passive or indifferent instrument of economic production or exploitation. Material nature is not in itself, or taken in isolation, the goal of our activity, but it is included in such a goal as a separate, independent part. Its subordinate position with respect to the Deity and humanity does not mean that it lacks rights. It has a right to our help in transforming and elevating it. Things do not have rights, but nature or the Earth is not just a thing. It is a reified essence, [384] which we can and therefore should aid in its spiritualization. The purpose of work with respect to material nature is not to use it for procuring things and money but to improve it—to revive the dead in it, to spiritualize the material. The *methods* of going about this cannot be specified here; they are the job of *art* (taken in the broad sense of the Greek word *τέχνη*). But, above all, the important point is our attitude towards the object itself, our inner frame of mind and the direction of our activity that follows from it. *Without a love of nature for itself it is impossible to organize material life morally.*

The human attitude towards external nature can take three forms: (1) a passive submission to it as it exists, (2) an active struggle with it, its subjugation and use as an indifferent tool, and finally (3) the affirmation of its ideal state—*what it should become through the human being*. The first attitude is quite unfair both to us and to nature—to us because it deprives us of our spiritual dignity, making us a slave of matter and to nature because bowing before it in its present imperfect and distorted state thereby¹¹⁰ deprives it of any hope of perfection. The second, negative attitude towards nature should be recognized as relatively normal, as a temporary or transitional attitude. For it is clear that in order to impart to nature its proper form it is necessary first to regard it negatively in its present, *improper* form. But of course only the third, positive attitude should be recognized as the unconditionally normal and final form. In it, we use our superiority over nature not to elevate ourselves alone but also to elevate it. It is easy to see that this three-fold relation of the human being to our external earthly nature is only an extended duplication of our attitude to our own material nature. Here, we must distinguish an abnormal (passive) attitude from the normal (positively active) and the transition from the former to the latter (negatively active).¹¹¹ The carnal human being is subordinate and surrenders oneself to one's material life in its improper, perverted form. The ascetic struggles with the flesh in order to suppress it. After passing through such a struggle, the perfect saint achieves not the destruction of his or her corporeality but its transformation, [385] resurrection and ascension. Just as asceticism in the life of an individual is a suppression of the flesh so also is it, in the general life of humanity, a struggle with external earthly nature. Its subjugation is only a necessary transition and not the ultimate form of activity. Normal activity in this respect is a cultivation of the land, *tending* to it so that it will be renewed and revived in the future.

¹¹⁰ C] thereby] *Absent in AB.*

¹¹¹ C] abnormal (passive) attitude ... (negatively active).] abnormal attitude from the normal and the transition from the former to the latter. **AB.**

VII

*The efficient or producing cause of work is given in human needs. This cause applies to all the factors involved in production which appear as the subjects and then, in turn, as the objects of need. The worker, as a living being, has a need for the means of existence. Yet, as a productive force the worker is the object of a need to the employer, or capitalist, who, in turn, as the one who does the hiring, is the object of the worker's need. In this sense, the employer is the immediate efficient cause of the worker's work. The same people, as producers, stand in a similar interaction with consumers, etc. The material (and instrumental) cause of work and production is given, on the one hand, in the forces of nature and, on the other hand, in the various human faculties and forces. But these economic causes, which are studied from various sides by political economics and statistics, are of two sorts (efficient and material) and have the quality of physical limitlessness and moral indeterminacy. Needs can increase both numerically and in complexity to infinity. Moreover, the needs and faculties can be of different worth. Finally, natural forces can be utilized in the most varied ways. All this evokes practical questions to which political economy in itself, as a science, limited to the material and factual side of the matter, cannot provide an answer. Many people have a need for pornography. Should this need be satisfied by the production of obscene books, pictures and immoral shows?¹¹² Other needs, and also other faculties as well have an evidently distorted character. Thus, in many people certain positive qualities of the mind and the will degenerate into a unique ability to arrange frauds and swindles cleverly [386] but legally. Should we allow the free development of this ability and allow it to become a special profession or type of work? Obviously, political economics as such cannot provide an answer to such questions. They are not its concern. However, such questions do directly concern the explicit interests of society, which cannot be limited to the material and factual aspects of phenomena alone. Society must subordinate them to a higher causality, distinguishing between normal and abnormal needs and abilities, between normal and abnormal uses of natural forces. Since, on the one hand, the factual existence of needs and, on the other, of forces and abilities solves neither the practical question concerning to what extent we should satisfy the former nor that of in what sense the latter should be used, we must turn to the moral principle to determine precisely what *should* be done. It does not create the factors and the materials utilized in work, but it does indicate how to act with what is given. From this we get a new conception of work, which with all its generality is more specific than that given by political economics in itself, taken separately. For the latter, work is a human activity that, ensuing from our needs, is conditioned by our abilities, is applied to the forces of nature and has as its goal the production of the greatest possible wealth. From the moral point of view, *work is the interaction of people in the material sphere that in agreement with moral demands must secure for all and everyone the necessary means to lead a dignified existence and the means to**

¹¹² C] immoral shows?] theatrical establishments, etc.? AB.

an all-round process of perfection. Its ultimate purpose must be the transformation and spiritualization of material nature. Such is the essence of work with respect to its higher causality, both formal and final and without which the two lower causes would remain practically indefinite.

The additional conditions for a normal economic life are cleared up with an analysis of the concepts of *property* and *exchange*.

VIII

All of the pointed questions of economic life are closely connected with the concept of property, which however belongs in itself more to the fields of law, morality and psychology than [387] to that of economic relations. Already, this fact clearly shows how erroneous the attempt is to isolate economic phenomena in a completely independent and self-contained sphere.

As all serious modern philosophers correctly recognize, the unalienable basis of property lies in the very essence of the human individual. Already, we distinguish within inner psychic experience *our own selves* from *what is ours*. We distinguish all thoughts, feelings and desires that appear within us as *ours* from whom they belong to, i.e., from *ourselves* as the one who thinks, feels and desires. The relation here is two-fold. On the one hand, we certainly put ourselves above what is ours, because we recognize that our existence is in no way exhausted and is not limited to these or those mental states, that *this* thought, *this* feeling, *this* desire can vanish, but we ourselves remain. This is the fundamental expression of human individuals in our formal unconditionality quite independently of the metaphysical question of the mind as a substance.¹¹³ On the other hand, however, we are aware that if we take away all mental states in general, we ourselves would be transformed into a blank slate. For this reason, the “myself” is insufficient for the reality and full scope of being. There must also be a “mine.” Within this inner, psychic sphere, the “mine” is not always a person’s unconditional possession and does not always belong to that person in the same tight manner. There are mental states the contents of which express in the most intimate, direct and immediate manner something essential and fundamental in a given individual and therefore are, in a certain sense, inseparable from this individual. So when someone has an unflinching, staunch belief in God, this faith is one’s indispensable property—not in the sense that he or she would always actually have in mind his affirmative idea of God with the corresponding feelings and desires, but only in the sense that each time the idea of God actually comes to mind, or each time the issue of God is posed, a definite positive answer together with the corresponding feelings and the will certainly follows. On the contrary, other mental states are only superficial and temporary reactions of the individual to external [388] influences—contingent both in terms of their content as

¹¹³ C] our formal unconditionality ... as a substance.] our unconditional or infinite significance.

well as their origin, even though they are more or less due to a complex association of ideas and other mental as well as physical processes. Thus, when someone has a thought about the benefit or harm of cycling, or has a desire to drink beer, or feels indignant in reaction to some lie in newspapers, etc., it is quite clear¹¹⁴ that such contingent states are only weakly connected with the person to whom they belong. When these states disappear, the individual loses nothing and experiences no essential change. Finally, however, there are also mental phenomena that, independent of their content and of the circumstances that brought them about, cannot be seen as an actual reaction of the individual who experiences them. Consequently, that they belong to this individual must be recognized as a sham. It is very difficult to offer a theoretical explanation for them, but these *inner* (hypnotically or otherwise) thoughts, feelings and desires along with the actions that follow from them are quite indisputable facts. Moreover, in addition to these unusual phenomena it is enough to point out that in science and in life individuals are *not held responsible* for certain actions even though they have evidently¹¹⁵ committed them. Nevertheless, since for the most part such actions are due to corresponding ideas, feelings and desires on the part of the agent, this recognition of a lack of responsibility assumes that certain mental states are not one's *own* or are not the *property* of the person who experiences them.¹¹⁶

Thus, even within the sphere of inner, psychic¹¹⁷ life we find only relative and unequal property starting with the "treasure" in which we "place our soul"¹¹⁸ but which, however, can be taken from us and ending with states, our possession of which turns out to be a complete sham. We find a similar relativity within the sphere of external property. The immediate object of it is one's own body, which, however, belongs only more or less to a person. In the first place, taken in the natural sense an individual cannot to the same extent consider as one's own those organs or parts of the body without which earthly life would be quite impossible (for example, the head or the heart), those also without which life would be possible but not pleasant (as, for example, "the apple of one's eye"), and finally those the loss of which would not amount to any misfortune (such as an amputated finger [389] or a extracted tooth, to say nothing about nails, hair, etc.)¹¹⁹ Therefore, however, if the real connection of a person with one's own body is relative and unequal, this means there is no natural basis for taking the body as one's absolute property or as absolutely inviolable. From the point of view of the unconditional moral principle, the corporeal inviolability of each person is not something unique but¹²⁰ is connected with universal obligatory norms for all and consequently is incompatible with a violation

¹¹⁴ C] it is quite clear] there is no doubt **A**.

¹¹⁵ C] evidently] undoubtedly **AB**.

¹¹⁶ C] who experiences them.] to whom they belong. **AB**.

¹¹⁷ C] psychic] All Russian editions consulted have here the word "psychological." However, Solowjew 1976 reads here "psychischen" and Solovyof 1918 reads "psychical."

¹¹⁸ E] Cf. Luke 12: 34.

¹¹⁹ C], to say nothing about nails, hair, etc.] *Absent in A*.

¹²⁰ C] is not something unique but] *Absent in A*.

of these norms. If I have not only a right but also an obligation to restrain by force a person from inflicting harm on a defenseless creature, then by the same token I must recognize the same right for others and the same obligation of corporeal compulsion over¹²¹ me in a similar case.

On the other hand, if we understand property in the strict sense as *jus utendi et abutendi re sua* (the right to use and to misuse a thing of one's own), then with respect to one's own body such a right is not recognized as unconditional. In this respect, it is limited by just¹²² considerations of the common good which find expression in the penal legislation of all countries and at all times. If the full physical powers of a person are needed, for example, to defend one's country, then even such a slight "misuse" of one's body as cutting off a finger is to be recognized as a crime. But apart from such special conditions, by no means is every use a person may make of one's body recognized as permissible.

Moreover, whatever be the moral and social limitations of a person's right to one's own body, it, as property, indisputably belongs to that person (just as one's mental states do) by virtue of a direct and natural involuntarily existing connection between the *person* and *what is one's own*. As for external things, the very foundation of the fact that they belong to this or that person, or their appropriation, is not immediately given and demands an explanation. Even in those cases where there exists the closest connection between a person and a thing, as for example between a necessary article of clothing and a person who at a given moment is wearing it, the question of property still remains open, for this article of clothing could not be that person's, but rather belongs to another from whom it was stolen. On the other hand, a person living in Petersburg or London can have an immoveable property in eastern Siberia that he has never [390]seen nor will see. If, therefore, the presence of the closest real¹²³ connection between a person and a thing (as in the first case) is no guarantee of property, and the absence of any real¹²⁴ connection (as in the second case) is not a hindrance to property, then this means a real¹²⁵ connection in general has nothing to do with it, and the possession of things must have an ideal¹²⁶ foundation. According to the generally accepted philosophical definition, property is the ideal¹²⁷ continuation of the person in things or the extension of oneself to things. But how and on what basis is this extension of the self to what is other accomplished so that this other becomes one's own? It cannot be done by an act of an individual will alone. In general, such an act can only transfer an already existing right to property (through inheritance, a gift, etc.), but it cannot create the right itself. It is commonly accepted that a right to property is created only in two direct and original ways: through possession and work. Possession in the strict sense, i.e., without

¹²¹ C] of corporeal compulsion over] to use force on **AB**.

¹²² C] just] *Absent in AB*.

¹²³ C] real] material **A**.

¹²⁴ C] real] material **A**.

¹²⁵ C] real] material **A**.

¹²⁶ C] an ideal] another **A**.

¹²⁷ C] ideal] moral **A**.

any special work (for example, from war), through a simple seizure ensuing from a simple act of the will creates a special property right, the “right of first occupancy” (*jus primi occupantis*¹²⁸), but this happens only in those exceptional cases where the seized property is an object that belongs to no one (*res nullius*).

By general agreement, the essential¹²⁹ foundation of property remains work. The product of a person’s work and effort naturally becomes that person’s own, one’s property. However, this foundation is feeble. If it were adequate, we would have to recognize children to be the property of the mother who not without work and effort brought them forth. Limitations must be accepted, and human beings excluded beforehand from inclusion among the objects of property. This can only be done in light of principles lying quite outside the economic sphere as such. However, a new and more important difficulty arises here. Only things can be an object of property, but the basis of property is recognized to be the work that produces them. This would be fine if work could produce things, but work in no way does so. It produces only the *usefulness* in things. Usefulness, being only a relation and not a real thing, cannot be the object of property. Although in everyday language it has been customary since time immemorial to speak [391] of workers making things, anyone who has not been taught political economics understands that workers only effect changes in a given material that impart to it certain new relative qualities that correspond in one way or another to human needs.¹³⁰ That they produce this work not only for other people but also for themselves, that this work must satisfy their own needs is indubitable. “The worker is worthy of his livelihood.”^{131, 132} This is a moral axiom, which no one in good conscience would begin to dispute. However, what can be the basis of the worker’s property right to the so-called product of his labor?¹³³ In fact, the work, which produces not a thing but only a certain particular quality in it, inseparable from the thing as a whole, cannot provide a right to ownership of what it did not produce and which does not depend on that work. However, the employer is in the same position as the worker, the former being dependent only on the labor of the worker but not for the reality of the product.

Thus, there is no real foundation for why the product of work should be someone’s property, and we must turn to its ideal foundations.

¹²⁸ E] Although the expression goes back to Roman law, Schopenhauer mentioned it. For this reason, we cannot be sure whether Solov’ev already knew the expression from his own readings or whether he learned of it from Schopenhauer. See Schopenhauer 1965: 149 (§ 17).

¹²⁹ C] essential] natural **A**.

¹³⁰ C] to human needs.] to the needs of society. **A**.

¹³¹ F] Of course, “livelihood” is to be taken in the broad sense explained above.

¹³² E] The translation provided here is from Solov’ev’s Russian rendering rather than from the King James version. See Matthew 10: 10. **AB**.

¹³³ C] of his labor?] of his labor? Really, only the inaccuracy of this expression, which, if we take it literally, is an obvious absurdity.

IX

Every person, by virtue of the unconditional significance of the individual, has a right to the means that lead to a dignified existence. Each person in oneself has this right only as a possibility. The actual realization or securing¹³⁴ of this right depends on society. The corresponding obligation of the individual towards society follows from this—the obligation to be useful to it, or to work for the common good. Only in this sense is work the source of property. Workers have an inalienable property right to what they have *earned*. Wages can be regulated by society (i.e., by a central power or government) only within certain limits demanded by the moral principle (i.e., not lower than a certain minimal level) and not prescribed with unconditional precision. [392] On the other hand, even in a normal society the needs and the conditions for a dignified existence can only be *approximated* to a specific and constant extent. Hence, there is for particular individuals the possibility of saving or accumulating material means, i.e., the forming of *capital*. The connection between capital and the person who has accumulated it is certainly even less apparent and real than that between the worker and the thing on which he has worked, but the close and all-round ideal connection is obvious here. Capital, as such, by its general essence (and not by its factual origin in particular cases), is¹³⁵ a pure product of the human will. For originally it depended¹³⁶ upon the human will to set aside a portion of the wages or to use that portion for current needs. Therefore, capital by rights¹³⁷ should be recognized, for the most part, as property.¹³⁸

The concept of property involves the concept of the free use of property as an object. Should this freedom be unconditionally accepted to include the use and misuse of what one owns? Since, in general, the realization of any right whatever is possible only with society's guarantee, it is unclear why society should guarantee the individual's misuse of a right that is contrary to the common good. According to the moral principle, from the fact that an individual has unconditional and inalienable rights, it does not follow that every act of this individual's will is an expression of such an inviolable right. Apart from the lack of rational grounds for it, similar admissions are themselves self-destructive in practice. For a will that violates any right it pleases would turn out also to be inviolable, and consequently no inviolable

¹³⁴ C] Each person in oneself has this right only as a possibility. The actual realization or securing] The securing **AB**.

¹³⁵ C] Capital, as such, by ... cases), is] Capital, as the result of savings, is **A**] Capital, as such, is **B**.

¹³⁶ C] For originally it depended] For it merely depended **AB**.

¹³⁷ C] capital by rights] capital in the mentioned sense by rights **A**.

¹³⁸ F] I have pointed out the source of capital in the simplest normal scheme. However, given all the possible anomalies that accompany the rise and formation of capital in real life, the significance of the will, or the practical force of the spirit, remains essential. Since it is indisputable that wealth can be squandered, the fact alone of *saving* it is for the saver an obvious *merit of the will*, which vanishes in comparison with the merits of another, higher order. Nevertheless, in the absence of these it undoubtedly has importance. C] *This entire note absent in AB*.

right would remain.¹³⁹ And if it is permissible and even proper to prevent a person from misusing his hands (e.g., to commit murder), then it is permissible and proper [393] to prevent him from misusing what he owns at the expense of the common good or social justice.¹⁴⁰

The question is only what are we to consider a misuse that evokes the intervention of the public authorities? Socialism recognizes such a misuse to be any transfer of earned property to another person by inheritance or through a will. This transfer of economic advantages to those who personally did not earn them emerges as the chief injustice and the source of all social misery. But if the continuity of property has real disadvantages, these disappear in light of the positive side of this institution, the necessity of which follows from human nature itself. A continuous chain of human progress is maintained by the conscious succession of its links. As long as the future all-one unity is still in the making, the ongoing progress in its creation demands a mutual moral connection between the generations, by virtue of which one not only follows after another but also *inherits* from the other. Without an intentional and voluntary transfer of what has been earned, there would be only a physical succession of generations each repeating the previous life as happens with animals. Certainly, most important of all is the continuous augmenting of our spiritual legacy, but since only a few people are fated to bequeath enduring spiritual acquisitions to universal posterity—and moral demands are the same for all—then for the majority of people there is a right and obligation to care about the material improvement of the living conditions of their personal successors. Those who sincerely devote themselves to realize a universal future and already anticipate it ideally have a right to refer to the tranquility found in the Gospels.¹⁴¹ In order to imitate the lilies of the field one must have their purity, and in order to imitate the heavenly birds one must fly to their heights. But with our shortcomings in those respects, our everyday serenity can liken us not to the lilies or to heavenly birds, but really only to the animal, which with its serene attitude towards the future not only undermines [394] the roots of the beneficial oak tree but on occasion devours its own offspring instead of acorns.

Let us take an institution that is not immoral but that, despite having ideal foundations, conforms merely to a middle level of morality. If a question is posed about this institution, the serious moralist ought not to forget the indubitable truth that it is much more difficult for a society to rise above this level than to descend below it. Even if socialism and similar theories intend to transform every human being into an angel, they still would not succeed. However, to bring human masses down

¹³⁹ C] similar admissions are themselves ... would remain] similar admissions would lead to absurd practical consequences. For we would then have to accept the freedom to commit crimes, and society would have no right to counteract A.

¹⁴⁰ F] Even Roman law with all of its individualism in this sphere did not adhere to the absolute formula adduced above without an essential limitation: *proprietas est jus utendi et abutendi re sua quantumvis juris ratio patitur*—property is the right to use and misuse a thing of one's own to the extent that it is *compatible with the sense* (or rational foundation) of *justice*. But the sense of justice expressly demands a limitation on private arbitrariness in favor of the common good.

¹⁴¹ E] See Matthew 6: 25–34.

to the bestial state is not at all difficult. To deny in the name of the unconditional moral ideal the necessary social conditions for moral progress would mean, in the first place and contrary to logic, to confuse the absolute and eternal value of *what is being realized* with the relative value of the degree of realization as a temporal process. Second, it means a frivolous attitude to the absolute ideal which, without the actual conditions for its realization, is for us mere idle talk. Third and finally, this pseudo-moral uncompromising directness reveals the absence of the most fundamental and elementary moral motivation—*pity*, and pity to those who need it the most—all the way to those who need it the least. To preach absolute morality while rejecting all moralizing institutions, to impose burdens on the weak and helpless shoulders of the average person, is *illogical, frivolous and immoral*.

Inherited property is the abiding realization of a mutual moral relation within the closest and also the most fundamental social sphere—the family. Inherited fortune is, on the one hand, the embodiment of a pity extending beyond the grave from the parents to the children, and, on the other hand, a real pillar of support for the pious memory of the deceased parents. But connected with this, at least in the case of the most important type of property, namely, land, there is also a third moral factor: our relation to external nature, i.e., to the Earth. For the majority of people this relation can become moral only on condition that they inherit land. To understand terrestrial nature and to love it for itself is given to only a few. But everyone is naturally attached to one's own native spot on the Earth, to [395] the graves and cradles of one's family. It is a moral connection and one, moreover, that extends human solidarity to material nature, thereby marking the beginning of its spiritualization. Here we have not only the justification of the present practice¹⁴² of inheriting property (real estate), but also the foundation for placing it within the ongoing moral ordering. It is not enough to recognize the ideal quality¹⁴³ obviously inherent in such property. This quality¹⁴⁴ must be strengthened and fostered, protecting it from the preponderance of low and self-serving motives that are only too natural at the present stage of humanity. Decisive obstacles must be placed against treating the Earth as an indifferent instrument for rapacious exploitation, and the inalienability of inherited plots of land adequate to maintain in each of us a moral attitude towards the Earth must be established as a principle. But, it is asked, with the continuous increase in population where is there enough land so that not only those who have it can¹⁴⁵ retain it (at least partially) but still have something more to give to those who do not have any? This objection, for all its seeming seriousness, is, in fact, either inadequately thought out or not quite honest. To guarantee to each and all an unalienable plot of land as an unconditional, distinct and independent measure would certainly be a great absurdity. This measure can and must be taken only in connection with another change, viz., the elimination of the rapacious economy in which there will not only not be enough land for everyone but there will not be any for anyone. But

¹⁴² C] justification of the present practice] fundamental justification A.

¹⁴³ C] quality] element AB.

¹⁴⁴ C] quality] element AB.

¹⁴⁵ C] can] Absent in A.

by establishing a moral attitude towards the land, by genuinely *looking after* it as we do a loved one, the minimum size of the plot sufficient for each person can be reduced to a size¹⁴⁶ so that there is enough land for all who have none without wronging those who have.

As for an unlimited increase in population, it is ordained neither by any physical and even less by a moral law. It goes without saying that a normal economy is possible only given a normal family, which is based on a rational asceticism and not on boundless carnal instincts. The immoral exploitation of the Earth cannot stop as long as there is immoral exploitation of women. With an improper [396] attitude towards one's inner *house* (as the Scriptures call the wife), is a proper attitude to one's outer house possible? How can a man who beats his wife tend to the Earth as he should?¹⁴⁷ In general, the essence of a moral solution to the economic issue lies in its intimate connection to the whole problem of human life and to the life of humanity.

X

Just as physiological life is impossible without the exchange of substances, so social life is impossible without the exchange of things (and of the signs that represent them). The technique involved in this important sphere of human material relations is studied by political economics and financial and commercial law. It is of concern to moral philosophy only when the *exchange* becomes *fraudulent*. It is unforgivable childishness¹⁴⁸ to evaluate economic phenomena and relations by themselves, as some moralists today do, and assert, for example, that money is an evil, that commerce should not exist, that banks should be eliminated, etc. These condemned objects are obviously indifferent, or "neutral," from a moral perspective. They become good or evil solely on the basis of the quality or direction of the will that employs them. If we must reject money as an evil because many people use it to do evil, then we must also reject the gift of articulate speech since many use it for swearing, idle talk and perjury. We would also have to reject the use of fire out of fear of conflagrations and water out of fear of drowning. In fact, however, money, commerce and banks are not evil but become evil or, more precisely, become the result of an already existing evil and the cause of a new evil¹⁴⁹ when, instead of a necessary exchange they serve as the means of a selfish fraud.

¹⁴⁶ C] to a size] as much as possible **AB**.

¹⁴⁷ C] How can a man ... as he should?] *Absent in A*.

¹⁴⁸ C] unforgivable childishness] fruitless **A**.

¹⁴⁹ C] money, commerce and banks ... new evil] just as a moral sermon is an evil only when instead of truth it inspires delusions, so money, commerce and banks are an evil only **A**] just as a moralist is evil only when instead of the truth he or she preaches a lie, so money, commerce and banks are evil only **B**.

The root of evil here, as in the entire economic sphere, is one and the same: the transformation of a material interest from of secondary to that of primary importance, from dependent to independent, from a means to an end. In the sphere of exchange, three malicious trunks, as it were, spring from this poisonous root: falsification, speculation and usury.

We read in the newest textbook of political economy that “commerce is commonly understood to be the commercial pursuit of buying and selling of commodities with the goal of obtaining a profit.”¹⁵⁰ That commerce is the buying [397]and selling of commodities is only a linguistic definition. Its essence, however, lies in its goal, which is recognized here to be the profit of the merchant.¹⁵¹ But if commerce simply has to be profitable, then this legalizes all profitable falsifications of commodities and all successful speculation. If profit is the goal of commerce, then it is certainly also the goal of such a transaction as the loaning of money, and since the loaning of money is more profitable the higher the rate of return, this also justifies unlimited usury. On the contrary, recognizing such phenomena as outside the moral norm, we must recognize that commerce and exchange in general can serve as instruments for individual profit only on the necessary *condition* that they render first of all a social service or fulfill a social function for the good of all.

From this point of view, the mentioned economic anomalies can be definitively eliminated only at their immoral root. But everyone understands that the unhindered growth of a plant fortifies its roots and extends them wider and deeper, and if the roots are very deep, then it is necessary first of all to cut the stem. Ceasing to speak allegorically, except for the inner, purely ideal and verbal struggle with the vice of self-interest, a normal society can and should decisively counteract such lush growths of immeasurable greed as commercial falsification, speculation and usury by taking real external measures.

The imitation of commodities, particularly those of necessary consumption, threatens public security and is not only immoral but is a blatant criminal offense. It is recognized to be such in other cases at present, but this view should be developed more decisively. With a general transformation of the criminal process and the penitentiary system¹⁵² the intensive prosecution of these special offenses will not be cruel, but only just. Along with this, we should not forget two things. In first place, those who suffer most of all from this evil¹⁵³ are the poor and ignorant, who already are wretched enough; and in second place, [398] the unhindered flourishing of these crimes, like all others, is an offense not only to the victims, but also to the criminals themselves, who can find their immorality justified and encouraged by such social connivance.

¹⁵⁰ E] Isaev 1894: 430.

¹⁵¹ F] Of course, I do not blame this definition on the author of the textbook, which merely passes on what is “commonly understood.” C] “commonly understood.” His own views, which are amply expressed in a clear manner in other places in the textbook, recognize self-interest as the sole principle of economic relations. **AB.**

¹⁵² F] See above Chap. XV.

¹⁵³ C] evil] deception **A.**

Financial transactions with false values (so-called “speculations”) are certainly not so much an individual crime as a social disease.¹⁵⁴ Here, above all, there must be an unconditional prohibition of the institutions where this disease thrives.¹⁵⁵ Finally, as for usury, the only sure way to destroy it is, obviously, the general development of normal¹⁵⁶ credit, not as a selfish institution but as a charitable one.

Speaking of proper¹⁵⁷ economic relations related to work, property and exchange, we spoke all the time of justice and right. We also presupposed these concepts in our argument on the penal question. For the most part in this matter, the terms “justice” and “right” could be understood as one and the same. However, the concept of justice expresses a purely moral demand and consequently belongs to the ethical sphere, whereas right belongs to a special sphere of relations—the juridical sphere. Is this distinction only a misunderstanding, and if it is well-founded, then in what sense and to what extent? Turning now to the issue of the relation between morality and right and prejudging nothing about the content of our investigation, we will note only that the scope of the question is very broad, since the concept of right is inevitably connected with an inextricable chain of other concepts: law, authority, legal coercion, the state. These concepts were already implicit when we spoke about the *organization* of just social relations, for clearly moral preaching alone cannot realize such an organization.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ C] Financial transactions ... social disease.] Speculation in commodities and thus their paper value is not so much an individual crime as a social disease. **AB**.

¹⁵⁵ C] disease thrives.] disease thrives, such as lotteries, sweepstakes, etc. **AB**.

¹⁵⁶ C] normal] publicly accessible **B**.

¹⁵⁷ C] proper] normal **B**.

¹⁵⁸ C] development of normal credit ... an organization] development of publicly accessible credit in the sense of a philanthropic institution. Likewise, the ultimate solution to the entire socio-economic issue lies merely in the moral organization of economic relations. **A**.

[399]Chapter 17

Morality and Legal Right

I

The very essence of the *unconditional* moral principle, understood as a *commandment* or *demand* (viz., to be perfect like our Heavenly Father,¹ or to realize the image and likeness of God in oneself) contains the recognition of a *relative* moral element. For clearly the demand to be perfect can be directed only to someone who is imperfect. Morally obligating this someone *to become* like the supreme being, this commandment assumes lower stages and relative degrees of exaltation. Therefore, the unconditional moral principle, or the perfect moral good, is for us, in the language of Hegel, the unity of itself and its other, a synthesis of the absolute and the relative. The existence of the relative, or imperfect, as distinct from the absolute Moral Good, is an unavoidable fact and to deny it, *to confuse* the two terms with each other or to affirm their identity with each other by means of dialectical hocus-pocus and mystical outbursts, would mean to engage in playing a false or affected game. However, it is just as false to take the opposite attitude towards the matter, namely *to separate* the relative from the absolute taking them as two completely distinct spheres that have nothing in common with each other. Given such a dualism, the human being, whose aspirations for the absolute are inseparably combined with relative conditions, turns out to be the embodiment of nonsense.² The sole serious point of view to which reason and conscience commit us lies in recognizing that the factual duality of the absolute and the relative is resolved in a free and complete unity (but [400]by no means in an empty identity or indifference). This unity

E] In **B**, this, the 14th chapter, spans pp. 484–512. As with Chap. 12, many passages in this chapter were also included in the separately published work, Solov'ëv 1899a, though the two are by no means identical. Solov'ëv, again, opposes in this chapter what he takes as the two extreme positions of Leo Tolstoy, on the one hand, and Boris Chicherin, on the other.

¹ E] Cf. “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5: 48.

² C] embodiment of nonsense.] embodiment of nonsense, approaching the absurd. **B**.

is achieved by means of a real moral process of increasing perfection starting from the stagnant stone up to the freedom and glory of the children of God.³

At every stage of existence, the relative is connected with the absolute as one means leading to the *actual* perfecting of all, and in this regard the lesser moral good finds its justification as a condition of the greater moral good. At the same time, this is a justification of the absolute Moral Good itself, which would not be absolute if it could not connect to itself or include within itself in one way or another all actual relations. In fact, in no region of the world accessible to us do we ever find these two terms separately or in their bare form. The absolute principle is everywhere invested with relative forms, and the relative is intrinsically connected to the absolute and is supported by it. The entire difference lies in the comparative predominance of this or that aspect.

If any two spheres or two sorts of actual relations are demarcated and set against each other, ascribing to one of them an unconditional significance and to the other only a relative one, then we can know in advance that this opposition is itself only relative, that neither sphere has a purely absolute nor a purely relative character. There is only a special connection between the two, a connection that is different in both form and degree but identical in essence and ultimate purpose. This relation of each to the absolute forms a positive connection or solidarity between the two.

Within the bounds of the active, or practical, life of humanity, there is an apparent opposition between the moral sphere, strictly speaking, and the legal sphere. From antiquity (starting with the pagan Cynics and the Christian Gnostics) right up to our own day this opposition has been taken as absolute. An unconditional significance has been ascribed to morality alone, and law, being a purely contingent phenomenon, has been rejected in the name of absolute demands. One immediately *feels* that such a view is false. Moral philosophy obliges us not to dwell on this possibly deceptive feeling. Instead, we are to examine the concrete relation between morality and law from the point of view of the unconditional Moral Good. Is this Moral Good justified with respect to law? A person interested in etymology will note that the answer to this question already [401]lies in the terms of the question. We will pursue this philological fact further, but it must not in itself prejudice the philosophical problem before us.⁴

II

In the lectures on criminal law, Prof. N.S. Tagancev cites, among other things, the following Prussian edict from 1739:

³ E] of the children of God] Cf. “Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Romans 8: 21.

⁴ C] The very essence ... problem before us.] *The entire § 1 absent in A.*

If an attorney, procurator or some such person dares to present a memorandum to his royal majesty, either personally or asks another to do so for him, his royal majesty will take pleasure in seeing that such person be hanged without mercy and that a dog be hanged alongside him.⁵

The legitimacy or legality of such an edict is indisputable, and just as indisputable is its opposition to the elementary⁶ demands of justice. This opposition is, as it were, intentionally emphasized by extending the criminal responsibility of the attorney or legal agent to a perfectly innocent dog. Other similar, though not so glaring, cases of a divergence between morality and positive legal right, between justice and statutory law, are a common occurrence in history. How are we to deal with this; which side are we to take in this conflict between the two chief principles of practical life? The answer is apparently clear: Moral demands in themselves have an inner unconditional obligatory character that positive⁷ legal rights can completely lack. Hence, it seems one could⁸ conclude that the problem of the relation of morality to legal right is resolved by simply rejecting one's legal right as the proper or obligatory principle of our actions. According to this view, all human relations must be reduced to purely moral interactions, and the sphere of legally rightful or lawful relations and determinations must be entirely rejected.

Such a conclusion is extremely easy but at the same time quite frivolous. This "antinomism" (anti-legalism), beginning with an unconditional opposition of morality to legal right, has never subjected nor does it now subject its basic assumption to any consistent or profound critique.

The contradiction with the demands of morality that we see in such [402] formal laws as the edict of the Prussian king, quoted above, is too obvious. However, do we not also find contradictions between it and the demands of legal right itself? The reader will get a better understanding of the possibility of a contradiction between the formal legality of certain actions and the essence of legal right if I present an actual example of an analogous contradiction between the formally moral character of an action and the essence of morality.

As the newspapers reported, not long ago in the middle of Moscow's Nikolsky Street around St. Panteleimon Chapel a mob of people injured and nearly beat to death a woman suspected of bringing an illness on a boy by means of a bewitched apple. These people acted without selfish motives or external considerations. They had no personal hatred for the woman and no personal interest in beating her. Their sole motivation was a realization that such a flagrant criminal act as the poisoning of an innocent boy⁹ through sorcery should receive a just requital. Therefore, it is impossible to deny that the crowd's action has a formally moral character, though

⁵ E] As was his typical practice here, Solov'ëv fails to provide referential information. Therefore, we cannot say with any certainty which edition of N. S. Tagancev's *Lectures on Russian Criminal Law* he used. However, for another citation of this Prussian edict see Bar 1916: 230f.

⁶ C] elementary] fundamental **A**.

⁷ C] that positive] that, at first sight, positive **AB**.

⁸ C] it seems one could] many have concluded and do **A**.

⁹ C] as the poisoning of an innocent boy] as poisoning **AB**.

everyone will agree that, in essence, it was decidedly immoral. However, if the fact that outrageous crimes can be committed for purely moral reasons does not lead us to reject morality itself, then on what basis do such essentially unjust, though lawful, decrees as the 1739 Prussian edict seem to us enough to reject laws? If, in the case of the crime on Nikolsky Street, the moral principle is itself not at fault but only that the semi-barbaric crowd had an inadequate level of moral awareness, then in the case of the absurd Prussian law what is at fault is not the idea itself of legal right or law but only the poor level of King Friedrich-Wilhelm's legal consciousness. This would not be worth mentioning if, contrary to logic, the bad habit of deducing general conclusions from particular, concrete cases had not been recently reinforced precisely with respect to the juridical sphere.¹⁰

III

There is no real contradiction and incompatibility between legal right and morality, but between the different states of awareness of both legal right and morality. Besides [403]these states and their factual expressions, there lie essential and abiding norms in the legal as well as in the moral sphere. Even the lying spirit is passively conscious of this in its sophistic¹¹ attack on jurisprudence:

Laws and rights are a hereditary illness
 Passing through humanity
 One after another, all generations
 Carry them everywhere.
 Reason becomes absurdity, and mercy suddenly mischief
 So, suffer grandson on your appearance!
 The right with which everyone is born,
 About it, there is no question.¹²

Even Mephistopheles recognizes this *natural right*, complaining only that that is not the issue.¹³ This is, in fact, precisely the issue any time legal matters in general are discussed. It is impossible to judge or evaluate any fact pertaining to the legal sphere, any expression of legal right if we have no general idea, or norm, of legal right. Mephistopheles himself utilizes this idea, or norm, when he says that certain rational legal rights and laws, though once beneficial, have now become senseless and harmful. He, thereby, indicates only one side of the matter, namely, the so-called *conservatism* of law. This phenomenon does indeed have its rational basis, and the inconveniences that follow from it and on which Mephistopheles

¹⁰ C] This would not be worth ... juridical sphere.] *Absent in A.*

¹¹ C] its sophistic] its frivolous, sophistic **AB.**

¹² E] Cf. Goethe 2001: 52 (Part I, Scene IV, lines 1972–1979). The reference to “the lying spirit” is also to Goethe 2001: 49. The translation here is from Solov’ev’s presumably own Russian translation.

¹³ F] Aside from the direct meaning of this remark, we can also see in it a certain prophecy about the persecution that befell the idea of natural law in jurisprudence a quarter century after Goethe. There are signs that this persecution is now coming to an end.

singularly dwells¹⁴ are eliminated by another phenomenon that the lying spirit, for its own reasons, does not mention, namely the phenomenon of a constant rise in legal consciousness and in an actual improvement in legal institutions. We can see this indisputable *progress* in legal right even in the case of the unjust law quoted above.¹⁵ This is not to say that such statutes as the 1739 Prussian edict have become quite impossible in any European country and that the foremost representatives of¹⁶ legal awareness long ago condemned the death penalty even [404]for the worst, obvious crimes. On the other hand, however, this edict represents indisputable progress in comparison with the conditions that prevailed earlier in Brandenburg and in Pomerania, as in the rest of Europe when every powerful baron, seeking personal revenge, could calmly kill peaceful people or do so in order to seize their property. In contrast, in the entire country during the reign of Frederick the Great's father, the life of a person could be taken only by the king alone, who had no personal or self-interested goals. In this matter, it is clear that in composing this edict Friedrich-Wilhelm was interested only in suppressing slander and cavil by threatening capital punishment but by no means in actually putting lawyers, procurators and dogs to death. In committing acts of violence, the barons were, undoubtedly, murderers and robbers, whereas in this outrageous edict the king still acted as the guardian of justice albeit with a rather low level of legal consciousness.

However, this difference of degree, this actual progress in legal right, the unswerving attraction of legal regulations toward legal norms, conformable, though not identical, to moral demands, adequately shows that there is not merely a negative relation between these two principles. It also shows that it is impossible precisely from the point of view of morality itself to get rid easily of the whole sphere of juridical events and problems by a simple and idle rejection of them.

IV

One of the fundamental problems in practical philosophy is the relationship between the moral and the legal spheres. In essence, the issue concerns the connection between ideal moral awareness and real life. The vitality and fecundity of moral awareness itself depends upon understanding this connection in a positive way. Between the ideal moral good and evil reality, there lies the intermediate sphere of legal right and law, which serves as the embodiment of the moral good and to limit and correct evil.¹⁷ [405]Legal right and its embodiment, namely the state, condition the actual¹⁸ organization of the moral life of humanity on the whole. With its negative attitude towards legal right, as such, moral preaching that is devoid of objec-

¹⁴ C] on which Mephistopheles singularly dwells] to which Mephistopheles singularly points **AB**.

¹⁵ C] of the unjust law quoted above.] with which I began. **A**.

¹⁶ C] the foremost representatives of] *Absent in A*.

¹⁷ C] Between the ideal ... correct evil.] *Absent in A*.

¹⁸ C] actual] current **AB**.

tive means and grounding in the real, foreign environment would remain¹⁹ at best only innocent idle talk. On the other hand, with the complete divorce of its formal concepts and institutions from their moral principles and ends, legal right would lose²⁰ its unconditional foundation. In essence, nothing would distinguish it from the arbitrary.²¹

Moreover, the fully consistent disconnection of legal right from morality would require a rejection of human speech itself, which, regardless of the language, invariably testifies to the fundamental internal connection between the two ideas. The concept of right and the correlative concept of obligation are so much a part of the sphere of moral ideas that they can directly serve to express these ideas. Everyone understands and no one will challenge such ethical assertions as: I am aware of my *obligation* to refrain from all that is shameful, or, what amounts to the same thing, I recognize as a human dignity (in my person) the *right* to my respect. I am *obliged* so far as I am able to help my neighbors and serve the common good. That is, my neighbors and the whole of society have a *right* to my help and service. Finally, I am obliged to harmonize my will with what I consider to be the unconditionally supreme. In other words, the unconditionally supreme has a *right* to a religious attitude on my part (on which all religious worship is originally based).

All moral relations can be correctly expressed in commonly understood legal terms. Obviously, one might ask what could be further from anything juridical than love for one's enemies? However, if the supreme moral²² *law obliges* me to love my enemies, then my enemies clearly have a *right* to my love. If I refuse to love them, then I act unjustly. In other words, I violate a *moral truth*. Here, we have the term that uniquely embodies the essential unity of the juridical and moral principles.²³ For a right is nothing if not an expression of a moral truth, and, on [406]the other hand, all virtues also amount to an expression of moral truth or justice, i.e., to what should be or is correct in the ethical sense.²⁴ Here, it is not a matter of an accidental identity of terms, but of an essential homogeneity and inner connection²⁵ of the concepts themselves.

It certainly does not follow from this that the spheres of law and morality coincide with each other or that ethical and juridical concepts can be mixed. The only

¹⁹ C] would remain] remains **B**.

²⁰ C] would lose] loses **B**.

²¹ C] moral preaching that is devoid ... from the arbitrary.] with the complete divorce of legal concepts and institutions from the ethical sphere, moral preaching remains at best only innocent idle talk. **A**.

²² C] moral] *Absent in A*.

²³ F] Moral and juridical concepts are expressed in all languages by either the same words or words derived from a single root. The Russian word "*dolg*," like the Latin word "*debitum*" (from which the French word "*devoir*" comes) as well as the German "*Schuld*," has both a moral and a legal meaning. In the cases of *δικη* and *δικαιοσύνη*, the Latin *jus* and *justitia*, as well as the Russian words "*pravo*" and "*pravda*," the German *Recht* and *Gerechtigkeit*, the English "right" and "righteousness," the two meanings are distinguished merely by means of suffixes. Compare also the Hebrew *tsedek* and *tsedeka*.

²⁴ F] See above in the first part of the chapter "On Virtues." C] *In A*, this note reads: See the article "On Virtues" in the May 1895 issue of *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii*.

²⁵ C] and inner connection] *Absent in AB*.

thing that is indisputable is that between these two spheres there is a positive and close, intimate relationship²⁶ that does not permit the rejection of one in the name of the other. The question is: What precisely is the connection and the difference between these two spheres?

V

Talk *about moral right* and moral obligation entails the elimination, on the one hand, of any idea about a fundamental opposition or incompatibility between moral and juridical principles. On the other hand, it indicates an essential difference between them. For by designating a given right (e.g., my enemy's right to my love) as merely²⁷ *moral*, we imply that in addition to the moral there is still another right, i.e., in another, narrow sense, a *right as such*,²⁸ which does not have a direct and immediate moral character. In fact, let us take, on the one hand, the obligation to love our enemies along with their corresponding moral right to our love. On the other hand, let us take the obligation to pay off our debts on time, or the obligation not to rob and kill our neighbors along with the corresponding right not to be robbed, killed or cheated. Obviously, there is an essential difference between these two sorts of relations, and only the second of them is a moral right in the proper or narrow sense.

[407]The difference here amounts to the following three chief points:

- 1) A purely moral demand, such as, for example, love thy enemies, is essentially unlimited or all-encompassing. It presupposes moral perfection or at least an unlimited aspiration for perfection. Every limitation, assumed as a *principle*, is contrary to the nature of the moral commandment and undermines its value and significance. Someone who in principle²⁹ rejects the unconditional ideal thereby rejects morality itself and abandons the moral ground. On the contrary, juridical law as such is essentially limited, as we can clearly see from all the instances in which it has been applied.³⁰ Instead of perfection, it demands the lowest, the minimum level of morality, i.e., the merely factual delay of certain manifestations of the immoral will. However,³¹ this opposition is not a contradiction that leads to real conflict. From the moral side, it is impossible to deny that such demands as to pay back promissory notes conscientiously, to refrain from murder, robbery, etc., are demands that, though elementary, are, nevertheless, a good and not an evil. If we must love our enemies, then *all the more* must

²⁶ C] close, intimate relationship] intimate, inner connection **A**] close, intimate connection **B**.

²⁷ C] merely] *Absent in AB*.

²⁸ C] i.e., in another, narrow sense, a *right as such*,] *Absent in AB*.

²⁹ C] in principle] *Absent in A*.

³⁰ C] as we can clearly see from ... has been applied.] *Absent in A*.

³¹ C] However,] Clearly, however, **AB**.

we respect the lives and property of all our neighbors. Without the fulfillment of these lower demands, it is impossible to fulfill the higher commandments. From the juridical side, although civil or criminal law does not demand higher moral perfection, it also does not reject it. Forbidding anyone from murdering and cheating, it cannot, and indeed has no need,³² to prevent anyone who pleases from loving his or her enemies. Therefore, on this point (which in certain moral theories is mistakenly taken to be the only important one) the relation between the two principles of practical life can only be expressed by saying: *A right is the lowest limit or definite minimum of morality.*

- 2) The second difference follows from the unlimited nature of purely moral demands, namely that their fulfillment is certainly neither caused nor exhausted by any specific external manifestations or material actions. The commandment to love one's enemies does not indicate (except as an example)³³ what precisely we should do as a result of this love, that is, what specific external actions are to be done and what we are to refrain from doing.³⁴ At the same time, if we must express our love through specific actions, the moral commandment cannot be considered already fulfilled by these actions and as not demanding anything more. The task of fulfilling this commandment, which is an [408]expression of absolute perfection, remains infinite. On the contrary, a juridical law prescribes or entirely prohibits specific external acts, the performance or non-performance of which is in compliance with this law and nothing more is demanded. If I procure the money I owe in time and pass it to my creditor, if I do not physically murder and do not rob, etc., then I have satisfied the law and it needs nothing more from me. There is no contradiction in this opposition of the moral law to the juridical. The demand for a moral frame of mind not only does not exclude external actions, but in general directly presupposes them as its proof or justification. No one believes that a person is intrinsically merciful if the individual never performs any charitable deeds. On the other hand, the order to act in a specific manner is in no way a denial of the inner states corresponding to them, although it certainly does not demand them.³⁵ Both the moral and juridical law concern, properly speaking, the inner human essence, the human will. However, the former takes this will in its universality and entirety, whereas the latter does so only in its partial realization with respect to certain external facts. These facts form the specific interest of a right, such as the inviolability of life and the property of every person, etc. The important point from the juridical view is precisely the objective expression of our will in carrying out or in barring certain acts. This is another essential characteristic of a right. If it is originally defined as a certain

³² C] has no need] does not want A.

³³ C] (except as an example)] *Absent in A.*

³⁴ C] love, that is, what specific ... refrain from doing] love. The commandment can be satisfied even without doing anything (i.e., nothing overt). For example, if no opportunity arises to encounter the enemy or to engage him in some meaningful respect. A.

³⁵ C] not only does not exclude ... certainly does not demand them.] does not exclude external actions, since the order to act in a specific manner is in no way a denial of the inner states corresponding to them. AB.

minimum of morality, then, in adding to this definition, we can say that a right is a demand *to realize* this minimum, i.e., *to carry out a definite minimal moral good* or, we could say, the actual elimination of a certain amount of evil. On the other hand, the moral interest, properly speaking, is immediately concerned not with the external realization of the moral good, but with its intrinsic existence in the human heart.³⁶

- 3) A third difference arises through this second one. The demand for moral perfection, as an intrinsic state, presupposes free or voluntary fulfillment; any [409]compulsion, not just physical but also psychological, is here essentially both undesirable and impossible. On the other hand, the external realization of a certain regular order supposes a direct or indirect *compulsion*, and insofar as we recognize that the direct and immediate goal here is precisely the realization, the external carrying out of a certain good, e.g., of public safety, to that extent the compulsory character of law becomes a necessity. For no sincere person just happens to believe that verbal persuasion alone can immediately stop all murders, fraud, etc.

VI

Combining together the three characteristics mentioned above, we obtain the following definition of right with respect to morality: *A right is a compulsory demand to realize a definite minimal moral good, or to realize an order that excludes certain manifestations of evil.*

Now someone might ask: What is the basis of such a demand and is this compulsory order compatible with the purely moral order, which apparently by its very essence excludes compulsion of any sort? Once the perfect moral good is established as an ideal within consciousness, does it not follow that everyone should be allowed freely to realize the good to the fullest extent possible? Why make the compulsory minimum of morality into a law, when a free fulfillment of the maximum is desired? Why announce with a threat: "Do not kill," when we should gently suggest "Do not be angry"?

All this would be fair if the moral task were a theoretical one and if the perfect moral good were compatible with³⁷ egoistic dispassionateness or indifference with respect to the sufferings of others. However, the true concept of the moral good *necessarily* contains the altruistic principle with a demand for a corresponding concern,³⁸ i.e., compassion for the sufferings of others, that induces us actively to

³⁶ C] heart.] heart. Generally, speaking, a small but actually realized good is preferable to a grandiose one that is not realized (the proverb about a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush). Thus, the minimal content of the good has no right to something that is for it reprehensible or humiliating. *This addition appears in B alone.*

³⁷ C] compatible with] a matter of A.

³⁸ C] with a demand for a corresponding concern] *Absent in A.*

save them from evil.³⁹ Thus, our moral obligation⁴⁰ is in no way limited to a mere awareness and an announcement of the perfect ideal. In the natural course of things, which should not be approved or sanctioned but which it would only be childish not to consider, it happens that⁴¹ while some would freely aspire to the highest ideal⁴² [410]and seek dispassionately to improve themselves, others would, if unhindered, perform every possible outrage and certainly would eliminate the former before they could attain a high degree of moral perfection. Independently of this, even if, by some miracle, those who are evil did not eliminate those with a morally good will, these morally good people would themselves clearly turn out to be *not* good *enough*, since they agree to engage merely in nice conversations about the good, instead of actively helping their neighbors by protecting them from the extreme and destructive clutches of evil.^{43, 44}

A necessary condition of moral interest is personal freedom, without which human dignity and higher moral development are impossible.⁴⁵ However, only within society can a person exist and, consequently, improve one's own freedom and morality. Thus, our moral interest demands that personal freedom not oppose the conditions for the existence of society. This task⁴⁶ cannot be accomplished by the ideal of moral perfection, which is left to free personal efforts. This is because for our vital, practical goal⁴⁷ it gives too much and at the same time too little. On the one hand, it demands too much from us, and on the other it yields too little. From those who know it, the ideal of moral perfection demands love for one's enemies, but this ideal cannot force *someone who does not recognize* its demands to refrain even from murder and robbery. If a frank moralist says that we should not refrain from committing crimes unless it is done voluntarily, then he is guilty of an obvious⁴⁸ injustice. He has forgotten to take into account those who were robbed and the families of the murder victim, as though the injury they suffered is the basis for an ultimate injustice. Moreover, the moral law is given to us so that we "shall live by it."⁴⁹ Without human society, morality would be only an abstract concept.⁵⁰ However, the existence of society does not depend on the perfection of some, but

³⁹ C] others, that induces us actively to save them from evil.] others and an obligation to act and save them from evil or to help them. **A.**

⁴⁰ C] obligation] task **A.**

⁴¹ C] In the natural course ... it happens that] *Absent in A.*

⁴² C] to the highest ideal] to this ideal **A.**

⁴³ C] Independently of this ... clutches of evil.] Our actual moral awareness, similar to the simple human instinct of self-preservation, cannot allow such a chaotic state. **A.**

⁴⁴ C], instead of actively ... clutches of evil] *Absent in B.*

⁴⁵ C] which human dignity ... are impossible.] which higher moral development is impossible. **A.**

⁴⁶ C] task] goal **AB.**

⁴⁷ C] for our vital, practical goal] *Absent in AB.*

⁴⁸ C] obvious] extreme **B.**

⁴⁹ E] Cf. "For Moses describe the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them."—Romans 10: 5.

⁵⁰ C] If a frank moralist ... only an abstract concept.] *Absent in A.*

on the security of all. The moral law by itself⁵¹ does not guarantee this security, and it does not exist for those in whom anti-social instincts predominate. However, this security is protected by a compulsory law that has real power over them. To appeal in this case to the beneficial power of Providence, which should instruct and restrain villains and lunatics, is nothing [411]short of blasphemy. It is profane to charge the Deity with what can be successfully accomplished by a good judicial system.⁵²

Thus, the moral principle demands that people seek to perfect themselves. To achieve this, however, society must exist, and society cannot exist if everyone who wishes to kill and rob his neighbors is allowed to do so unhindered. Consequently, the compulsory law that actually does not permit these extreme, socially destructive expressions of the evil will is a *necessary condition of moral perfection*. As such, it *is demanded by the moral principle itself*, although it is not its direct expression.

Let us assume that (on its ascetic side) the highest morality demands that I be indifferent to whether I am killed, maimed or robbed. However, that very same morality (on its altruistic side) does not allow me to be indifferent to whether my neighbors, if left unhindered, become murderers or be murdered, robbers or be robbed and to whether society, without which human individuals cannot live and improve themselves, risks the danger of being destroyed. Such indifference would be an obvious sign of moral death.

So that it can be realized, the demand for personal freedom presupposes a restraint on this freedom to the extent to which at a given state of humanity it is incompatible with the existence of society or the common good. Although in abstraction they are opposed to each other, these two interests are equally obligatory from the moral viewpoint. Indeed, in reality they coincide, and from their encounter right is born.

VII

The principle of right can be considered from an abstract point of view. Doing so, we, then, see that it is only the direct expression of justice: I maintain my freedom as a right insofar as I recognize the freedom of others as their right. However, the concept of right certainly includes, as we saw, an objective element or a demand for its realization: A right is necessarily always capable of being realized. That is, the freedom of others, independently of my subjective recognition of it, i.e., independently of my personal sense of justice in this matter, can always in practice limit my own freedom to the same extent as all others. This demand [412]for compulsory justice is brought in along with the idea of the common good or social interest, or—what amounts to the same thing—an interest in realizing the moral good. For the latter, it⁵³ certainly is necessary that justice be an actual fact and

⁵¹ C] by itself] *Absent in A.*

⁵² C] To appeal in this case ... judicial system.] *Absent in A.*

⁵³ C] interest, or—what ... moral good. For the latter, it] interest, for which it A.

not just an idea. Certainly, the means and the degree to which this can be realized depends on the state of moral awareness in a given society and on other historical conditions. Therefore, natural right becomes a positive right and from this point of view is expressed⁵⁴ as follows: *Right is the historically dynamic determination of a necessary and*⁵⁵ *compulsory equilibrium between two moral interests—individual freedom and the common good.*

It would be a fatal conceptual confusion to think that the point of a right is the material equalization of private interests.⁵⁶ A right, as such,⁵⁷ has nothing to do with that.⁵⁸ It is concerned simply with the two chief ends of human life—an individual's freedom and the welfare of society. By limiting itself to these ends without introducing a compulsory element into the sphere of private relations, right provides the best service to morality itself. For a person must freely choose to be moral. However, to accomplish this he must be given a certain *freedom to be immoral*. Within certain limits,⁵⁹ right provides us human beings with this freedom, though it does not incline us to use it in the least. If a creditor did not have the compulsory right to collect money from a debtor, then it would be impossible to reject, through a free moral act, this right and forgive the poor man's debt. On the other hand, only the guarantee of the compulsory fulfillment of a freely accepted obligation preserves the debtor's freedom and his equal rights with respect to the creditor. He depends not on the creditor's will, but on his own decision and on the common law. The two interests, that of the individual's personal freedom and that of the common good, coincide here, since without a provision for free contracts there could be no regular social life.

It is even clearer that with respect to criminal law both moral interests coincide. Clearly, each person's freedom or natural right to live and improve oneself would be nothing but empty words if they depended on the arbitrariness of every other person who wants to go around murdering or maiming his neighbor or deprive the latter of the means of subsistence. If we have a moral right to defend our freedom and security from [413]the encroachments by another's evil will, then it is our moral obligation in this respect to help others as well.⁶⁰ This obligation, shared by all, is fulfilled, for the benefit of all,⁶¹ by criminal law.

⁵⁴ C] expressed] defined **AB**.

⁵⁵ C] *determination of a necessary and*] boundary of a **A**.

⁵⁶ C] the material equalization of private interests.] an equilibrium of private interests, or what is called distributive justice. **A**.

⁵⁷ C] , as such,] *Absent in AB*.

⁵⁸ C] that.] that. When a wealthy creditor collects the last penny of a poor debtor, it is clear that the private interests of these people are imbalanced. It was broken by one of the parties. However, in matters of right the issue of the degree of the material being of the parties is immaterial. **A**.

⁵⁹ C] Within certain limits,] *Absent in A*.

⁶⁰ C] in this respect to help others as well.] to defend others from it. **AB**.

⁶¹ C] , for the benefit of all,] *Absent in AB*.

However, in protecting the freedom of peaceful people, the compulsory nature of criminal law still leaves enough room for the effecting of evil inclinations,⁶² and does not compel anyone to be virtuous. If a malicious person wishes to, he or she can display evil in malicious gossip, intrigues, quarrels, etc. Only when an evil will encroaches on the objective public⁶³ rights of his neighbors and threatens the security of society itself, only then must the interest of the common good, which coincides with the interest in freedom of peaceful citizens, limit the freedom of the evil will. In the interest of freedom, a right allows people to be⁶⁴ evil and does not meddle in their free choice between good and evil. Only in the interest of the common good does right prevent an evil person from becoming a *villain*, dangerous to the very existence of society. The purpose of right is not to turn a world lying in evil into the Kingdom of God, but only to prevent it from being transformed into hell *before its time*.

Such a premature hell has threatened humanity *on two sides* and to a certain extent still does so. A normal society, i.e., one that exists securely and is progressing in a proper manner, is conditioned by a correct balance between its personal and collective interests. Thus, anomalies fatal to a society can be based either on a preponderance of personal arbitrariness, which destroys social solidarity, or, on the contrary, on a preponderance of social guardianship, which represses the individual. The first anomaly threatens us with the burning hell of anarchy; the second with the icy hell of despotism, i.e., the same anarchy, the same arbitrariness, only concentrated, gathered and compressed from without.

Of course, in historical reality the balance between one's personal free powers and the collective power of the social organization is fluid, variable and is composed of numerous particular transgressions and recoveries. However, the very fact that we *notice* these variations is sufficient to show that, above them, there are inviolable norms of personal and social relations, that there are eternal boundaries dictated by the very essence of morality and right and that society cannot possibly cross these boundaries from any direction without pernicious consequences in this or that respect. The most [414]common and, in this sense, most important of these boundaries is that which limits the *compulsory* activity of the collective organization exclusively to the field of the really objective, or practical, moral good, leaving all else, i.e., the entire inner, or spiritual, world of man to the complete responsibility of individuals and free (non-compulsory) associations. The protection of everyone's life and property against encroachments from external and internal enemies and, then, the securing of all necessary assistance, education, medical care, food stuff and everything else connected with this (means of communication, the mail, etc.) are all together the practical good which can and should be realized by the organized power of society. Such a practical good inevitably imposes definite restrictions or "duties" on individuals. The *compulsory* characteristic of these restrictions

⁶² C] people, the compulsory ... of evil inclinations] citizens, criminal law still leaves enough room for the effecting of evil passions **AB**.

⁶³ C] objective public] objective, so to speak, public **A**.

⁶⁴ C] allows people to be] does not prevent people from being **A**.

is in itself only *optional*. For this reason, it is clear that someone who, for example, voluntarily abstains from committing crimes does not himself personally experience any constraint as a result of judicial and penitentiary institutions. In general, all restrictions that arise from the necessary organization of social forces are no more at variance with personal freedom than the fact that if I want to obtain something, I must pay for it or if I do not want to get wet in the rain, I must take an umbrella.

The *basic* characteristic of the good that results from the legal organization of society is not compulsion (which is only a possible consequence), but the *direct objectivity of its task*. Above all, what is important here is that certain things factually *are the case* and that certain things factually *are not*. It is important that there be *protection* from savage marauders; it is important that they not burn and destroy towns and villages; it is important that those who are evil not rob and murder travelers; it is important that the population not die out from disease; it is important that the opportunities for an education and cultural formation be available to everyone.

The external character of these necessary goods corresponds to the external way they are obtained, which may be through compulsion if it is unavoidable. Surely, it makes no difference to the immediate, vital work of the courts, hospitals and schools whether their support is based on voluntary donations or on compulsory taxes. However, can we say the same thing about spiritual goods? That very question cannot be posed [415]owing to the fact that by their nature spiritual goods cannot be compulsory. Ultimately, there are two such goods for us humans: virtue, i.e., *the intrinsic inclination of our will to the good in itself*, and veracity (or correct belief), i.e., *the intrinsic agreement of our mind with the truth as such*. It is clear from these definitions alone that freedom, or spontaneity, is part of the very essence of this or that spiritual, or intrinsic, good. Consequently, every external compulsory action in this sphere is, above all, an *illusion*. In any case, being a direct logical contradiction or absurdity, the goal of *externally* forcing a person to have an inner, i.e., *inwardly* determined, inclination to the good, or an inner receptivity to the truth, cannot be achieved, and pointless violence is obviously an evil. Thus, in spiritual matters any compulsory measure undertaken for the sake of a supposed interest in truth and virtue is nothing other than the use of an evil means for a false purpose, which is, for the most part, an abuse.

There happen to be three kinds of violence in our world: (1) *brutal* violence, which is carried out by murderers, robbers and child molesters; (2) *human* violence, necessarily accepted by the compulsory organization of society for the protection of the external material goods of life; and (3) the violent intrusion of our external social organization into the human spiritual sphere under the false pretense of protecting our intrinsic goods. The last is a kind of violence that is *entirely* shaped by evil and falsehood, and this is why it should rightly be called *devilish*.

VIII

By its essence, right serves the external, or objective, good, whereas truth and virtue must always remain a private and unconditionally free concern. Besides the principle of unrestricted religious toleration, certain other consequences also follow from this.⁶⁵

In the field of criminal (as well as civil) law, the freedom of one person is restricted not by the private, or subjective, interest of another person, *taken separately*,⁶⁶ but by the common good. Many self-conscious⁶⁷ and vain people agree that it would be better to be robbed and even maimed than to suffer [416]secret gossip, slander and heartless condemnation. Therefore, if right is intended to protect private interests, as such, it would in these cases have to limit the freedom of slanderers and those who swear even more than the freedom of robbers and rapists.⁶⁸ However, the law does not do this, since a verbal offense⁶⁹ is not as important to the security of society and does not exhibit such a menacing degree of evil will as do crimes against the person and property inviolability. Even if the law did intend to do so, it would be impossible for it to take into account all the forms and nuances of individual sensitivity to insult.⁷⁰ Indeed, if the law did so, it would also be unfair, for it is impossible to prove that an offender had in mind to cause precisely the high degree of suffering that turned out to be the case. *Common law* can be guided only by definite intentions and objective actions, which can stand public examination. In cases that are not a matter of criminal responsibility, the injured party may, if he or she wants, take revenge on the offender using the same means taken against the injured party, whose freedom is respected just as is the freedom of the adversary. If the injured party is morally superior to the latter and does not consider vengeance permissible for oneself, external law would not, in any case, have to be turned to despite one's sensitivity to the offense. If the injured party rejects personal vengeance, then it is all the better for that person and also for the society which is allowed to express freely its moral judgment. For judicial evaluation, what is important is not the evil will *in itself* nor the result of an action *in itself*, which can also be accidental, but only the connection of the intention with the result or the degree to which the evil will has been realized in the action. For this degree of realization and the corresponding degree of danger to society can be objectively determined. They represent an external evil, protection from which is an external good allowing for lawful compulsion.⁷¹

⁶⁵ C] Such a premature hell has threatened ... follow from this.] *This lengthy selection absent from AB.*

⁶⁶ C] *taken separately,*] *Absent in AB.*

⁶⁷ C] self-conscious] sensitive **AB.**

⁶⁸ C] rapists.] mutilators **AB.**

⁶⁹ C] offense] crime **AB.**

⁷⁰ C] insult] offenses **AB.**

⁷¹ C] They represent an ... lawful compulsion.] In the case of premeditated murder, whether accomplished or stopped owing to circumstances out of the control of the would-be criminal, it is

IX

Since the essence of right lies in balancing two moral interests, viz., individual freedom and the common good,⁷² it is clear that the latter can only *limit* the former but *in no way eliminate it*. For then the balance would obviously be disturbed or destroyed through the elimination [417] of one of the terms.⁷³ Therefore, by no means may the measures taken against the criminal lead to the loss of his life or to taking away his freedom forever. Consequently, laws that permit capital punishment, an indefinite term of hard labor or an indefinite period of solitary confinement cannot be justified from the juridical point of view; they contradict the very essence of law. Moreover, the assertion that in certain cases the common good requires the definitive elimination of a given individual contains an inner logical contradiction. The common good is *common*, because in a certain sense it contains the good of *all* individuals *without exception*. For, otherwise, it would not be the common good, but the good⁷⁴ of the majority. It does not follow from this that it consists of a simple sum of private interests or that it permits unrestricted personal freedom for all. In such a case, we would have another contradiction, since those spheres of personal freedom can and actually do conflict with each other. However, it logically follows from the concept of the *common good* that in commonly *restricting* private interests and aspirations (within common limits), there is no way the common good can *eliminate*, as it were, a single bearer of such interests and aspirations by taking away his life and any⁷⁵ possibility of free action. In some way or other, the common good must be the good of *this person too*. However, in taking away his existence and any⁷⁶ possibility of free action—consequently all possibility of effecting any good whatever—it ceases to be a good for him. The common good itself becomes merely a private interest and thus loses its right to restrict personal freedom.⁷⁷

We see that on this point the demands of morality fully coincide with the essence of right. In general, insofar as it exercises compulsion to effect a minimal good, right is distinguished from morality in the proper sense. However, in exercising compulsion that meets the demands of that very [418] morality, right must not⁷⁸ on

clear that this individual's evil will is capable of being implemented, something that is incompatible with both public safety and personal freedom. **AB**.

⁷² C] the common good,] the moral interest of the common good, **A**.

⁷³ C] or destroyed through the elimination of one of the terms.] *Absent in AB*.

⁷⁴ B] but the good] but only the good **AB**.

⁷⁵ C] any] the **AB**.

⁷⁶ C] any] the **AB**.

⁷⁷ F] After what was said in Chap. 15 (on the penal question), I need not explain further that the moral principle not only allows, but in certain cases even demands, that the criminal be temporarily deprived of personal freedom both for his own sake as well as for the safety of society. Along with capital punishment, we must recognize that it is morally impermissible only to sentence a person to a deprivation of freedom for the rest of his or her life. C] After what ... her life.] *Entire note absent in A*.

⁷⁸ C] must not] cannot **AB**.

any occasion contradict it. Therefore, if any positive law should conflict with the moral awareness of the good, we can be certain in advance⁷⁹ that it does not meet the essential requirements of right. Our legitimate interest in such laws lies not in any sense in retaining them, but only in their *lawful* repeal.

X

External, compulsory obligation is one of the essential distinctions between a legal norm and a moral norm in the proper sense. Therefore, by its essence right requires for itself an actual *guarantee*, i.e., sufficient power to realize legal norms.

By virtue of our unconditional significance (in the moral sense), every individual being has an inalienable right to existence and to improve oneself. However, this moral right would be empty words if its genuine realization depended entirely on external fortuities and on the arbitrary will of another. An actual right includes the conditions for its realization, i.e., self-protection against a transgression. The first and fundamental condition for this is a social life, because a solitary person is obviously powerless against the natural elements, against wild beasts and against beastly individuals. However, serving as the necessary *defender* of individual freedom or of the natural rights of the human being, community life entails at the same time a *limitation* of these rights, neither a contingent nor an arbitrary limitation, but one that is intrinsically obligatory⁸⁰ and that follows from the essence of the matter. In using a social organization for the protection of my existence and free activity, I must recognize that it has a right as well to exist and that it is an obligation for me to see that it exist. That is, I must make my actions conform to the conditions that are necessary for society to exist and develop. Both interests coincide here. For if I want to realize my right or secure a sphere of free activity for myself, then certainly I must determine the extent of this realization or the scope of this free sphere in terms of the fundamental demands of the social good. Without the satisfaction of these demands, there cannot be *any* realization of my rights and *no* guarantee [419] of my freedom. An individual's subordination to society is in complete agreement with the unconditional moral principle, which does not sacrifice the particular to the general but unites them so that there is intrinsic solidarity. In sacrificing his unlimited but insecure and inefficacious freedom to society, an individual obtains an actual guarantee for his definite or rational freedom—a sacrifice that is as beneficial as exchanging a dead lion for a live dog.⁸¹

The definite limitation placed on individual freedom at a given time in compliance with the demands of the common good is a positive right or *law* in the strict

⁷⁹ C] in advance] *Absent in A.*

⁸⁰ C] intrinsically obligatory] intrinsic **B.**

⁸¹ C] exchanging a dead lion for a live dog.] a living dog is more powerful than a dead lion. **B E]** Cf. “for a living dog is better than a dead lion”—Ecclesiastes 9: 4.

sense. Since it amounts to the same thing, we can also say that it is a definite balance, given the conditions, or a constant joint occurrence of⁸² the two principles.

Law is essentially a universally recognized and impersonal determination of right. That is, it is a determination independent of all personal opinion and desire, or a concept of the proper balance (under the given conditions and in certain respects) between personal freedom and the good of the whole. It is a determination or *general* concept that is realizable through *particular* judgments in *individual* cases or situations.

Hence, the three necessary and distinctive features of law are: (1) its *public character*—a decree not made *universally* known cannot be universally obligatory, i.e., it cannot be a positive law; (2) its *concrete character*—it expresses norms relating uniquely and specifically to an actual given environment and is not an expression of abstract truths and ideals⁸³; (3) its *real applicability*, or practicality in every *single* case, for the sake of which a “sanction” is always connected with it. That is, there is always the threat of compulsory and punitive measures should its demands not be fulfilled or its prohibitions be breached.⁸⁴

[420] In order that this sanction not remain simply an empty threat, a law must rest on real force, sufficient to see that its fulfillment be carried out in every case. In other words, a right must have actual bearers or representatives who are powerful enough so that the laws they issue and the judgments they pronounce have a compulsory force. Such a real representation of the law or legal agency is called the *authority*.

In demanding that the social whole necessarily protect my natural rights, which I do not have the power to do myself, I must recognize, by reason and in all fairness, the social whole’s positive right to those ways and means of acting without which it could not fulfill the task I desire and find necessary. That is, I must grant this social whole: (1) the authority to enact laws that hold for all; (2) the authority to judge personal matters and actions on the basis of these general laws; and (3) the authority to compel each and everyone to fulfill these legal verdicts as well as all other measures necessary for general security and prosperity.

It is clear that these three different authorities, viz., the legislative, the judicial and the executive, even with all their necessary distinct characters (differentiation), cannot be separated (and even less may contradict each other), for they have one and the same goal: service to the common good according to the law. Their unity

⁸² C] conditions, or a constant joint occurrence of] conditions of **B**.

⁸³ F] Although in certain pieces of legislation there exist resolutions (on paper) that prescribe piety, honor for one’s parents and abstention in general from drunkenness, etc., such pseudo-laws are only an unrepaid leftover from an ancient fusion or mixture of moral and juridical concepts. C] Although in certain pieces of legislation there exist] Only on the basis of a misunderstanding in certain pieces of legislation does there exist **B C**] such pseudo-laws ... juridical concepts.] *Absent in B*.

⁸⁴ F] The pious wishes of the legislator mentioned in the previous note are not accompanied by any sanction. This adequately shows that they are pseudo-laws.

has its real expression in an equal subordination to⁸⁵ a single supreme authority in which all the positive rights of the social whole as such are concentrated. This single principle of sovereignty is immediately manifested in the first authority—the legislative, and since a court of law is not autonomous, the second authority—the judicial—is dependent on the first. This second authority makes its rulings on the basis of laws to which it is subject. The third authority is subject to the first two, and it handles the compulsory enforcement of the laws and judicial verdicts. By virtue of this intrinsic connection, i.e., without the unity of a supreme authority expressed in one way or another, neither laws that all must obey nor regular courts of law nor an effective administration would be possible. That is, the goal itself of the organization of society under law⁸⁶ could not be achieved. It goes without saying that the proper connection between the three [421]authorities is severed not just by separating and setting them in hostile opposition to each other, but also by confusing them and distorting their natural order. This happens, for example, when the second authority, the judicial, is subordinate not to the first, but to the third and is made dependent not on a single law, but on the various organs of the executive authority.

The social body with a definite organization that contains the full scope of positive rights or the one supreme authority is called the state. We must distinguish in every organism the organizing principle, a system of organs or instruments by which the organization is actively effected and the totality of the organized elements. Correspondingly, we distinguish in the collective organism of the state, taken concretely: (1) the supreme authority, (2) its various organs or subordinate authorities, and (3) the substrate of the state, i.e., the mass of the population of a definite territory, consisting of individuals, families and other more or less broad private unions subordinate to the authority of the state. Only in the state does right find all the necessary conditions for its effective realization, and seen from this side the state is the *embodiment of right*.

Without dwelling here on⁸⁷ the issue of the actual historical source and the highest sanction of state authority,⁸⁸ we have simply pointed to its *formal basis* as the necessary condition for the lawful organization of society.⁸⁹ In its simplest practical expression, the meaning of the state lies in the fact that, within its bounds, it subordinates violence to right, arbitrariness to legality and replaces the chaotic and destructive conflict of particular elements of our innate humanity with the correct order of their existence. Compulsion is accepted as a means only in cases of extreme necessity. Its use is determined in advance as specified by the law and is justified, since it originates from a general and⁹⁰ impartial authority. However, this authority

⁸⁵ C] even with all their necessary ... equal subordination to] are only the separate, manifested forms of **B**.

⁸⁶ C] under law] *Absent in B*.

⁸⁷ C] dwelling here on] dealing for the time being with **B**.

⁸⁸ F] Cf. above, in Chaps. 10 and 15, and below in Chaps. 18 and 19. C] *This entire note absent in B*.

⁸⁹ C] society.] society, and this is sufficient for its moral justifications. **B**.

⁹⁰ C] since it originates from a general and] as originating from a general and therefore **B**.

extends only to the borders of the given territory of the state. There is no general authority over separate states, and therefore conflicts between them ultimately can only be decided by violent means, namely, *war*. There can be no dispute that this fact is not in accordance with the *unconditional* moral principle [422] as such. The *relative* significance of war and the genuine path to its elimination is the last of the fundamental practical⁹¹ issues that the collective life of historical humanity poses to moral awareness.⁹²

⁹¹ C] practical] *Absent in B.*

⁹² C] External, compulsory obligation ... moral awareness.] *Entire §X absent in A.*

[423]Chapter 18

The Meaning of War

Generally speaking, it seems no one doubts that health¹ is a good thing and illness bad, that the former is the norm and the latter an anomaly. It is impossible even to define health as anything other than the normal state of an organism. Nor is there any other definition of illness than “a deviation of physiological life from the norm.” However, the anomaly of physiological life called an illness is not a meaningless accident or an arbitrary creation by external, evil forces outside the patient. Apart from the inevitable illnesses of growth or development, all thoughtful physicians opine that the true cause of illness lies in internal, deeply rooted changes in the organism itself and that the external immediate causes of a sickness (e.g., a cold, exhaustion, infection) are only *occasions* for the manifestation of the inner cause. The same symptoms that those who do not know better usually take for the illness itself (e.g., a fever, a chill, a cough, various aches, abnormal secretions) in fact express only the successful or unsuccessful *struggle* of the organism against the destructive action of those internal disorders. Undoubtedly, these disorders are the genuine essence of the illness, even though their ultimate basis is for the most part enigmatic. The practical conclusion from this is that the chief object of the art of medicine is not the external symptoms of an illness, but its inner causes. The art of medicine must, at least, determine their factual presence [424]and then,² through curative actions, help the organism itself by speeding up and supplementing³ these natural processes without forcing them.

The chronic illness of humanity, international hostility, which expresses itself in war, is in a similar position. To treat its symptoms, i.e., to direct our treatments not

E] This chapter originally appeared with the subtitle “From moral philosophy.” In **B**, this, the 15th chapter, spans pp. 513–548.

¹ C] Generally speaking, it ... that health] Let us suppose someone were to ask how you regard illness. *Is it necessary or not?* It is unlikely you would respond with a monosyllabic affirmation or negation. In any case, *such* an answer would be hasty. However, upon reflection you would say something such as undoubtedly health **AB**.

² C] , at least, determine their factual presence and then,] *Absent in A*.

³ C] itself by speeding up and supplementing] itself. It must speed up and supplement **A**.

on the internal causes, but only on their external manifestations, would even on the best occasion only be a doubtful palliative. The simple and unconditional rejection of this illness would make no real sense. External wars have taken place as long as there has been moral disorder within humanity, and they still may be necessary and useful just as fever and vomiting serve as necessary and useful symptoms of an illness that belies a deep physical disorder.

Properly speaking, concerning the issue of war we ought to pose not one, but three different questions. In addition to the general moral value of war, there is another⁴ question that has to do with its significance in the *as yet unfinished* history of humanity. Finally, there is a third question, a personal one, concerning how I, i.e., any human being who through conscience and reason recognizes the obligatory nature of moral demands, should regard *here* and *now* the fact of war and the practical consequences that follow from it. Confusing or incorrectly separating these three questions—one concerning general or theoretical morality, another the historical and finally a question of personal or practical morality—form the chief cause of all the misunderstandings and misconceptions regarding war, particularly those prevalent in recent times.⁵

A principled condemnation of war was already a common enough occurrence a long time ago in human development. Everyone agrees that peace is good and war evil. We automatically, as it were, utter the expression: *the blessings of peace, the horrors of war*. No one so much as ventures to say the opposite: “the benefits of war” or “the disasters of peace.” Prayers are said in all churches for times of peace and for deliverance from the sword or battles, which are placed alongside fire, famine, pestilence, earthquake and flood. Except for savage paganism, all religions condemn war in principle. The Jewish prophets already preached the coming pacification of all humanity and even of all nature. The Buddhist principle of compassion for all living creatures demands the same thing. The Christian commandment to love one’s enemies excludes war, since a *loved enemy* ceases to be an enemy, and for that reason [425]one cannot wage war on him. Even the bellicose religion of Islam looks on war as only a temporary necessity, condemning it in principle. “Fight your enemies as long as Islam is not established,” and then, “let all hostility cease,” because “God hates aggressors” (*Qur’an*, surah II).⁶

With respect to morality in general, there are not and cannot be two views on this subject. Everyone unanimously agrees that peace is normal and what should be the case, whereas war is an anomaly, i.e., what should not be the case.

⁴ C] another] a A.

⁵ C] , particularly those prevalent in recent times] *Absent in AB*.

⁶ E] Owing to striking differences with a consulted English translation of the *Qur’an*, the passage provided is a translation of Solov’ëv’s Russian.

II

Thus, as to the first question about war, there is only one undisputed answer: *War is an evil*. Evil can be either unconditional (e.g., a mortal sin, eternal damnation) or relative, i.e., one evil can be less evil than another and compared to this other must be considered a good (e.g., a surgical operation for saving a life).

Defining war negatively as an evil and a horror does not exhaust its meaning. There is also something positive about war—⁷ not in the sense that it is in itself normal, but simply in the fact that it happens to be a real necessity under the given conditions. *This* point of view towards abnormal phenomena in general cannot be avoided,⁸ but must⁹ be adopted owing to the direct demands of the moral principle and not in contradiction to it. So, for example, everyone will agree that throwing children from a window onto the pavement below is in itself godless, inhuman and unnatural.¹⁰ However, if in the case of a fire there is no other means to extricate unfortunate infants from a blazing house, then this terrible action becomes not only permissible but even obligatory. Obviously, the rule to throw children from a window in extreme cases is not an independent principle on the same level as the moral principle of saving those who are perishing. On the contrary, the latter moral demand remains here the *sole* motivation for acting. There is no deviation in this instance from the moral norm. Throwing children from a window is only a direct application of that norm in a manner that, though irregular and dangerous, turns out to be, owing to its real necessity, the only possible *one under the given conditions*.

[426] Does war depend upon a necessity that makes this in itself abnormal course of action permissible and even obligatory *in certain circumstances*? This question can be answered by turning to history. Sometimes, however, it is erroneously viewed from the broader perspective of natural science, where the necessity of war is connected with the allegedly universal principle of the struggle for existence.

In fact, though, neither in the animal kingdom nor among humans does the struggle for existence have anything in common with war. When it is said that a certain animal species has been *victorious* in the struggle for existence, this does not mean that it has defeated some enemies in direct clashes or in public battles. It only means that due to sufficient adaptation to the external environment or to the surrounding conditions, the species has managed to survive and multiply, which not all have equally succeeded in doing. If Siberian mammoths disappeared owing to their defeat in the struggle for survival whereas martens were victorious, this certainly does not mean that martens were braver and more powerful than mammoths and eliminated them in open combat by employing their teeth and paws. Similarly, the Jewish nation, which disarmed a long time ago and is comparatively small in numbers, has turned out to be indestructible in the historical struggle for existence, whereas

⁷ C] Defining war negatively ... war—] Defenders of war justify it A] Those who defend war justify it B.

⁸ C] *This* point of ... be avoided] This point of view, generally speaking, cannot be avoided AB.

⁹ C] but must] but sometimes must AB.

¹⁰ C] and unnatural] *Absent in* AB.

military successes over many centuries did not protect the enormous Roman Empire from ruin nor those of the bellicose powers that preceded it.

The struggle for existence takes place independently of wars and utilizes other methods that have nothing in common with fighting. Similarly, war, for its part, has other grounds, independent of the struggle for a means to continue living. If the entire issue were over these means, if hostile clashes took place only for the sake of livelihood, then the primitive epoch of history would have been the most peaceful. For very few people were alive at the time, their demands were simple and a great expanse for their satisfaction stretched out before them. Fighting and mutual extermination posed only risk and no profit. In this respect, the normal outcome of any quarrel is by itself obvious. “And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for [427]we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other” (Genesis 13: 8–11).

If, however, such an amicable agreement only rarely took place at the time and, in general, primitive human relations more closely resembled a “war of all against all” (as in the well-known theory of the philosopher Hobbes),¹¹ then this was the result not of a necessary struggle for existence but of the free play of evil passions. *Envy, not hunger*, caused the fratricide with which history opens. The oldest monument of poetry that has been handed down to us—the bloody song of Cain’s grandson, Lamech—speaks not of material need, but of savage spite, revenge¹² and fierce arrogance. “And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold” (Genesis 4: 23–24).

III

At a time when the human race was few in number and multiplying slowly compared to most other animals, the predominance of such feelings would have threatened humanity with quick ruin¹³ if the war of all against all had not been counterbalanced

¹¹ E] The reference is to Hobbes’s description of what life would be like in an anarchist situation or what Hobbes calls a “state of nature.”

¹² C] speaks not of material ... savage spite, revenge] is devoted not to material need, but to savage spite **AB**.

¹³ C] would have threatened humanity with quick ruin] threatened to ruin humanity quickly **AB**.

by the gentile connection. This connection, rooted in the maternal instinct, is developed by means of family feelings and relations and is strengthened in the religion of ancestor- veneration. The *gentile way of life* (in the broad sense),^{14, 15} which resulted from all this, can be considered the primitive stage of historical development, since humanity, properly speaking, never consisted of single, separate solitary individuals¹⁶ in a state of war with each other. The gentile connection [428] existed right from the start and “the war of all against all,” as a general rule, expresses a mutual relationship not between separate units,¹⁷ but only between separate gentile groups. Of course, this does not mean that each gens was in fact in¹⁸ constant war with all the others, but only that no single gens was completely secure or protected from the possibility of war with any other gens. Such a state of affairs, however, could not last forever. Only rarely did a war between gentes end with the destruction of the weaker gens. Achieving a certain equality of power, the outcome of the struggle was a religiously consecrated treaty or agreement. On the other hand, in order to avoid destruction in an unequal struggle the weaker gentile groups either separately joined a more powerful gens, agreeing to conditions of submission, or many of them together formed a union with various rights (a federation). Thus, war itself gives rise to treaties and rights as a guarantee of peace. Such gentile unions are already the embryo of the *state*.

From the time when we begin to have continuous historical records, a considerable part of the human race was already living under the state system. There are two fundamental types of such states: the Western or Hellenic *polity*, i.e., a small city community, and the vast Eastern *despotism* of either one nation (for example, in Egypt) or of many nations (the so called “universal monarchies”¹⁹).

Without the state, it would have been impossible to have human cultural progress based on a complex collaboration (cooperation) of many forces. To a large extent, such collaboration was impossible for isolated gentes living in a state of constant blood feud with each other. In the state, we find human masses for the first time acting in solidarity. These masses already banished war and moved it out to the wider circumference of the state. In the gentile way of life, all (adult males) are always armed, whereas in the state warriors form either a special caste or profession, or finally (with universal conscription) military service forms only a temporary occupation of the citizenry. In the state, *the organization of war* is the first great step *towards the realization of peace*. This is especially clear in the history of the vast

¹⁴ F] Cf. above, Chap. 10. C] *Note absent in AB.*

¹⁵ C] (in the broad sense)] *Absent in A.*

¹⁶ C] solitary individuals] isolated units **AB.**

¹⁷ C] units,] individuals, **AB.**

¹⁸ C] fact in] fact (currently) in **AB.**

¹⁹ E] A reference to a once widely held belief, stemming from the book of Daniel, that there had been in history four “universal monarchies.” Cf. Daniel 8: 22– “Now that one being broken, in whose place four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.” A traditional view is that the four “kingdoms” correspond to the Assyrian, the Persian, Macedonian (Alexander the Great), and Roman.

conquering powers (the universal [429]monarchies). Each conquest meant a dissemination of peace, i.e., an expansion of the circle within which war ceased being a normal phenomenon and instead became a rare and reprehensible accident—criminal civil dissension. The “universal monarchies” strove indubitably, though also only semi-consciously, to give peace to the world by subduing all nations to one common power. The greatest of these conquering powers, the Roman Empire, frankly described itself as the *peace*—*pax Romana*.

However, there were monarchies at an earlier time that also strove for the same goal. Discoveries in the nineteenth²⁰ century leave no doubt that the Assyrian and the Persian kings considered their true vocation to be the subjugation of all nations in order to establish a peaceful order on Earth, although their idea of this task and of the way to fulfill it was usually too simplistic. The historical plans of the Macedonian monarchy that included the entire world were more complex and productive. It rested on the superior power of the Hellenic culture, which deeply and firmly penetrated into the subjugated Eastern world. The Romans came to a completely clear idea of universal and eternal peace and firmly believed in their vocation to subjugate the entire world to the power of one single law. Virgil, in particular, immortalized this idea. Besides the very well-known expression “*tu regere imperio populos*”²¹ etc.

You, o Roman, have the right to rule over nations mightily,
To protect humbly, subduing the obstinate by arms²²

he returns to it at every opportunity in his *Aeneid* as the highest motive inspiring the entire poem. Jupiter is represented, for example, as saying to Venus about her descendants:

Romulus shall call that people ‘Romans,’ after his own name.
I set no limits to their fortunes and
no time; I give them empire without end.²³
Aeneid I 278–294

The same supreme god tells Mercury that Aeneas, the ancestor of the Romans, is destined to conquer an Italy stirring with war [430]in order to establish the noble²⁴ line of the Teucer, who will “place all earth beneath his laws” (*The Aeneid*, book IV, pp. 229–231).²⁵

Comparing the four “universal monarchies,” we find in their succession a steady approach to the idea of *universal* peace, both with respect to their extension as well as with respect to inner principles. The first of these, the Assyro-Babylonian

²⁰ C] nineteenth] present **AB**.

²¹ E] See Virgil 1982: 166 (book VI, 851).

²² E] Solov’ëv previously quoted in Chap. 14 these same lines from Virgil. However, his Russian translation there differs slightly from that presented here, leading to the reasonable conjecture that he quoted Virgil from memory.

²³ E] Virgil 1982: 10–11 (book I, 278–294).

²⁴ C] establish the noble] establish in it the noble **AB**.

²⁵ E] Virgil 1982: 90.

kingdom, did not extend beyond the bounds of the Near East, was supported by incessant²⁶ devastating campaigns and its laws consisted solely of military decrees. The second “universal monarchy,” the kingdom of Cyrus and the Achaemenides, added to the Near East a significant portion of central Asia and extended in the other direction to Egypt. It rested from within on the serene religion of Ormuzd,²⁷ which legitimated morality and justice. In the third monarchy, that of Alexander and his successors, the historical East was united for the first time with the historical West, and not only the power of the sword but also the ideal principles of Hellenic culture welded the two sides²⁸ together. Lastly, the progress represented by the fourth monarchy, the Roman Empire, consisted not only in that the Romans extended the earlier unity all the way to the Atlantic Ocean, but also in that they gave this unity a solid political center and a stable judicial form. War played an inevitable role and armed might served as the necessary support in this whole business of establishing peace. War and peace were accurately symbolized by the two opposed but inseparable faces of the Roman god Janus.²⁹

War proves to be the most forceful unifier of the inner forces within each warring state or union. At the same time, it serves as the condition for the subsequent rapprochement and coming together of the opponents themselves. We see both of these most clearly in the history of Greece. Only three times in its entire history did the majority of³⁰ the separate tribes and city-states unite for a common cause and manifest their inner national connection in a practical way. Each of these times, it was due to a war: the Trojan War at the beginning, the Persian Wars at the middle, and the campaign of Alexander the Great as its culminating achievement. It was thanks to the last that the creations of the Greek national genius finally became the common property of humanity.

The Trojan War established the Greek element in Asia Minor, where nurtured by other cultural elements, it first blossomed. [431]Greek poetry (the Homeric epics) was born on the shores of Asia Minor, and it was there that the most ancient school of their philosophy (Thales of *Miletus*, Heraclitus of *Ephesus*) arose and developed. The emergence of the united national forces in the struggle with the Persians brought forth a second, even richer blossoming of spiritual creativity, and Alexander’s conquests, which cast the ripe seeds of Hellenism onto the ancient and cultured soil of Asia and Egypt, yielded the great Hellenic-Eastern synthesis of religious and philosophical ideas. It was these ideas, along with the subsequent unification by the Roman state that created the necessary historical condition for the dissemination of Christianity. Without the Greek language and Greek ideas, as

²⁶ C] incessant] continuous **AB**.

²⁷ E] Ormuzd] the chief deity of Zoroastrianism, considered the source of light and the embodiment of goodness.

²⁸ C] the two sides] the two elements **AB**.

²⁹ E] Janus] The Roman god of gates and doors, beginnings and endings, Janus is represented with a double-faced head, each looking in opposite directions.

³⁰ C] the majority of] *Absent in AB*.

well as without the “Roman peace” and Roman military³¹ roads, the preaching of the Gospels could not have taken place so quickly and on such a wide scale. Greek words and ideas entered the public domain only thanks to the militaristic Alexander and his generals. Over many centuries of war, the Roman “peace” was achieved and preserved by the Roman legions, and for these legions roads were constructed and along them the apostles passed. The churches sing, “Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.”³² This “all the earth” and these “ends of the world” are only the wide circle (*orbis*) that Rome’s bloody sword sketched around itself.

Therefore, all the wars of which ancient history abounds merely extended the sphere of peace, and the pagan “*bestial* kingdoms”³³ prepared the way for those who would announce the kingdom of the son of *man*.

However, in addition to this the military history of antiquity shows us important progress in the direction of peace even in another respect. Not only has war achieved peaceful ends, but with the further march of history fewer and fewer active military forces were needed to attain these ends, whereas, on the contrary, the peaceful results became ever the more numerous and important. This paradoxical fact is indisputable. In order to take Troy, an almost universal conscription among the Greeks was necessary for 10 years,³⁴ and the direct result of this terrible exercise of its forces was insignificant. A great catastrophe [432]crowned Greek history, namely, the conquest of the East by Alexander the Great, and the universal cultural consequences of this catastrophe were not slow in coming to light. All that was required on the part of the military was a 3-year campaign with thirteen thousand warriors. Let us, on the one hand, compare the significance of the results and, on the other hand, consider the population of Greece and Macedonia under Alexander compared with the small Achaean population, which sent such a large military contingent (110,000 men) to Troy. We will see, then, in a stark fashion that after these seven centuries the relative number of human lives that had to be sacrificed to achieve historical goals *decreased*. Another comparison of a more general character leads to the same conclusion. The Persian kingdom, whose millions of soldiers could not ensure military success in the struggle with tiny Greece,³⁵ was barely able to hold up under the protection of such forces for two centuries. The Roman Empire, three times as large and with a population of no less than 200 million, kept at most 400,000 legionnaires under arms for the defense of its vast borders and lasted three times longer than the kingdom of Darius and Xerxes (around six centuries).

³¹ C] military] *Absent in AB*.

³² E] Romans 10: 18.

³³ E] Cf. Daniel 7.

³⁴ F] It is certainly impossible to ascribe literal accuracy to the number of Greek forces given in the *Iliad*, but it is quite probable if we take it as an approximate figure (110,000 warriors). In general, as to the reliability of the *Iliad*, let us note that the most recent scholarly excavations have restored to this poetic monument its importance as a historical resource, of course mythologically portrayed.

³⁵ C] whose millions of ... with tiny Greece,] which turned out millions of soldiers for war, **AB**.

And how immeasurably more important to humanity were the fruits of civilization³⁶ which these few legions protected compared with that for the sake of which the innumerable hordes of the king of kings assembled!

Therefore, the progress in the business of war represented by the advantages of the Macedonian phalanx and the Roman legion over the Persian hordes expressed itself, generally speaking, in the preponderance of quality over quantity and of form over matter. At the same time, it represented great moral and social progress by enormously reducing the number of the human casualties devoured by war.

IV

From an external historical standpoint, the replacement of the Roman world (and peace) by the Christian did not immediately bring about any essential change in the status of the problem of war. True, in unconditionally condemning all hatred and hostility, Christianity in principle [433]destroyed the moral root of war. However, cutting the root is still not the same as felling the tree. Indeed, the preachers of the Gospels did not want to fell Nebuchadnezzar's tree,³⁷ for they knew that the Earth needed its shade until the true faith emerged from the small seed that would replace it, "the greatest among herbs"³⁸ in whose shade both people and beasts of the field can safely hide.

The Christian missionaries did not reject the state and its vocation³⁹ to "execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."⁴⁰ Consequently, they did not reject war. The followers of the new faith saw for themselves a great triumph in the fact that two victorious wars gave Emperor Constantine the chance to hoist the Cross of Christ over the old, unaltered edifice of the Roman Empire. Moreover, under this unaltered political exterior the secret work of spiritual forces was hidden. For the Christian, the state, even one blessed by the cross, ceased to be the highest good and the final form of life. Faith in eternal Rome, i.e., in the unconditional significance of political unity, was replaced by the expectation of a "New Jerusalem," i.e., of an inner, spiritual union of reborn peoples and nations. However, apart from an elevation, a lifting of human consciousness to a higher level, the progress of an external real unification within the body of humanity continued, though slowly at first.

The Christian world (*tota christianitas, toute la chrétienté*),⁴¹ which in the Middle Ages replaced the ancient Roman Empire, covered a significantly greater expanse. True, wars were not unusual within it. (Just as in the Roman Empire, there were revolts of peoples and mutinous generals.) However, the representatives of

³⁶ C] civilization] culture **AB**.

³⁷ E] a reference to a tree that appeared in one of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams. See Daniel 4: 1–18.

³⁸ E] Matthew 13: 32.

³⁹ C] vocation] significance **B**.

⁴⁰ E] Romans 13: 4.

⁴¹ E] *tota christianitas, toute la chrétienté*] Latin and French: whole of Christendom.

Christian principles saw these wars as deplorable internecine conflicts and tried in every way to limit them. Also, the constant struggle between the Christian and the Moslem worlds (in Spain and in the Levant), undoubtedly had a positive cultural and progressive character. For the defense of Christianity against the Islamic offensive saved the pledge of a higher spiritual development for historical humanity instead of being absorbed by a comparatively⁴² lower religious principle.⁴³ Moreover, the interaction of these two fundamentally hostile worlds could not be confined to bloodletting⁴⁴ alone. In time, this interaction would lead to [434]an expansion of the intellectual outlook of both sides. The great epoch of the Renaissance of the arts and sciences and then of the Reformation was thereby prepared for Christianity.

Three general facts in modern history have the greatest significance for our problem:

(1) the emergence of nationalities, (2) the corresponding emergence of international relations of all sorts, and (3) the dissemination of cultural unity around the entire globe.

After breaking out from under the tutelage of the Catholic Church and rejecting the impotent claims of the Holy Roman Empire, the European nationalities segregated themselves into autocratic⁴⁵ political units. Each national state viewed itself and was viewed by others as a *perfect body*, i.e., as having supremacy or absolute and full power within its borders and consequently as not being subordinate to any outside earthly tribunal. The direct consequences of this national segregation were not favorable to the cause of peace. In the first place, war even among Christian states thereby became a regular occurrence, for it served as the sole means of resolving conflicts between separate unconditionally independent⁴⁶ units, which had no arbiter above them to settle disputes. In the Middle Ages, the arbiter was always in principle and sometimes in fact⁴⁷ the Roman pope (and in part also the emperor). Second, when it was taken as the supreme principle of the life of nations the national idea, naturally, degenerated into national pride, the true character of patriotism became distorted and active love for one's nation was transformed into an idolatry of the nation, conceived as the supreme⁴⁸ good. This, in turn, changed into hatred and contempt for other nations and led to unjust wars as well as to the capture and oppression of other nationalities.⁴⁹

However, hidden behind these negative aspects lies the positive significance of nationality. As the living organs of humanity, nationalities must exist and develop with their peculiarities. Without these organs, the unity of humanity would be empty and dead, and such a dead peace would be worse than war. The true unity

⁴² C] comparatively] *Absent in A.*

⁴³ F] See above, Chap. 14. C] *Note absent in AB.*

⁴⁴ C] bloodletting] killings **AB.**

⁴⁵ C] autocratic] unconditionally independent **AB.**

⁴⁶ C] separate unconditionally independent] two unconditionally separate **B.**

⁴⁷ C] always in principle and sometimes in fact] at least in principle **AB.**

⁴⁸ C] supreme] absolute **A.**

⁴⁹ C] nationalities] national elements **AB.**

of humanity and the longed-for peace must be based not on weakness and the suppression of nations, but on the highest development of their powers and on the free interaction of nationalities, which complement one another.⁵⁰ [435] Despite all the efforts arising out of national selfishness,⁵¹ which strives for the hostile estrangement of nations, positive interaction between them exists and constantly penetrates deeper and increases in breadth. Previously established international relations have not disappeared, but have intensified internally, and new ones have been added. Thus, although it has lost its external power, the spiritual authority of the Roman church in the West has significantly increased. It has cleansed itself of many of⁵² its crude medieval abuses, and the damage that the Reformation inflicted on it deservedly has been recompensed by other spiritual⁵³ conquests. Alongside this church and in a struggle with⁵⁴ it, there arose the powerful brotherhood of freemasons but with the same broad embrace. Everything in it is mysterious except its international and universal character. Relations of another kind were established on an unprecedented scale in the economic sphere: The *world market* appeared. There is not one country today⁵⁵ that is economically self-sufficient. Not one country today produces everything it needs without getting something from others and not giving them something in return. In this way, in this fundamental respect, the idea of an independent state as a “perfect body,” i.e., as an unconditionally independent social organism,⁵⁶ turns out to be the purest fabrication. Furthermore, constant cooperation between all educated countries in scientific and technical work, the fruits of which are now becoming public property; inventions that eliminate distances; the daily press, which brings continuous news from everywhere; finally the striking increase in the international “exchange of goods” by new means of communication—all this makes civilized humanity into a single whole, which actually, even though involuntarily, lives one common life.

This, the civilized portion of humanity, is becoming more and more *all* of humanity. From the start of the modern era, Europeans have extended the sphere of their activity in all directions. Having seized America in the west, India in the southeast and Siberia in the northeast, the greater part of the globe with its population has already come under European control. We can now say that this power embraces the entire globe. The Islamic world is surrounded and permeated throughout with strands of European culture. Only in the tropical deserts of the Sudan can it still defend its savage independence (the Kingdom of the Dervishes)—and then without any hope⁵⁷ of success. [436] The entire coastal circumference of Africa has already

⁵⁰ F] See above the chapter “The National Question from the Moral Point of View.” C] *Entire note absent in A.*

⁵¹ C] selfishness] egoism **AB.**

⁵² C] many of] *Absent in AB.*

⁵³ C] spiritual] *Absent in AB.*

⁵⁴ C] a struggle with] opposition to **AB.**

⁵⁵ C] today] *Absent in A.*

⁵⁶ C] an unconditionally independent social organism] unconditionally independent organism **A.**

⁵⁷ C] hope] chance **A.**

been divided among the European powers, and the center of the black continent has now become the arena for their rivalry. Beyond the frontiers of European influence still remains Mongolian Asia—China and Japan. However, before our very eyes this last partition in humanity is being removed. With amazing haste and success, the Japanese have in a quarter century assimilated the entire material side of European civilization⁵⁸ as well as its positive-scientific side and then, above all, tried in a convincing manner to prove the necessity of such assimilation to their Mongolian brothers. The Chinese, whose self-confidence was already shaken by the English but were still slow in understanding these foreigners, understood at once their fellow tribesmen. Now, the notorious Chinese wall is no longer a symbol of enduring isolation, but only a monument to the irretrievable past.⁵⁹

What relation does this curious process of the universal “gathering of lands”⁶⁰ by means of a single material culture have to war? On the one hand, war plays an *active* role in it. It is well known how⁶¹ the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars provided a powerful contribution to the advance and dissemination of general European ideas, which brought about the scientific, technical and economic progress of the nineteenth Century and which materially united humanity. In the same way, the last act of this unification (its dissemination to the final stronghold of isolated barbarism, China) began in our eyes not by peaceful preaching but by war. On the other hand, the universality of material culture, which is realized in part by war, itself becomes a powerful means and foundation of peace. At the present time, the enormous majority of the globe’s population forms in practice a single connected body, whose parts are in at least physical, if not moral, solidarity. This solidarity is manifested in the sphere from which no one can escape, viz. the economic sphere. An industrial crisis in New York has an immediate and strong impact in Moscow and Calcutta. A *common sensorium* (*sensorium commune*)⁶² has been formed in the body of humanity. A consequence of this is that every particular stimulus *palpably* produces a universal effect. Every serious and protracted war is inevitably accompanied by the most severe economic shocks, which, given the present connection between the different parts [437]of the globe, will be felt as *worldwide* shocks. Such a state of affairs, which arose during the course of the nineteenth century,⁶³ but which became clear to all only at the end of it, is a sufficient reason to *fear war*. This fear has now seized all civilized nations but was quite unknown in earlier times. However, already in the first half of the century, wars became shorter and

⁵⁸ C] civilization] culture **AB**.

⁵⁹ C] irretrievable past.] irretrievable past, similar to the Cyclopean buildings or the Egyptian pyramids. **AB**.

⁶⁰ E] “gathering of lands”] A traditional notion in Russian historiography invoked to rationalize the country’s expansion.

⁶¹ C] It is well known how] In particular, **A**.

⁶² E] *common sensorium*] Cf. “Certainly, however, all sanguineous animals have the supreme organ of the sense faculties in the heart, for it is here that we must look for the common sensorium belonging to all the sense-organs.” Aristotle 1995: 747.

⁶³ C] nineteenth century,] present century, **AB**.

less common. Between Waterloo and Sevastopol, Europe saw a 40-year period of peace—an instance unprecedented in its earlier history. Later, special causes rooted in history provoked several comparatively short European wars in 1859, 1864, 1866 and in 1870.⁶⁴ The Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 did not succeed in becoming a European war.⁶⁵ However, the most important of these wars,⁶⁶ the Franco-Prussian War, is a typical example. Although it left a bitter sense of national insult and a thirst for vengeance in the leading European nation, because of the fear of war alone these feelings 28 years later are still not strong enough to pass into action! Can you even imagine such abstention in the XVIII or the XVII century, let alone even earlier? What do all the monstrous armaments of the European states point⁶⁷ to if not the terrible and quite overpowering fear of war and, consequently, the immanent end of wars?^{68, 69}

It would be irrational, however, to think and act as though this immanent end had already arrived. The common economic sensorium now unites all parts of the world's population by a connection that to them is palpable. However, this connection is by no means equally firm everywhere and not all of these parts are uniformly sensitive. There are still nations that in the event of a world war would risk little, and there are also some ready to risk even a great deal. The introduction of the Mongolian race into the orbit of European material culture has in fact mutual significance. This race, whose⁷⁰ chief representative, the Chinese nation, calculated to be at least 200 million souls,⁷¹ is noted for its racial pride and for its great contempt for life, not only that of foreigners, but also of its own. It is more than probable that in the decisive struggle [438]the entire yellow race's⁷² assimilation of western cultural technique will serve only as a means to prove the superiority of their spiritual principles over that of the Europeans. This coming armed struggle between Europe and Mongolian Asia will certainly be the last and therefore all the more horrible world war. It is not a matter of indifference to the fate of humanity which side will turn out to be victorious.

⁶⁴ C] *a note here in B*: The Turkish campaign in 1877 only threatened to become a European war, but the cloud happily dispersed.

⁶⁵ C] The Russo-Turkish War ... a European war.] *Absent in AB*.

⁶⁶ C] most important of these wars,] the last and most important of them, **AB**.

⁶⁷ C] states point] states, over which the friends of peace inconsolably cry, point **A**.

⁶⁸ F] The last three semi-European wars do not contradict this: The Serbo-Bulgarian War of 1885, the Greco-Turkish War of 1897 and the Spanish-American War of 1898 concluded before they seriously began. C] *Entire note absent in AB*.

⁶⁹ C] of wars?] of all wars? **AB**.

⁷⁰ C] whose] in particular it's **A**.

⁷¹ C] calculated to be at least 200 million souls,] *Absent in A*.

⁷² C] the entire yellow race's] the Chinese **A**.

V

The general history of human wars, whose principal moments we have recalled, presents a wonderful unity and harmony. Through the rosy haze that makes up our recollections of historical childhood, there rises, above all, the clear, though partially fantastic, image of the Trojan War. It was the first great collision between the West and the East, between Europe and Asia. Herodotus looked⁷³ on the Trojan War in this way and began his history with it. Certainly, it was not for nothing that the first inspired monument of purely human poetry (the *Iliad*) is associated with it. Actually, this war is the beginning of the earthly, worldly history of humanity, which throughout its entire course revolves around the fateful struggle between the East and the West in an ever-widening arena. This arena has now reached its ultimate expanse—the entire surface of our earthly globe. In place of the desolate Skamander,⁷⁴ there is the Pacific Ocean; in place of the smoking Pergamon⁷⁵—the ominous⁷⁶ colossus of China. The struggle is just the same as before between the hostile principles of the East and the West. There was a moment of crisis in this process, a break, when, after the external unification of the then historical East with the West in the Roman Empire—under the power of the descendants of Aeneas of Troy⁷⁷—the light of Christianity internally abolished the ancient hostility.

And spilling out openly
 Carried out with signs and powers
 The light that flowed from the East
 The West and East reconciled.⁷⁸

However, the old material and cultural⁷⁹ unification turned out to be unstable, and the spiritual still awaits its final realization. True, instead of the political⁸⁰ unity of the Roman Empire, [439]humanity has now developed another unity—an economic one,⁸¹ which, like the first, places great external obstacles in the path of armed struggle. However, these obstacles, thanks to which we have been saved lately from a *European* war, are not in a position to prevent the last and the greatest conflict between these two worlds—the European and the Asiatic. They are not now represented by their peoples, as were the Achaeans and the Trojans, or even the Greeks and the Persians. They appear, instead, in their actual entire import, as the two great hostile halves into which *all* of humanity is divided. The victory of this or that side

⁷³ C] Herodotus looked] Herodotus, the father of historians, looked **AB**.

⁷⁴ E] Skamander] The river valley in present-day Turkey that was the site of the city of Troy.

⁷⁵ E] Pergamon] An ancient city to which, according to *The Iliad*, Zeus traveled from Mt. Olympus in order to watch the Trojan Wars.

⁷⁶ C] ominous] 400-million **A**.

⁷⁷ E] Aeneas of Troy] The hero of Virgil's *The Aeneid*, Aeneas was a cousin of King Priam of Troy. Aeneas was one of the greatest heroes of the Trojan War. He fought on in Troy until ordered to leave by the gods. Eventually, he arrived in Italy and became a founder of Italian culture.

⁷⁸ E] From a 1890 poem "Ex Oriente Lux" by Solov'ev himself.

⁷⁹ C] old material and cultural] external **AB**.

⁸⁰ C] political] external **AB**.

⁸¹ C] an economic one] that of material culture **AB**.

will actually bring peace to the whole world. There⁸² will no longer be struggles between states. However, will this political peace, this establishment of international unity in the form of a universal state (whether monarchical or other)⁸³ be a genuine and perpetual peace? Will it end the struggle—even sometimes an armed one—between other non-political elements of humanity? Will it not repeat, now on a grand scale, what took place before our eyes within narrower confines? Germany once consisted of many states at war with each other. The national body suffered from the absence of a real unity, and the creation of such a unity became the cherished dream of the patriots. As a result of several wars, this idea was realized, but it then turned out to be insufficient. The Germans certainly will never relinquish political unity, but they clearly see that unification was just one necessary step forward and not by any means the achievement of the ultimate goal. The political struggle between small states has been replaced throughout the entire empire by a more profound struggle—a religious and economic one. The ultramontanes⁸⁴ and the social democrats are turning out to be more formidable than the Austrians and the French. When all of humanity is politically united—whether it be in the form of a worldwide monarchy or a worldwide international union⁸⁵—will this stop the struggle of freemasons with clericalism? Will it restrain the hostility of socialism towards the well-to-do classes and of anarchism towards any form of social and state organization? Is it not clear that the struggle between religious beliefs and material interests outlives the struggle between nations and states and that the final establishment of external, political unity decisively reveals its internal inadequacy? It also reveals the moral truth that external peace is still not *in itself* the true good and that [440]it becomes good only in connection with the internal regeneration of humanity.⁸⁶ And it is only when the inadequacy of this external unity will be known by *experience*, and not by theory, that the time will have finally come for the spiritualization of the united body of the universe and for realizing the Kingdom of Truth and of Eternal Peace in it.

VI

As we have seen, war has served as the chief historical means for effecting the external political⁸⁷ unification of the human race. Wars between clans and gentes⁸⁸ led to the formation of the state, which abolished war within the boundaries of its power. External wars between individual states led, then, to the creation of more

⁸² C] world. There] world. A universal monarchy will actually emerge from this victory. There **AB**.

⁸³ C] (whether monarchical or other) *Absent in AB*.

⁸⁴ E] advocates of papal authority not just in ecclesiastic but also political matters.

⁸⁵ C] international union] union of states **AB**.

⁸⁶ C] It also reveals ... of humanity.] *Absent in A*.

⁸⁷ C] political] *Absent in A*.

⁸⁸ C] gentes] classes **A**.

extensive and complex cultural and political bodies that tried to establish peace and a sense of equilibrium within their borders. There was once a time when the mass of humanity, scattered and separated, was permeated⁸⁹ throughout by war, which never stopped between the numerous small groups. War was omnipresent. However, being gradually pushed further and further out, it now threatens to be a virtually inevitable⁹⁰ danger only at the boundary between the two chief races into which historical humanity is divided. The process of unification is approaching its end, but this end has not yet come. The⁹¹ peaceful inclusion of the yellow race into the sphere of general human culture is highly improbable, and from the historical point of view, there is no reason to think war will be immediately and completely abolished. However, are we obliged by our human moral awareness to take this point of view?

The issue takes this form: “Whatever the historical significance of war, it is above all the murder of certain people by others. However, our conscience condemns murder, and, consequently, we should honestly refuse to participate in war and urge others to do the same. The dissemination of this view by word and deed is the true and the only sure means of abolishing war. For clearly if everyone would refuse to perform military service, war would become impossible.” For this argument to be convincing we must first agree⁹² that war and even military service is nothing other than murder. However, it is impossible to agree with this claim. In performing military service, war is only a *possibility*. During the 40-year period [441] between the wars of Napoleon I and those of Napoleon III, several million men in Europe performed military service, but only an insignificant number experienced actual war. However, even in those cases where it ensues, war still cannot be reduced to murder, i.e., to a crime that presupposes an evil intent directed towards a definite object, towards this particular person whom I kill. In war, the individual soldier, generally speaking, just does not happen to have such an intention, particularly⁹³ given today’s common-enough means of fighting with long-range cannons and guns against an enemy located at a long distance *out of sight*. Only in cases of actual hand-to-hand combat does⁹⁴ the question of conscience arise for the individual, who must decide for himself according to his conscience. In general, war as a conflict between collective organisms (states) and their collective organs (armies) is not a matter of single individuals who play a passive role in it. On their part, a possible murder is only *accidental*.

⁸⁹ C] was permeated] was, so to speak, permeated **AB**.

⁹⁰ C] virtually inevitable] serious **AB**.

⁹¹ C] come. The] come. We must desire and can hope that there will be no European war. However, the **AB**.

⁹² C] For this argument ... first agree] This argument would be convincing if only we could be convinced **AB**.

⁹³ C] particularly] *Absent in A*.

⁹⁴ C] *out of sight*. ... combat does] *out of sight*. There cannot even be a specific murder. Such a thing is possible only in the rare cases of hand-to-hand combat. Only in such cases does **A**.

Would it not be better, however, to prevent the very possibility of an accidental murder by refusing to perform military service? Undoubtedly, this would be the case if it were a matter of free choice. A person who has attained a certain level of moral awareness or has a sense of pity that has been developed separately certainly does not choose on his own to perform his military service at the frontline. Instead, this person prefers peaceful occupations. However, as long as compulsory service is required by the state, we must recognize that for the individual to refuse to perform it is a *greater evil* than to comply with the current institution, and this does not thereby mean an approval of universal military service, the inconvenience of which is obvious and the efficiency dubious. Since the person who refuses to serve *knows* that a certain number of recruits will be supplied *in any case* and that *another* will be drafted in *his* place, he *deliberately* subjects his neighbor to all the burdens of military duty, burdens from which the neighbor would otherwise be free. In addition, the general meaning of such a refusal satisfies the demands neither of logic nor of morality. For it amounts to the fact that in order to avoid the remote possibility in the *future* of accidentally killing an enemy in a war, which would not depend on me, I myself *now* declare war against my state and *force* its representatives to take a whole set of violent actions [442]against me *at the present time*. I make this declaration in order to save myself from possibly carrying out accidental violence in an unknown⁹⁵ future.

Our law states the purpose of military service by the formula “defense of the throne and fatherland,”⁹⁶ i.e., of the political unit to which the given person belongs. Just as it has happened many times in the past, there is a possibility that the state will in the future abuse its armed forces and⁹⁷ use them in unjust and aggressive wars, instead of in self-defense.⁹⁸ However, this cannot serve as a sufficient reason for my own actions in the present. Such actions must be determined by *my* own moral duties, and not by those of others. Thus, the question ultimately comes down to this: *Do I have a moral obligation to participate in the defense of my fatherland?*

Theories that⁹⁹ unequivocally reject war and consider it everyone’s duty to refuse the state’s demand for military service, in general, deny that the individual has any obligations to the state. From their point of view, the state is no more than a gang of robbers who hypnotize¹⁰⁰ the crowd in order to keep it under state control and to use the crowd for its own ends. However, to think seriously that this exhausts or in any way expresses the *true essence of the matter* would be quite naïve. Such a view particularly lacks a foundation when it refers to Christianity.

⁹⁵ C] unknown] indefinite **AB**.

⁹⁶ E] According to the government issued “Statutes Regarding Military Duties” from 1 January 1874, “Defense of the throne and fatherland is the sacred duty of every Russian citizen. Every male without social distinction is subject to military service.” Korkunov 1904: 568.

⁹⁷ C] abuse its armed forces and] *Absent in B*.

⁹⁸ C] Just as it ... self-defense.] There is the possibility of unjust and aggressive wars instead of one in defense of the fatherland. **A**.

⁹⁹ C] Theories that] Theories (e.g., those of the Quakers) that **AB**.

¹⁰⁰ C] is no more than a gang of robbers who hypnotize] only hypnotizes **A**.

Christianity has revealed to us our unconditional moral worth, the absolute significance of the inner human essence, of the human soul. This unconditional moral worth imposes on us an unconditional obligation to realize the truth throughout our lives, not just in our personal but also in our collective lives. We, thereby, *indubitably* know that this task is impossible for each separate, or isolated, individual and that in order for it to be accomplished a particular individual's life *must be completed* by the historical social life of humanity. One means to achieve this completion, one of the forms of social life, indeed the chief and predominant form at the present historical moment, is the *fatherland*, organized in the definite form of the *state*. Certainly, this form is not the highest and final expression of human solidarity, and the fatherland must not replace God and His universal Kingdom. However, [443] from the fact that the state is not everything it does not at all follow that it is unnecessary and that it is acceptable to seek its destruction.

Let us suppose that the country in which I live is overtaken by some general disaster, for example, a famine.^{101, 102} In such a case, what is the duty of a particular individual as an unconditionally moral being? Both my feelings and my conscience clearly dictate that I must do one of two things: Either feed all who are hungry or die myself from starvation. I cannot possibly feed the starving millions. Yet, if my conscience does not in the slightest blame me for staying alive,¹⁰³ this is solely due to the fact that the state takes on itself my moral obligation to supply bread to the hungry and can fulfill that obligation thanks to both its collective resources and its organization, which is adapted for swift action on a broad scale. In this case, the state turns out to be the institution that can successfully carry out the morally obligatory work that a single individual is physically incapable of doing. However, if the state fulfills my direct moral obligations in my stead, then how can it be said that I owe it nothing and that it has no rights over me? If without it I, in good conscience, would have had to give up my own life, then how can I refuse to give it my small share of the means that it needs to complete my own work?

What, one might ask, if the taxes and duties collected by the state go not to things whose usefulness is obvious, but to those which seem to me useless and even harmful? In such a case, my obligation is to expose these abuses, but not to reject, by either word or deed, the very principle of state taxation, the recognized purpose of which is the welfare of the general public.¹⁰⁴

However, the military organization of the state, in essence, has such a foundation. If some savages, such as the recent Caucasian mountaineers or the present

¹⁰¹ E] The famine of 1891–1892 highlighted the corruption and inefficiency of the government. In 1892, Leo Tolstoy published articles critical of the government's efforts. Shortly afterward, Tolstoy himself participated in relief efforts that proved more efficient than those of the government.

¹⁰² C] Let us suppose ... a famine.] four [Five B] years ago, a significant part of Russia was overtaken by a famine. **AB**.

¹⁰³ C] for staying alive,] for the fact that I stayed alive and did not starve myself to death, **AB**.

¹⁰⁴ C] What, one might ... general public.] *Absent in AB*.

Kurds¹⁰⁵ and the Black Flags,¹⁰⁶ attack a traveler with the clear intention of murdering him and killing his family, he undoubtedly has an *obligation* to fight them. He fights them not out of hatred or malice, nor even in order to save his life at the cost of his neighbor's life, but in order to protect those who are weaker and are under his protection. To help those near to oneself in such circumstances is [444]an unconditional moral obligation, and it is impossible to limit this obligation to one's own family. However, an individual alone cannot successfully defend all who are weak and innocent from criminal violence. It is impossible even for groups of people alone. Such a defense along the lines of a collective organization is the purpose of a state's military forces. To support the state's philanthropic work in one way or another is everyone's moral obligation, an obligation that no abuses whatever can eliminate. Just as the conclusion that rye is harmful does not follow from the fact that ergot is poisonous, so the burdens and dangers of *militarism* do not speak against the necessity of having armed forces.¹⁰⁷

The military and, in general, any compulsory organization is not an evil, but a consequence and an indication of evil. There was no mention of such an organization when, out of malice, the innocent shepherd Abel was killed by his brother. Justly fearing that the same thing would later happen to Seth and other peaceful men as well, the good guardian angels of humanity mixed clay with copper and iron to create the soldier and the policeman. Moreover, until Cain's feelings disappear from human hearts, the soldier and the policeman will be a good, not an evil. Hostility towards the state and its representatives is, nevertheless, still hostility, and such hostility alone towards the state is enough to see the *need* for the state. It is strange to be hostile towards the state for the reason that by external means it merely¹⁰⁸ limits but does not internally abolish everywhere the malice that we cannot eliminate from within our own selves!

VII

Between the historical necessity of war and its abstract rejection by a particular individual lies the duty of that individual to the organized whole (the state), which down to the end of history conditions not only the existence but also the progress of humanity. However, the undeniable fact that the state possesses the means not only to preserve human social life as it presently is, but¹⁰⁹ also to move it forward,

¹⁰⁵ C] the present Kurds] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁰⁶ E] An anarchist terrorist organization that operated primarily in the western and southern parts of the Russian Empire.

¹⁰⁷ C] whatever can eliminate. Just ... having armed forces.] and untruths can eliminate. The conclusion that rye is harmful does not follow from the fact that ergot is poisonous. **AB**.

¹⁰⁸ C] merely] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁰⁹ C] as it presently is, but] as it presently is (*statu quo*), but **AB**.

imposes on the individual other duties to the state in addition to the simple¹¹⁰ fulfillment of its legal demands. If the state were the perfect embodiment [445] of the normal social¹¹¹ order, fulfilling these demands would be enough. In fact, however, the state, being the condition and the instrument of human improvement, is itself gradually progressing in various respects. For this reason the single individual is obliged, within the bounds of one's abilities and faculties, to participate actively in the general political¹¹² process. There is within the individual an unconditional moral awareness of the perfect ideal of moral truth and peace, an awareness of the Kingdom of God. He obtains this awareness not from the state, but from above and from within. This ideal, however, can be genuinely *realized* in the collective life of humanity only by means of a *preparatory*¹¹³ state organization. It follows from this that the individual who actually¹¹⁴ takes the moral point of view has a direct and positive obligation to assist the state, through persuading and preaching, to fulfill its preliminary task in the best possible manner. The state itself, of course, becomes superfluous *after* this fulfillment, *but not before*.¹¹⁵ The individual can and should have such an influence on society with regard to war as well as with regard to all other aspects of life within the state.

The evil of war lies in the extreme¹¹⁶ hostility and hatred between the parts of a shattered¹¹⁷ humanity. In personal relations, no one justifiably has bad feelings, and it is useless to reveal such feelings. However, in the case of international hatred the bad feeling is usually combined with false opinions and incorrect reasoning. In fact, these often evoke the bad feeling. To struggle against this lie is the first duty of anyone who really wants to bring humanity closer to a morally good peace.¹¹⁸

As for the future¹¹⁹ decisive struggle between Europe and Asia, despite the high probability of its occurrence, we do not consider it an unconditional and inescapable necessity. The matter is still in our hands. Although it is highly unlikely to occur, the first condition for the possible peaceful inclusion of the Mongolian race into the

¹¹⁰ C] simple] passive **AB**.

¹¹¹ C] normal social] absolute **AB**.

¹¹² C] political] *Absent in AB*.

¹¹³ C] *preparatory*] *Absent in AB*.

¹¹⁴ C] actually] seriously **AB**.

¹¹⁵ C] to fulfill its ... *not before*.] for it to approach gradually the ideal. **AB**.

¹¹⁶ C] extreme] *Absent in AB*.

¹¹⁷ C] parts of a shattered] various parts of **B**.

¹¹⁸ C] really wants to bring ... morally good peace.] seriously wants to bring humanity closer to eternal peace. The historical progress already accomplished has made war between European nations *almost* impossible. The removal of this "almost" is the concern of the good will of European nations and their rulers. They need only turn attention to the logical consequence of the existing situation, namely to the obvious uselessness of stockpiling colossal armaments (along with compulsory military service), which only arouses a futile apprehension of an incredible and quite unnecessary European war. No one is seriously suggesting complete disarmament, but a ten-fold reduction in the size of military forces is enough for a genuine defense against savages and barbarians as against what is required by an empty fear of a European war. **AB**.

¹¹⁹ C] future] *Absent in AB*.

circle of Christian civilization¹²⁰ lies in the Christian nations becoming more Christian. They should be guided to a greater degree in *all* aspects of their collective life by moral principles than by shameful self-interest and evil economic, national and religious hostility.

Recently at the world congress of religion in Chicago,¹²¹ certain Asians—Buddhists and Brahmins—addressed the Europeans [446] with words that expressed current opinion in the East: “You send us missionaries to preach your religion. We do not deny the merits of your religion, but having gotten to know you for the last two centuries we see that your entire life runs counter to the demands of your faith and that you are moved not by the spirit of moral truth and love, bequeathed to you by your God, but by the spirit of greed and violence common to all bad people. Consequently, it is either of two things: Either your religion, despite its inner superiority cannot be practically realized and so it is not useful even for you who profess it; or you are so bad that you do not want to do what you can and should do. In either case, you present no advantage over us and should leave us in peace.”¹²² Only deeds, not words, can serve as a convincing reply to this objection. Against an internally united and truly Christian Europe, Asia would have no justification for fighting nor meet the conditions for victory.^{123, 124}

¹²⁰ C] civilization] culture **AB**.

¹²¹ E] A reference to the first World Parliament of Religion held in Chicago from 11–27 September 1893.

¹²² E] Although these words are marked as a quotation in the original, Solov’ev is not directly quoting any of the presenters at the Chicago event but only seeking to convey the sense of the “Asian” critique of European Christianity.

¹²³ C] for victory.] for victory. Be that as it may, if the final military encounter of the West with the East happens to be inevitable, we must remember that a victory for Europe will be conditional on the harmonious action of all its nations coupled with the arousal of their spiritual forces, and not the size of their armed masses. In this final war, which must be to advance unification on a world scale, Russia will obviously have to play a leading role. Therefore, our true patriotic duty is to desire and see that our fatherland be not only materially but, *above all*, morally and spiritually strong and *worthy* of this great calling in completing this final task of humanity. **A**.

¹²⁴ C] for victory.] for victory. Be that as it may, if the final military encounter of the West with the East happens to be inevitable, we must remember that a victory for Europe will be conditional on the harmonious action of all its nations coupled with the arousal of their spiritual forces, and not the size of their armed masses. Above all, the rulers of the nations and the guiders of public opinion must decisively and sincerely agree that a “European” war, or more precisely a war between the nations of Christendom is unnecessary and impermissible. Let the people, on whom the actual triumph of peace depends, hear the voice not of the abstract thinker and not of the one-sided moralist, but of a person who with an impeccable moral character and extensive practical experience was certainly least inclined towards philosophical and political utopias. In his excellent recently published letter to Count Bismarck (written in 1871 and published in 1894), the late Prince Petr Georgievich Oldenburg, having mentioned the “adverse theories” “vanquished not by bayonets, but by political wisdom and enlightened measures” and having discarded, then, the absurd idea of a possible, immediate and complete disarmament, continues: “My opinion is, therefore, (1) to end war between civilized peoples and to guarantee the reciprocal territories on the part of the governments, (2) to resolve disputed issues following the example of England and America with the help of an international commission, (3) to establish the strength of the military forces of all states by an international convention.” (The temporary need for small armies to protect against, among

War was the direct means for the external unification of humanity and the indirect means for its internal unification. Reason forbids abandoning this instrument as long as it is needed, but conscience obliges us to try *to make it unnecessary* and to try to make the natural organization of humanity, currently divided into hostile parts, into an actual moral, or spiritual, organization. The general description of this entire moral organization, which is contained in human nature, rests internally on the unconditional Moral Good and through world history is fully realized. The moral conditions justify the moral good in the world. This description of the aggregate moral conditions must be the culmination of moral philosophy.¹²⁵

other things, possible attacks by savage nations was explained above.) “Although many assign the elimination of war to the realm of phantasy, I, nevertheless, have the courage to think that this is the only way to save the church, the monarchy in principle, society and heal the states of the ulcer that is hindering their development. The implementation of such a supreme, truly Christian and human idea, coming immediately from two powerful monarchs would be a glorious victory over the principle of evil. It would usher in a new era of happiness. Cries of joy would spread around the world, cries which would be echoed by the heavenly angels. If the Lord is behind me, then who can be against me, and what force can oppose those who act in the name of God? This is the modest opinion of an old man sorely tried by fate and who without fear and without concern for the opinion of the world in the sight of God and eternity merely follows the voice of conscience, seeking nothing more on this Earth than a quiet grave alongside his dear ancestors.” **B E]** Oldenburg 1894: 137–138.

¹²⁵ C] The general description ... of moral philosophy.] *Absent in B.*

[447]Chapter 19

The Moral Organization of Humanity as a Whole

To speak of the *natural* organization of humanity is to say that different human individuals and groups are naturally forced to interact so that their private needs¹ and activities are² counterbalanced leading, generally speaking, to the comparative improvement³ of the whole. In this way, the needs of shepherds and farmers, the militaristic spirit of national leaders and the greedy enterprise of merchants have created since time immemorial our worldly culture and advanced human history. This natural arrangement of human affairs, thanks to which individual aspirations lead to common progress, expresses a certain real unity of humanity. However, this unity is both internally and externally imperfect. Externally, it is imperfect owing to its factually incomplete character and internally because it is not the conscious and desired object of those individuals and groups concerned. In the non-human world, we find such solidarity, despite the intentions and desires of creatures, in the unity of the genus and in the development of organic species.⁴ To stop at this point⁵ would be unworthy of humans in whom objective and generic reason—the general *predicate* of nature—becomes the individual *subject*. What is demanded is the moral, conscious and voluntary organization of humanity in the name of and by virtue of the all-one Moral Good, and it became the explicit aim and purpose of thought and life from that moment in history when this Moral Good was revealed as unconditional and full. A unity in [448]the Moral Good means not just participating and factually balancing aspirations and actions for a common outcome, but a direct community of people and groups engaged in a single-minded activity in order to attain a universal goal, viz., absolute perfection,⁶ which is understood and accepted by each as his and her *personal* goal.

E] Many pages of what would become the last sections of this chapter in **B** and then in the 1899 edition did not appear as part of a journal article. In **B**, this, the 16th, chapter spans pp. 549–635.

¹ C] needs] interests **AB**.

² C] are] would be **A**.

³ C] improvement] progress **AB**.

⁴ C] development of organic species.] progress of organic forms. **AB**.

⁵ C] stop at this point] be content with this alone **A**.

⁶ C] viz., absolute perfection,] *Absent in AB*.

With its task⁷ being the realization of the unconditional norms of the moral⁸ good, or active (practical) perfection, the moral organization of human life is defined in general as the process of improvement. Above all, there, then, arises with logical necessity the question: Who is improving? In other words, we have the question of the subject of the moral organization. We know that *people* do not exist *in isolation* and, consequently, are not improving.⁹ The actual subject of this process of improving, or of moral progress (like historical progress in general), is the single individual *together with and inseparable from the collective person*, or society. Just as not every combination of molecules forms an organic cell and not every group of cells forms a living creature, so not every assembly of human individuals and groups forms an actual and living bearer of the moral organization. In order for it to be such, i.e., in order for an assembly to become organically a moral individual, the collective whole¹⁰ must be no less real than it and in this sense equivalent and equal in rights. Such significance must be given to it and not be created by it.

The *natural* groups that really expand the life of the individual are: family, nation and humanity. These three abiding stages embody the collective human being. The corresponding stages in the historical order are: blood-relatives, the political nation and the universal spirit.¹¹ The last of these can be revealed only with the spiritualization of the first two.¹²

Can the family form a part of the ultimate¹³ and universal moral organization? Is it not merely a transitional stage¹⁴ in the development of human life? Surely, the individual, at this *given level* with its egoistic desires for exclusivity is also a transitional stage,¹⁵ just as is the nation and even humanity itself. It is not a matter of idealizing and preserving some perishable aspect of one or another living being but of revealing and kindling the Divine [449]spark hidden under this smolder. We seek what is of unconditional and eternal¹⁶ significance inherent within the conditional and transitional¹⁷ form and affirmed to be not only an unalterable idea but also the start of fulfillment, the first step towards perfection. We must understand and accept the positive elements of life in their relative and temporary¹⁸ manifestations as

⁷ C] With its task] With the goal **AB**.

⁸ C] unconditional norms of the moral] absolute **A**.

⁹ C] We know that people ... are not improving.] It is impossible to recognize only the individual, i.e., only separate individuals, to be improving. **AB**.

¹⁰ C] collective whole] social formation **AB**.

¹¹ C] universal spirit] *Note added in A*: See "The Individual and Society" (*Knizhki Nedeli*, May and August 1896).] *Note in B*: See above Chap. 8, "The Individual and Society."

¹² C] The last of these ... the first two.] *Absent in AB*.

¹³ C] form a part of the ultimate] be an element of the final **AB**.

¹⁴ C] stage] form **AB**.

¹⁵ C] with its egoistic desires for exclusivity is also a transitional stage] is also a transitional form **AB**.

¹⁶ C] and eternal] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁷ C] and transitional] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁸ C] temporary] transitional **AB**.

conditional data for the solution of an unconditional task. In the case of the family, these natural data are the three generations successively¹⁹ connected by birth: grandparents, parents and children. The continuity and the relative nature of this connection does not eliminate its triadic structure as an abiding norm. The members of the series on both sides—the *great*-grandfather and the *great*-grandchildren—do not represent any special independent aspect of the ideal family relationship.²⁰ The highest task lies in spiritualizing the relative natural connection of the three generations²¹ and transforming it into the unconditionally moral. This is achieved from three sides: through the family religion, through marriage and through child-rearing.

II

The family religion is the oldest, most fundamental and strongest institution in humanity. It has outlasted the tribal way of life, has outlasted and is outlasting all changes be they religious or political. The object of the family religion is the older generation, the deceased fathers and grandfathers. According to the very oldest ideas, grandfathers certainly must be dead. This is so necessary that by a natural train of thought all who were dead, regardless of their age or sex,²² were called grandfathers (the Lithuanian-Polish word “*dziady*”²³ is a quite archaic remnant or relic). It was considered an outrage, a violation of the religious and moral norm if the natural grandfathers happened still to be alive. The norm could easily be restored, however, through the voluntary sacrifice of the old man. The essential truth in this savage fact²⁴ is the idea, or more precisely the two ideas, that: (1) The genuine *object* of human reverence and worship²⁵ cannot be a being who possesses the same status as a human being, with the same needs and abilities. (2) In order to have a powerful and beneficial *influence* in the earthly realm, which is the way it should be for a higher being, such a being must *remove* oneself from this realm, relinquish one’s immediate, physical connection with [450]it. In order to maintain the family devotion bestowed on the older generation in an era when force predominated, this devotion could not be connected with the spectacle of decrepitude and impotence. The elderly themselves understood this and with grateful wisdom in due time departed with their weakened life for another, a powerful and prophetic existence.

“The evening steals upon me,” king Bele said,

¹⁹ C] successively] *Absent in A.*

²⁰ C] The continuity and ... family relationship.] *Absent in A.*

²¹ C] spiritualizing the relative natural connection of the three generations] strengthening the relative natural connection A] strengthening the relative natural connection of the three generations B.

²² C] age or sex,] age, **AB.**

²³ E] Polish for “grandfathers,” it is also the word for an ancient Slavic feast to commemorate the dead.

²⁴ C] in this savage fact] here **AB.**

²⁵ C] and worship] and a religious cult **AB.**

“The helmet now is heavy, and stale the mead.”²⁶

But lay us now, ye children, in two mound-graves.
Close where the blue gulf tosses its ceaseless waves.

When the moon’s pale beams the mountains and valleys fill,
And midnight’s dew is falling on grove and hill;
Then will we sit, O Thorstin, above our pillows,
And talk about the future, across the billows.²⁷

Already in the pagan veneration of ancestors, the natural connection between successive generations tends to have a spiritual and moral significance. The complete realization of this religious connection with one’s ancestors becomes possible through the Christian revelation of the unconditional meaning of life. A spiritual interaction in prayer and sacrament is established instead of a material sacrificial feeding of the “grandfathers,” who for their part help with external matters. Both sides pray for each other; both help each other to attain the *eternal good*. Both have an unconditional interest in the soul’s salvation. Eternal memory,²⁸ peace with the saints, universal²⁹ resurrection of life—these are the things that the present generation desires *for the deceased*, what it helps them to get, and in turn what help it expects *for itself* from the deceased. This mutual relation, passing into the sphere of the absolute good ceases to be self-interested and becomes purely moral, understood and realized as the perfect Moral Good.

Eternal memory certainly does not mean that people on Earth will eternally remember the dead as those who were but now are not. In the first place, it would not be so important for the dead, and secondly it is impossible, since humanity itself on Earth must not expect [451]an *eternal* extension of its *temporal* existence if there is any sense in the world. We appeal to God, and not to people, for such eternal memory. Eternal memory means to abide in God’s eternal mind. To create an eternal memory of someone means to create that person according to his or her eternal idea, according to God’s eternal thought of him or her and affirm that person in the sphere of unconditional and immutable being. In contrast to everyday anxieties, this is eternal *rest*. Death in itself is not rest, and the dead among natural human beings can better be labeled restless (in French, *revenants*; in German, *Poltergeister*)³⁰ than at rest. The rest for which we pray for our departed is dependent on God’s eternal memory of them. Affirmed as their unconditional idea, they have in it a solid, inviolable guarantee that the perfect³¹ moral good will ultimately be realized in the world and for this reason cannot be *anxious* about it. Although the distinction between the present and the future still exists for them, the future holds nothing doubtful and disturbing. It is separated from them only by a necessary delay, and they can

²⁶ E] Tegner 1877: 10.

²⁷ E] “But lay us now, ye ... across the billows.”] Tegner 1877: 17.

²⁸ E] An expression in an Orthodox liturgical chant to commemorate the dead.

²⁹ C] universal] *Absent in A*.

³⁰ C] (in French, *revenants*; in German, *Poltergeister*)] *Absent in AB*.

³¹ C] the perfect] the absolute **AB**.

already gaze at everything “*sub specie aeternitatis*.”³² On the other hand, for the dead in natural humanity the future still remains a formidable puzzle and mystery even though it becomes their main interest.

Then will we sit, o Thorstin, above our pillows
And talk about the future, across the billows.

Eternal rest is not inactivity. The departed are still active, but the character of this activity has essentially changed. No longer does it arise from an uneasy striving for a distant and incorrect goal but is done on the basis and by virtue of an attained and invariably abiding connection with the unconditional Moral Good. For this reason, action is compatible here with serene and carefree rest. Just as their beneficial influence expresses their moral connection *with others in nature*, with their living descendants, so in their blissful repose they are inseparable from others *in God and in eternity*. They are at rest *with the saints*.

Such is the norm for everyone. If everyone does not attain it, if not all who are dead are actually at rest and not all to whom eternal memory is sung turn out to be worthy of it before God,³³ [452] this does not change our religious attitude towards the “grandfathers,” which is the basis of family morality and through it of all morality. In first place, the actual fate of each³⁴ of the deceased remains for us still only a matter of conjecture. In second place, with the greater probability of unfavorable assumptions our religious attitude takes on a different character and with it the accompanying feeling of pity here leads to it having greater spiritual influence. Finally, in third place if not³⁵ the majority then certainly some of each person’s “grandfathers” do conform to³⁶ the demands of “eternal memory” and “rest with the saints.” Consequently, apart from the other relations every person certainly has a generic, blood bond with the world of God’s eternity. In this fundamental respect, the family can have an unconditional significance for each of us. That is, it is the true completion (through an abiding past) of our moral personality.

On the other hand, however, the full life of our forefathers, even remembered by God, even those resting with the saints, depends upon the actions of their descendants, who create the earthly conditions that can advance the end of the secular process and, consequently, also the corporeal resurrection of the deceased. Each of the deceased is naturally connected with the ultimate humanity of the future through successive generations of blood relatives.³⁷ Acting to spiritualize our corporeality and external, material nature, each of us fulfills our obligation with respect

³² E] Latin: from the standpoint of eternity.

³³ E] It should be remembered here that the prayer asking for “eternal memory” is a prayer that the soul of the departed has entered heaven.

³⁴ C] of each] *Absent in AB*.

³⁵ C] if not] if neither all nor even *AB*.

³⁶ C] conform to] satisfy *A*.

³⁷ F] For the time being, I cannot expand on the next set of circumstances in this connection and other related issues without passing into metaphysics and mystical aesthetics. However, the general need for resurrection as a full spiritual-corporeal being is sufficiently clear from the point of view of the unconditional moral principle and the reality of the moral order.

to our forefathers, paying our moral debt to them. Having received their physical existence and an entire legacy of previous history³⁸ from their forefathers, a new generation carries on the work that in the end will create the conditions for a complete life also for the deceased. So, from this point of view the natural connection with previous generations, or the family religion of the past, is of unconditional importance; it is an expression of the perfect Moral Good.

The human job of spiritualizing our corporeality and [453]material nature in general will exert a beneficial effect *backwards* onto the past. Only then will the goal be attained. The past will obtain³⁹ its full reality only in the future. When this job is finished and the perfection of life is achieved, our spiritual and corporeal existence will fully imbue each other, the abyss between the visible and the invisible worlds will be completely eliminated and death will be impossible not only for the living but also for the dead. However, until then the struggle of the spirit with the flesh, its intensification and focus must be accepted as a prerequisite for this future perfection and as our present moral task. The way *at present* to resurrect the body is a subjugation of the flesh. A prerequisite for the full life is the suppression of the immensity of life, or asceticism. True asceticism, i.e., spiritual possession of the flesh leading to the resurrection of life, can follow two paths: *monasticism* and *marriage*. Concerning the former path, being primary and exclusive, we spoke in another place⁴⁰; an explanation of the second path is part of the present argument.

III

Such an apparently simple relation, the physical basis of which appears already in the animal kingdom and even in the vegetable realm, is not without reason called a “great mystery.”⁴¹ It is taken as the permanent image, consecrated by the word of God, denoting the union of the God of Israel with the people, of the crucified Christ with the earthly Church, and Christ—the King of Glory⁴²—with the New Jerusalem.⁴³ If the veneration of one’s ancestors and religious interaction with them connects people with the Perfect Good⁴⁴ through the past, then true marriage has the same meaning for the present, the middle period of life. It is a realization of the unconditional moral norm in the actual center of human existence. The opposition of the sexes, which in the world of pre-human organisms expresses only a general interaction between a formative and a formed life, between an active and a passive principle, acquires for humans a more definite and profound meaning. A woman, unlike a female animal, is not only the embodiment [454]of a single passive-re-

³⁸ C] history] culture AB.

³⁹ C] obtain] have A.

⁴⁰ F] See the second chapter “The Ascetic Principle in Morality.”

⁴¹ E] Ephesians 5: 32.

⁴² E] See Psalms 24: 7.

⁴³ E] See Revelation 3: 12.

⁴⁴ C] Perfect Good] absolute principle A.

ceptive side of natural existence. She is the concentrated essence of all of nature, the ultimate expression of the material world in its *inner* passivity, as ready to pass into a new, higher realm—to transition to moral spiritualization. The male does not represent here only the active principle in general, but is the bearer of human activity, properly speaking, determined by the unconditional meaning of life, which the female also shares through him. He, in turn, owes her the possibility of *realizing* this sense, the absolute moral good, in an immediate or most direct way.

The highest morality, starting from the unconditional principle and determined by it (which in theology is called “*grace*”), is not the destruction of nature but the imparting of actual perfection on it. The natural relation between man and woman has three aspects: (1) the *material*—physical attraction conditioned by the nature of the organism, (2) the *ideal*—the exaltation of spiritual feeling, which is called “*amorousness*,” and finally (3) the *purpose* of natural sexual relations, or its ultimate result, i.e., childbirth.

In a true marriage, natural sexual intercourse is not eliminated but transubstantiated. However, since this transubstantiation still has not become a fact, it is a moral task and the elements of a natural sexual relation are the data of this task. In this regard, of chief importance is the middle element—the exaltation, or pathos, of love. The male sees his natural complement, his material other—his wife—not as she appears to external observation and not as outsiders see her. He sees her in her true essence or idea. He sees her as she was intended originally to be, as God saw her from the beginning and as she ultimately should become. The woman—material nature in its highest expression—is here recognized, in fact, as of unconditional significance, and she is affirmed as a moral person, as an end in itself, or as a creature capable of spiritualization and “*deification*.” Such a recognition implies a moral obligation to act in order to realize in this actual woman and in her life what she should be. This corresponds to the special character of the highest [455] feeling of love in a woman. She sees in her choice her genuine savior, who must reveal to her the meaning of her life and fulfill it.

Marriage remains the satisfaction of sexual need. It is just that this need concerns not the external nature of the animal organism, but humanized nature and its expectant deification. An enormous *task* appears that can be accomplished only by a continuous *feat*, which in the struggle against a hostile reality can be won only by passing through *martyrdom*.⁴⁵ From this point of view, the satisfaction of a full life that includes corporeal sensuality is connected not with some prior lust, but with the subsequent joy presented by attained perfection.

⁴⁵ F] The late professor of philosophy, P. D. Jurkevich, told me of one young scholar, the son of a Lutheran pastor in Moscow, who, attending a wedding once in a Russian church, was struck by the fact that in the sacred songs the bridal crowns are compared to martyrs’ crowns. This profound view so struck a cord that it resulted in a complete mental revolution in him that ended up with the young philologist abandoning secular scholarship and the university professorship he was bound to occupy. Much to the chagrin of his family, he entered a monastery. This was the famous Father Clement Sederholm, of whose excellent character and life story K. L. Leontiev later related. E] See Leontiev 1882.

Of course, in a *perfect* marriage the human being is, in the end, internally complete through a complete union with one's spiritualized material essence, and external child-bearing is unnecessary and impossible. It is unnecessary, because the highest task has been fulfilled, the ultimate goal achieved. It is impossible, just as it is impossible that when two of the same geometric shapes are superimposed there is an ill-fitting part that does not align. The perfect marriage is the beginning of a new process, which does not temporally repeat life, but which renews it for eternity. It is impossible, however, to forget that a perfect marriage is not necessarily the initial condition⁴⁶ of a moral union between a man and a woman, but only its *ultimate result*. It is impossible to assume this higher stage at the start and begin a construction with the roof, just as it is impossible to maintain that such a roof is also an actual house. A true human marriage is one that is deliberately *directed* towards the perfect union of a man and a woman, towards [456]the creation of a whole person. However, as long as this is only intended and its very idea is not yet realized as fully complete, as long as it is still not released from the duality between the idea and material, empirical reality, which is opposed to the idea, external physical child-birth will appear as the *natural result of an as yet unattained perfection and as necessary to its future attainment*. It is clear that as long as the union of man and woman is not completely spiritualized, as long as its full expression remains only an idea and a subjective feeling and it continues objectively, now as before, to be as external and superficial as it is in animals, the result of this union *can have no* other character. However, *given this imperfection* it is just as clear that this result is of the highest desirability. For what the parents did not do the children will do. The external, temporal succession of generations exists, *because* marriage has not attained perfection, because the union of individual men and women is not sufficiently spiritual⁴⁷ and full to restore internally in them the integral person in the image and likeness of God. However, this "*because*" turns out to be an "along with" and an "*in order that,*" namely in order that the task which has turned out to overwhelm⁴⁸ this individual person (man and woman) was, nevertheless, indirectly realized by this person starting from him through a series of future generations. In this way, the inner complete character of the family as an end in itself is restored. The human being, even though imperfect, remains of unconditional value, and the solid connection between the temporal, living members of the series extending to eternity remains continuous.

As for the moral organization of humanity, with respect to the past the fact of heredity alone, i.e., of descent from a given line of ancestors, is insufficient. What it requires is an established and abiding moral connection with these ancestors, and this is accomplished in the family religion. Furthermore, the natural fact of sexual relations is at present insufficient for such an organization. It requires raising these relations to the level of a spiritual achievement, which happens in a true marriage. Likewise with respect to the future, children are important for the moral organiza-

⁴⁶ C] the initial condition] a condition **AB**.

⁴⁷ C] spiritual] deep **A**.

⁴⁸ C] to overwhelm] to be too difficult for **AB**.

tion of the collective human being not only because they are a *new* generation with an unknown future ahead. In addition to the factual, external succession, [457]an inner, moral succession is needed. It is not enough that parents produce children for the future. They have an obligation to *raise* these carriers and engines of the future to fulfill their particular world-historical task.

IV

The natural moral feeling of pity, which forbids us from injuring our neighbors and which makes us help them, is naturally focused on those to whom we are closest and at the same time are most in need of our help, viz., on children. This connection, which in the family has a moral character as part of the natural life of the human being, has an unconditional importance in the family as the primary basis of a new, spiritually-organized life.

The moral significance of marriage lies in the fact that a woman ceases to be an instrument of natural instincts but is recognized as someone who is absolutely valuable in herself, as the necessary complement of an individual man to make him truly whole. The failure or inadequacy of a marriage in realizing this unconditional significance of human individuality forces the task to be transferred—to the children as representatives of the future. Our simple, natural⁴⁹ pity for the weak and suffering offspring is connected with our worldly grief over the evils and distresses of life, with our hope that these new creatures will succeed in easing the universal burden and finally with our duty to protect them for this task and prepare them for it.

In the spiritually⁵⁰ organized family, the relation of the parents to the children mainly has to do⁵¹ with the unconditional purpose of the human being. The goal of education is to connect the temporal life of this future generation to the supreme and eternal good common to all generations and in which grandparents, parents and children are inseparably of one essence^{52,53} with each other. For the Kingdom of God can be revealed and the resurrection of life accomplished only through eliminating the temporal decay of the human being whereby one generation excludes and displaces another from life. While on the road to this perfection, the moral connection between generations and our unconditional extra-temporal unity [458]is

⁴⁹ C] natural] concrete **AB**.

⁵⁰ C] In the spiritually] In the family, the natural concern of parents for the children is limited to providing them with the immediate, relative goods of life and with securing their material future. In the spiritually **A**.

⁵¹ C] mainly has to do] has to do above this and mainly before this **A**.

⁵² C] of one essence] in solidarity **AB**.

⁵³ E] Solov'ëv's Russian word here is "*edinosushchny*," which also occurs in the Russian text of the Nicene Creed in speaking of the first two Persons of the Trinity. Thus, the translation here could also be "of one substance" or "of one being."

maintained through the veneration⁵⁴ of ancestors, on the one hand, and through the rearing of children, on the other.

There is a great dispute going on in us concerning whether time or eternity is stronger: the Moral Good or death? The Prince of this world⁵⁵ says to us, “Your fathers, those through whom you received everything that you have, were, are and will not be forever. But then where is the Good? You are reconciled with the death of your fathers; you affirm it by your consent. *You live and have fun, and those to whom you are obligated have vanished forever.* Where, then, is the moral good? Where is the very start of piety? Where is gratitude, pity and shame? Are they completely defeated by self-love, selfishness, and sensuality?⁵⁶ But do not come to despair. Surely such a condemnation of your life makes sense only in terms of the Moral Good, only under the assumption that the Moral Good exists, and precisely this assumption forms a fundamental error, namely that there is no Moral Good at all. If there were, then either your fathers would not have died, or you would not be able to find peace with their deaths. Now, it is clear that this Moral Good with its fictitious demands and standards of piety, shame and pity are nothing but an empty claim. If you want to live, live and forget about the Moral Good, since it has been devoured by death without leaving a trace. There is no more and will not be more....”—The Eternal One, however, says, “Your fathers have died but they have not ceased to exist, because the keys of life belong *to me*. Do not believe they have disappeared. To see them again bind yourself to the invisible true bond of the Moral Good. Honor them, pity them, be ashamed to forget them.” “An illusion!” the Prince of This Age⁵⁷ again says. “Perhaps you believe in their hidden subjective existence, but if you yourself are not satisfied with such a counterfeit⁵⁸ of life and hold to the full nature of the manifest, objective life, then, if only there is a Moral Good, you should not demand it for your fathers. But the manifest, objective existence—the one thing that is worth talking about—was lost by your fathers and will never be returned to them. Renounce the impotent Moral Good, this exhausting struggle with phantoms and live a full life.” However, the last word belongs to the Eternal One, who, without renouncing the past, all the more boldly appeals to the future: “The Moral Good does not depend on some measure of your power, and your weakness is not a sign of the impotence of the Moral Good. Indeed, you yourself are impotent only when you stop with yourself. That your life is incomplete is your own doing. In truth, everything is open to you. Live in [459]everything, be one with yourself and your other, not only towards the past with respect to your ancestors, but also to the future. Affirm yourself in new generations in order that with your cooperation now they will see the world to that final state in which God will restore a full life to all—

⁵⁴ C] veneration] cult **AB**.

⁵⁵ E] That is, Satan. John 12: 31—“now shall the prince of this world be cast out.”

⁵⁶ C] Where, then, is the ... and sensuality?] But is this really compatible with the Moral Good? Is this not profane, pitiless, shameless and shameful selfishness? **A**.

⁵⁷ E] Prince of This Age] Another reference to Satan.

⁵⁸ C] counterfeit] surrogate **AB**.

for new generations, for you, for your parents and their parents. By doing this,⁵⁹ you can in fact at the present time show the absolute power of the Moral Good over time and death, not by idly denying them, but by using them for the fullest revelation of immortal life. Use your ancestors' deaths to preserve through a religion of the departed a lasting pledge of their resurrection. Use your temporal existence in order that by giving it to posterity, by bringing the center of your moral gravity into the future, you anticipate and approach the final revelation of the Kingdom of God in this world.⁶⁰

V

Even our conventional everyday morality requires that we pass down to our children not only the goods we have acquired, but also the ability to work to provide further for their lives. The highest and unconditional morality also obliges the present generation to hand down to a new generation a dual legacy: first, all the positive acquisitions of the past, all that we have historically accumulated and second, the ability and the willingness to use this fundamental capital for the common good, for a new approach to the highest goal. Such is the essential purpose of true education, which must be at once and inseparably both *traditional* and *progressive*. The division and opposition between these two producers⁶¹ of the true life—between the foundation and what is founded on it, between the root and what should grow from it—is equally absurd and deadly for both sides. If the old and good prevails but is no longer the real⁶² basis of the new and better, this means that the old has lost its life force. Seeing it as something *finished* and worshipping it in this form as an external object, we make *religion* into only⁶³ a *relic*—a dead one to be sure but not one that works miracles. This is the fundamental sin of the current conservatism that seeks to replace [460]the living fruit of the spirit with artificial preserves. To the extent that it is expressed in education, this pseudo-conservatism breeds people who are indifferent or hostile to religion. Faith cannot *result* from such education when there is already no *basis* for it. In fact, it is clear that exceptional zeal in the preservation of faith can arise only from a lack of faith among these zealots themselves. They would have neither the time nor the need to be so distressed or concerned for faith if they had *lived by faith*.

When *tradition* assumes the place of *its* object (when, for example, the traditional conception of Christ is preserved unconditionally but Christ's presence as well as that of His Spirit is not felt), then religious life is impossible and all our efforts to arouse it artificially only expose the fatal loss all the more clearly.

⁵⁹ C] By doing this,] Meanwhile, A.

⁶⁰ C] in this world] *Absent in A.*

⁶¹ C] producers] factors **AB**.

⁶² C] no longer the real] not the **AB**

⁶³ C] only] *Absent in A.*

However, can the life of the future arise out of a past that is really dead? If the connection between parts of time is really severed, what does progress mean? *Who* is progressing? Can a tree actually grow if its roots and trunk exist only conceptually while its branches and leaves alone enjoy genuine reality? Without dwelling for now on the logical incompatibilities of such points of view, let us confine ourselves to the ethical aspect of this matter. As a moral being, a person has an unconditional value. Our present condition, each of us taken individually, does not correspond (is inadequate) to this value. Hence, the moral task is to avoid separating oneself, one's individuality and one's existence from the unconditional moral good which lies in everything as a unit. To the extent that a moral creature is intrinsically connected with *everything*, it really does have an unconditional value and finds its dignity. In the temporal order, the "everything," from which we must not separate ourselves and with which we unite ourselves, appears from two immediate sides: as our past and our future, as our ancestors and our descendants. In order to realize our moral dignity in time, we must become spiritually what we already are physically, namely, a link uniting and mediating the two. For this to happen, we must recognize those who have departed as an abiding reality and recognize an unconditional future for our ancestors. Although they have died, we must not consider them as finished. They are bearers of the unconditional principle, which must be fully realized for them as well. [461]The departed, our ancestors, along with living in our memory of the past have a secret existence also in the present, and this will become clear in the future: *They possess both a reality and a future.*⁶⁴

Only on this foundation is a genuine education possible. If we are indifferent towards the future of our ancestors, why will we care about the future of the next generation? If we can have no unconditional moral solidarity with those who *have died*, how will we get solidarity with those who certainly *will die*? To the extent that education essentially consists in passing moral obligation from one generation to another, the question is: *What* is our obligation, and with respect *to whom* are we to pass it down to our successors if our own connection with our ancestors is broken? Do we have an obligation to move humanity forward? What we have here, however, is only a play on words, because neither "forward" nor "humanity" has any real meaning. "Forward" must refer to the Moral Good, but how does it enter here if evil is posited at the start—the most elementary and indisputable evil of ingratitude towards our fathers, an acquiescence in their departure, a tranquil separation and alienation from them? And where is the humanity that our students and successors are to move forward? Did last year's leaves, scattered by the wind and having rotted on the ground, together with new leaves really form a new tree? There is, from this point of view, no humanity at all; there are only generations of people succeeding one another on into the future.

If we must replace this external and constantly disappearing connection with an essential and abiding one, it obviously must be done in both directions. The form of time, which in itself is morally indifferent, cannot in essence determine our moral relations. No bargaining is possible here—there cannot be two unconditional prin-

⁶⁴ C] The departed, our ancestors ... *and a future.*] *Absent in AB.*

ciples of life. We must finally once and for all resolve for ourselves the issue: Do we recognize the unconditional significance of the temporal order of phenomena or of the moral order, i.e., of the intrinsic connection between creatures? With the first possible solution, with the disappearance of a real unity in a humanity that is incurably fragmented over time,⁶⁵ there can be no common task. Consequently, there can be no obligation to raise future generations that will continue to carry out such a task. And with the second possible solution, education [462] is inextricably connected to a veneration⁶⁶ of the past that forms a natural complement to it. This traditional element in education conditions its progressive element, since *moral progress can only lie in the further and better execution of the obligations that follow from tradition.*

The same unconditional value of human beings (our ability to be bearers of eternal life and to partake in the divine completeness of being) that we religiously esteem in the departed, we morally teach to the next generation, affirming the connection between them as one that manifests itself through a triumph over time and death. Particular problems, such as the technique of educating, belong to a specific special sphere that we will not go into here. However, if pedagogy wishes to have a general positive principle that is morally indisputable and that conveys unconditional worth on its aspirations, it will find this in only one thing, namely, *the inextricable connection between generations that support one another in the progressive fulfillment of one common cause—the preparation for the obvious Kingdom of God and the resurrection of all.*⁶⁷

VI

The veneration⁶⁸ of ancestors and the family upbringing based upon it vanquish immoral discord and reestablish moral solidarity among people over the course of time or in *the succession of existence.* It is a victory of the moral good over individual selfishness, an affirmation of the individual as a positive element in an abiding family union in spite of death and time. However, for it to be the foundation of

⁶⁵ C] with the disappearance ... fragmented over time] in the absence of a common subject **AB.**

⁶⁶ C] veneration] cult **AB.**

⁶⁷ C] *In A alone, there is the following paragraph:* If you would inculcate your best principles in your child or a child entrusted to you, and this child asks, “Why should I do that when I do not want to?” And you simply answer, “In order for you to be good,” you are raising an egoist, who is unhappy and the cause of unhappiness, the logical outcome of which is either crime or suicide. If your answer is for the benefit of others, for the common good, etc., you are, in the best case, raising perhaps an abstract thinker but more likely a twaddler. However, you can answer the question, essentially with complete honesty and merely adapting your expressions for the occasion, say that your grandfather in heaven spoke about this with God and God will then allow him and all our ancestors to return and to live together with us more quickly forever. Only by answering in this spirit can you actually raise a moral person, a progressive actor in history.

⁶⁸ C] veneration] cult **AB.**

a moral, and consequently, universal organization, for it to be the initial⁶⁹ form of the unconditional and, consequently, all-embracing moral good, this union cannot be self-contained, closed and exclusive. The family is an immediate restoration of moral integrity in one fundamental respect, namely, a continuity over generations. This integrity, however, must be restored also in the order of a *coexistence*.

The *linear* infinity of the family can find its moral completion only within another wider whole—just as a geometric line becomes real only when taken as the edge of a plane, a plane being to a line as a line is to a point. And if [463] a moral point—an individual person—has a genuine reality only as the bearer of a generic succession, then the entire line of this succession has its real existence only in connection with a number of collectively co-existing families, forming a *nation*. If we obtained all of our physical and spiritual properties from our fathers, then our fathers had them only through the *fatherland*. Family traditions are part of the national traditions, and the future of the family is inseparable from the future of the nation. This is why reverence for our fathers must pass into reverence⁷⁰ for our fatherland, or patriotism, and family upbringing is linked with national upbringing.

The moral good, which by its essence is inexhaustible and non-envious, imparts to every subject of moral relations, whether individual or collective, its own intrinsic dignity and unconditional value. Therefore, the moral connection and the moral organization are essentially different from every other by the fact that each subject of a lower or, more precisely, narrower order, in becoming a subordinate member of a higher or broader whole, is not only not absorbed by it, not only retains his or her distinctiveness, but finds in this subordination the intrinsic conditions and external environment for realizing one's highest dignity. Just as a family does not entail the elimination of individual members, but gives them a complete life within a certain sphere and lives not only by them, but also in them and for them, so precisely also the nation neither absorbs the family nor the individuals but *fills* their lives with content in a definite national form. This definite form, which makes up the proper meaning or positive quality of the nation, is represented, above all, by its *language*. A language is a definite expression, a special quality of universal reason, uniting those who speak *this* language without dividing them, however, from those who speak another language. For all languages are only special qualities of the *all-one word*. All are commensurate in it with each other or understandable by each other.

The multitude of languages in itself is something positive and normal no less than is the multitude of grammatical elements and forms in each of the languages. What is abnormal is only the mutual misunderstanding and the disconnection arising from this situation. In the sacred tale of the tower of Babel, heaven's punishment (and [464] along with it the natural consequence) for seeking an external and godless unity is a loss of inner unity and solidarity, expressed in mutually unintelligible *sounds* (which is possible even with an identical lexical structure). If the inner moral unity had not been lost, the differences in the languages would not have

⁶⁹ C] initial] elementary **AB**.

⁷⁰ C] reverence for our fathers must pass into reverence] cult of our fathers must pass into a cult **AB**.

been a problem. They could have been learned, and there would have been no need to be scattered across the face of the Earth. The point, however, is not the creative emergence of languages, but their *confusion*. “Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth” (Genesis XI: 7–9). It is clear that this tale does not concern the origin of the multitude of languages, since for there to be confusion, they must have already existed.⁷¹

The complete meaning of this ancient revelation, which is startling in its profundity, is understandable only by comparing the book of Genesis with the New Testament’s Acts of the Apostles. “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.” (Acts II: 1–11).

A unity in the true sense is realized in a multitude. Without eliminating it, a unity liberates the multitude from the limitations of exclusivity. [465] Monolingualism through an act of God means intercourse and understanding between many *separate and separated but not separating languages*. This point, however, is not understood by the inventors and defenders of the various Volupics and Esperantos, who consciously or unconsciously imitate those who built the Tower of Babel.⁷²

The normal relation between languages is also at the same time the normal relation between nations (both concepts are expressed by a single word in Slavonic). The true unity of languages lies not in monolingualism but in an all-lingualism, i.e.,

⁷¹ C] It is clear that ... already existed.] *Absent in AB*.

⁷² F] The intrinsic connection and contrast between the Babylonian pandemonium of the pagans and the Zionist assembly of the apostles, like that of the transgression and restoration of a norm, is clearly shown in church songs on Pentecost. E] In this footnote, Solov’ëv, most likely, had in mind the Orthodox Church’s Kontakion Tone 8 hymn recited on Pentecost: “When the Most High came down and confused the tongues, He divided the nations, but when He distributed the tongues of fire, He called all to unity.”

a communality and understanding, the⁷³ mutual penetration of all languages into each other while preserving the distinctiveness of each. Likewise, the true unity of nations is not some single nationhood, but an all-nationhood, i.e., the interaction and solidarity of all for the sake of an independent and full life for each.

VII

When, having learnt another language, we understand a foreigner's native tongue but which to⁷⁴ us is a foreign language, we understand not just the meaning of the words spoken, but join with this individual, by means of speech, in a genuine communication of thoughts, feelings and aspirations. We clearly see that the actual unity of peoples is not limited to the unity of a single nationality. It is impossible to deny this fact, the fact of inter-lingual, international and, consequently, universal human communication. But is this communication only perhaps a superficial relationship without any real unity behind it? Many people think this way asserting that a nation is a real whole, whereas humanity is only a generic concept abstracted from interactions between separate nations that are essentially external to one another. Let us leave for metaphysics the question to what extent any interaction presupposes an essential unity of those who interact. For now, we will note that an attribute of precisely the interactions which appear between different nations or peoples belonging to different [466]nations demand, independently of any metaphysics, that we assume at least between them the same real unity that is assumed within each nation between the people and groups that form it.

On what basis do we recognize nationality as a real force and a nation really as a single something and not a simple conglomeration of many human units? A question such as this but concerning the family is answered by reference to the *obvious* physical connection. Concerning a nation, we can point to three bases.

1) *The presupposed physical connection*, or the unity of its descent. This *presupposition*, however, has not only an equal, but an incomparably greater force with regard to humanity than with nationality. The original unity of the human race is not only a dogma of faith between the three monotheistic religions, but also the dominant opinion among philosophers and scientists, whereas the direct⁷⁵ unity of physical descent within a nationality is, in the vast majority of cases, an indubitable fiction.

2) *Language*. The unity of a language connects those who speak it, but we also know that a difference in language does not prevent a unanimity in thought, an agreement in opinion and even a use of the same words. For a difference in language does not eliminate but manifests the single inner language undoubtedly com-

⁷³ C] understanding, the] understanding, so to say, the **A**.

⁷⁴ C] When, having learnt another ... which to] When we understand a foreigner's native tongue, but which to **AB**.

⁷⁵ C] direct] *Absent in AB*.

mon to all people, since all can, under certain conditions,⁷⁶ understand one another whatever language they happen to speak. This is not a superficial result of external interaction, because what is mutually understood concerns not just contingent topics, but embraces the innermost content of the human soul. Consequently, this most profound and real foundation of life is based on a real connection and unity of all people. A difference in language is a difference in essential forms of mental life. This is important, since each of these forms represents a special quality of the soul. However, even more important is the content that each of them conceives in its own way and which is conceived by all. This content is not exhausted by one nor is exclusive of any. It is the positive and independent principle of the hidden unity and of an explicit unification of all.

A language is the deepest and most fundamental expression of the national character. However, just as differences in the characters of individuals do not preclude [467]the real unity of a nation—which includes all the people with various characters—so the differences in the characters of nations cannot preclude the real unity of all nations in humanity—which is also a “character.”

3) *History*. If a nation’s history is the basis of national unity, then universal or world history is the foundation of a broader but no less robust all-human unity. Moreover, a nation’s history is quite inconceivable except as an inseparable part of universal history. Try to imagine Russian history as if the nation were totally independent. Even if we managed to eliminate every innocent claim concerning the Scandinavian origin of our state,⁷⁷ it would still be impossible to deny that⁷⁸ the baptism of the Rus by the Greeks brought our nation immediately into the sphere of international, supernational life. In itself, in terms of its content, Christianity is the absolute truth and is consequently superhuman and even more so supernational. From a purely historical point of view, it is impossible to trace it to any particular nationality. How can one separate the Hebrew wheat from the Chaldean and the Persian, the Egyptian and the Phoenician, the Greek and the Roman chaff? At the same time, without this national wheat and without the chaff from these other nations there would have been no Christianity as a positive revelation, and consequently the foundation of the Kingdom of God would not have been laid. However, regardless of the value of these national elements in the historical formation of the universal religion, new nations such as Russia, which appeared after Christianity had been established and which adopted it in its finished form as the definitive revelation of the highest unconditional⁷⁹ Moral Good, cannot seek the genuine source of their lives in themselves. Their history can make sense only as the more or less perfect assimilation of the given, the more or less successful preparation for fulfilling the task Christianity

⁷⁶ C] under certain conditions,] if they want, **A**.

⁷⁷ E] Solov’ëv is here referring to the claim in the twelfth century Kievan manuscript known as the “Primary Chronicle” stating that a group of Vikings, known as the Rus’, settled in the town of Novgorod exacting tribute along the Volga trade route. First driven out by the local tribes, ensuing internecine conflicts led the Rus’ to be called back to rule and establish peace.

⁷⁸ C] it would be impossible to deny that] *Absent in A*.

⁷⁹ C] unconditional] absolute **AB**.

has already supplied. Clearly, in this preparatory process a single Christian nation cannot and should not remain isolated, alienated and hostile towards other nations, for such an attitude is contrary to the very essence of Christianity. Moreover, it is impossible to prepare to execute a certain task while affirming something that directly contradicts its inner meaning. Russia resolutely affirmed its confession of Christian universalism when in the most important and glorious epoch of its new [468]history it decisively emerged from a national seclusion and identified itself as a living member of the international whole. Only then was Russia's national strength revealed in what is still up to now⁸⁰ the most significant and valuable thing we have—not just for us but also for other nations. The beautiful blossom of our deep, thoughtful and tender poetry grew on the powerful stem of the “Europeanized” state that Peter the Great constructed.⁸¹ Russian universalism, which is as unlike cosmopolitanism as the language of the Apostles is unlike Volapük⁸², is connected with the names of Peter the Great and Pushkin. Who can mention others equal to these Russian national names!

Just as we individual human beings find the meaning of our personal existence in our families, in our connection with our ancestors and posterity, and just as the family has an abiding living content only in the nation and its national tradition, so a nationality lives, moves and exists only carried along by a supernational and an international environment. Just as an entire series of successive generations lives in and through the individual human being, just as the single nation lives in the totality of these families and acts through them, so humanity as a unit lives in the plenitude of nations and makes its history.

If a nation is an actual⁸³ fact and not a generic concept, if the intrinsic, organic character of the connection binding nations to one another in universal history is also an actual⁸⁴ fact, then humanity as a whole must also be recognized as such a fact. For actual,⁸⁵ living organs can only be organs of an actual,⁸⁶ living body and not of an abstract concept. Unconditional moral solidarity in the Moral Good, which connects human beings with our ancestors and our descendants, forming a normal family, connects us, via these original and immediate liberating ties, with⁸⁷ the universal whole concentrated in humanity. The complete collective subject, or “recipient,”⁸⁸

⁸⁰ C] in what is still up to now] , only then could there be formed what is (after the Christian faith, which we also obtained elsewhere) A.

⁸¹ C] other nations. The ... Peter the Great constructed.] other nations: our strong state and deep, thoughtful and tender poetry. A.

⁸² E] An artificial language constructed by the German Catholic priest Martin Schleyer in the late nineteenth century that he hoped would serve as an international language.

⁸³ C] actual] real AB.

⁸⁴ C] actual] real AB.

⁸⁵ C] actual] real AB.

⁸⁶ C] actual] real AB.

⁸⁷ C] ties, with] ties, with the nation, with A.

⁸⁸ C] , or “recipient,] *Absent in AB.*

of the perfect Moral Good, the complete image and likeness of the Deity, or bearer of the actual moral order (the Kingdom of God) is humanity. However, as already mentioned, it is the very essence of the moral order, or moral organization, that each part or each member of the great collective human being participates in the absolutely complete whole, [469]since we are necessary for this completion no less than it for us. The moral connection is a perfectly mutual connection. Just as humanity is inconceivable without the nations that compose it, the nation inconceivable without the family and the family without single individuals, so the reverse is also the case: The individual human being is impossible (not only physically, but also morally) outside the generic succession of generations. The moral life of the family is impossible outside the nation, and the life of the nation is impossible outside humanity.⁸⁹ This truism was willingly and entirely accepted by all until recently. However, for some time now (for reasons which are still obscure to existing systematic philosophies of history) it has become customary, contrary to all logic, to separate its necessary apex from this truism and to express that the intrinsic dependence of a nation on humanity is a phantasy and a chimera. It is agreed that a bad son and a bad father, i.e., a man who does not honor his ancestors and does not care about the upbringing of his (physical or spiritual) descendants, cannot be a good patriot, and a bad patriot cannot be a genuine servant of the common good. The reverse order is also conceded, i.e., that a bad patriot cannot be a normal family man, and a bad family man cannot be a normal man. However, they do not want to recognize that the same solidarity between the various stages of moral organization does not allow a man who is indifferent to the one supreme good of all nations as a whole⁹⁰ to be an actual, good patriot (and owing to this a normal supporter of family and of, finally, personal life). Yet, it is perfectly clear that if someone places the good of one's own nation, taken separately without regard for others, as the highest good, then he, first, strips the Moral Good of its essential characteristic of universality and consequently distorts this very goal. In the second place, in separating the good of one nation from the good of others, he distorts the idea of the nation, for in reality they are connected in solidarity. In the third place, that such a person can serve only a distorted nation imparting a distorted moral good onto it follows from this double distortion. That is, he can only be serving evil, and in bringing only evil to his fatherland he must be seen as a bad patriot.

The moral good embraces all the particulars of life, but it itself is *indivisible*. Patriotism, as a virtue, is part of the general [470]proper attitude towards everything, and this part in the moral order cannot be separated from the whole and be opposed to it. In the moral organization, one nation cannot prosper *at the expense* of others and cannot assert itself positively to the detriment or disadvantage of others. Just as

⁸⁹ C] Just as humanity ... outside humanity.] Just as the human being is impossible (not only physically, but also morally) outside the generic succession of generations and the moral life of the family impossible outside the nation and the nation outside humanity, so is the reverse also the case. Humanity is inconceivable without the nations that compose it, the nation without the family and the family without the individual human being. **AB**.

⁹⁰ C] one supreme good of all nations as a whole] final and unconditional moral good of all nations **AB**.

the positive moral dignity of a particular person is known from the fact that one's own prosperity truly benefits all others, so the prosperity of a nation true to the moral principle is necessarily connected with the universal moral good. This logical and moral axiom is grossly distorted in the current sophism: We must think only of our own nation, since it is good and therefore its prosperity benefits all. This either overlooks with striking flippancy or dismisses with striking impudence the obvious truth that this very alienation of one's own nation from others, this *exclusive* recognition of it as the moral good *par excellence*, is already evil and nothing but evil can arise on the basis of this evil. There are two choices: Either we renounce Christianity and monotheism in general, according to which "there is none good but one, that is, God,"⁹¹ and instead recognize one's own nationality *in itself* as the good, i.e., substitute it for God, or we must accept that a nation becomes good not simply by virtue of its given nationality but⁹² only by conforming to and being involved in the absolute moral Good. This is obviously possible only with a good attitude towards everything and above all, in the present case, towards other nations. A nation cannot actually be morally good as long as it bears malice or feels alienated from others,⁹³ as long as it does not recognize them as neighbors, as long as it does not love them as it does itself.

The moral obligation of the genuine patriot is determined by this: to serve one's nation in the Moral Good, or to serve the true good of the nation, which is inseparable from the good of all, or, what amounts to the same thing, *to serve the nation in humanity and humanity in the nation*. Such a patriot will find a positive, morally good side in every foreign race and nationality, and through it this patriot will connect this race and this nationality with one's own for the good of both.

When there is talk of a rapprochement between nations, of international accords, friendships and alliances we must know, before rejoicing or grieving, the basis of the rapprochement or union. We must know whether it is morally good or evil. The fact of union alone [471] says nothing. If the two—regardless of whether they be two particular individuals or two nations—are united in hatred of a third, the union is evil and a source of a new evil. If they are united in a mutual interest or by something beneficial to both, the issue remains open. For the interest can be unworthy, or the benefit imaginary. In such cases, the union of the nations in an unworthy interest or for an imaginary benefit—just as with particular individuals—cannot be morally good, something desirable for its own sake, even if it is not directly evil. Any union of peoples and nations can be positively approved only insofar as it contributes to the moral organization of humanity or to the organization of the unconditional Moral Good in it. We have found that the final *subject* of this organization—the real essence of the *moral order*—is the collective human being, or humanity, divided into its organs and elements—nations, families and individuals. Now, knowing *who*

⁹¹ E] Mark 10: 18.

⁹² C] good not simply by virtue of its given nationality but] becomes good **AB**.

⁹³ C] as long as it bears malice or feels alienated from others,] as it bears malice within itself towards others **AB**.

is morally organized, we must resolve *what* the organization is. That is, we must examine the question of *the universal forms of the moral order*.⁹⁴

VIII

The proper or dignified human attitude towards the higher world, towards other people and towards lower nature is organized collectively in the forms of the church, the state and the economic society or *zemstvo*.

The individual religious feeling derives its objective development and realization in the (universal)⁹⁵ Church, which is, therefore, *organized piety*.

From the point of view of religious morality, the human being lives in three different spheres: the mundane, or conditional (“this world”); the divine, or unconditional (the Kingdom of God); and that which is intermediate between them or which really connects them, the religious properly speaking (the Church).

To dwell permanently on the direct⁹⁶ opposition between the world and the Deity, between earth and heaven, is contrary to sound religious feeling. Let us even suppose that we are sincerely prepared to look on the entire world as worthless dust. Surely, however, this dust is not afraid of our contemptuous gaze. It *remains*.⁹⁷ *But, then, on whom?* If we say that this gaze remains on the Deity, this would obviously be profane. If we recognize [472]the worldly dust to be only a phantom of our imagination, then our own *self*, which is subject to the tormenting nightmare of phenomena, and helpless before the phantoms it has created, turns out itself to be⁹⁸ a worthless speck of dust which has from somewhere fallen into the eye of eternity and has hopelessly tainted its purity. This second view would be even more profane than the first. Since everything ultimately comes down to God, the more contempt we bear towards worldly existence, the more unworthy are our concepts of the absolute entity. When we declare that the world is a pure nothing, we lapse into extreme blasphemy, since all the evil aspects of existence, which are not eliminated by a verbal rejection, must be attached, then, directly and immediately to God himself. This dialectic cannot be avoided as long as we recognize only two opposing terms. However, there is a third, intermediary one. The historical sphere exists in which the worthless dust of the Earth is converted through skillful fertilization into the fertile soil of the future Kingdom of God.

Sound religious feeling demands not that we reject and do away with the world, but only that we not accept the world as the unconditionally independent principle

⁹⁴ C] *forms of the moral order*.] forms and the historical engines of the moral order. **A**.

⁹⁵ C] (universal)] *Absent in AB*.

⁹⁶ C] permanently on the direct] on the **A**.

⁹⁷ C] dust is not afraid of our contemptuous gaze. *It remains*.] this dust *remains*. **AB**.

⁹⁸ C] phenomena, and helpless before the phantoms it has created, turns out itself to be] phenomena turns out to be **AB**.

of our lives. Being *in the world*, we not only must become⁹⁹ ourselves not of the world,¹⁰⁰ but as such we must act on the world so that it ceases to be from itself and becomes all the more¹⁰¹ from God.

The essence of piety at the highest level of universal consciousness lies in recognizing the Deity alone as having unconditional value. Only in connection with Him does everything else that is also capable of having absolute value indeed have such value¹⁰² though not in itself and for itself, but in God and for God. *Everything becomes of worth through establishing a positive relationship¹⁰³ with the one worthy thing.*

If all people and nations were truly pious, i.e., revered the one absolute Good, i.e., the Moral Good or God, as their own good, they would obviously be as one. Being as one, or in solidarity with each other in God, they would obviously live according to God. Their unity would be at the same time holiness. Present-day humanity, which is not focused and raised by the one absolute interest in God is willingly dispersed between many relative and disconnected interests. Hence, there is discord and division. Morally good actions cannot arise on the basis of [473]an evil fact. This is why the activity of a divided humanity *in itself* can lead only to sin. Therefore, the moral organization of humanity must begin in essence with its unification and the consecration of its activity.

Perfect¹⁰⁴ unity and holiness lie in God; discord and sin lie in secular humanity; union and consecration lie in the church, which reconciles and adjusts the divided and sinful world with God. But in order to unite and consecrate, the church itself must be *one* and *holy*. That is, it must have its foundation in God without regard for the disparate and sinful people *who are in need* of unification and consecration and, consequently, who cannot get it on their own. Thus, *the Church in essence is the unity and holiness of the Deity, though not in itself but insofar as it abides and acts in the world.*¹⁰⁵ It is the Deity in its *other*, or the real essence of divine humanity. The *unity* and *holiness* of the church is spatially manifested as its universality, or catholicity, and temporally as the apostolic succession. Its catholicity (καθ' ὅλον—according or conforming to the whole) lies in the fact that all of the church's forms and activities connect individual people and individual nations with the whole of divine humanity both in its individual focal point, namely Christ, as well as in its collective circles, namely the world of ethereal forms, the departed saints who live in God and also the faithful who fight on earth. Insofar as in the church everyone conforms with the absolute whole, all are catholic. All exclusivity of race, individual

⁹⁹ C] become] be **AB**.

¹⁰⁰ E] Cf. Cf. John 15: 19—"but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

¹⁰¹ C] all the more] entirely **AB**.

¹⁰² C] does everything else ... have such value] is everything else recognized as also having absolute value **A**.

¹⁰³ C] *relationship*] connection **A**.

¹⁰⁴ C] Perfect] Absolute **AB**.

¹⁰⁵ C] world.] people. **AB**.

characteristics and social position fall away in it. All *divisions* or separations¹⁰⁶ fall away but all *differences* remain, for piety demands a unity in God, not as an empty indifference and meager monotony, but as the unconditional completeness of all life. There are no divisions, but there is still a difference between the invisible and the visible church. For the former is the hidden active force of the latter, and the latter is the emerging appearance of the former. They are united with one another but different in terms of their condition. There are no divisions, but there is still a difference within the visible church between the many races and nations in the unanimity of which the one Spirit testifies to the one truth and communicates the one Moral Good by various gifts and callings, albeit in various languages. Finally, [474] there are no divisions, but there is a difference between a church of those who teach and of those who are taught, between the clergy and the nation, between the mind and the body of the church, in the same way as the difference between a husband and a wife is not an obstacle but the foundation of their perfect union.

IX

The catholicity of the church is the fundamental form of the moral organization of humanity and is the conscious and deliberate solidarity of all the members of this universal body for the single unconditional¹⁰⁷ goal of existence coupled with a full “division of spiritual labor,” of gifts and services, which express and realize this goal. This moral solidarity intrinsically differs by its conscious and voluntary character¹⁰⁸ from the natural solidarity that we find between the various parts of a physical organism and also between the various groups of creatures in nature. It¹⁰⁹ forms a true *brotherhood* in which lies positive *freedom* and positive *equality* for the human being. We, human beings, do not avail ourselves of our genuine freedom when the social sphere weighs down upon us as external and foreign. Such alienation is eliminated in essence only by the principle of the universal church, according to which each person must have¹¹⁰ in the social whole not an external limit, but an intrinsically complete freedom of their own. The human being, *in any case*, needs such a completion by the “other.” For owing to our natural¹¹¹ limitation, we by necessity are dependent beings and cannot by ourselves or alone be¹¹² a sufficient reason of our own existence. If you take away from any of us all that we owe to others beginning with our parents and ending with the state and world his-

¹⁰⁶ C] separations] oppositions **A**.

¹⁰⁷ C] unconditional] absolute **AB**.

¹⁰⁸ C] by its conscious and voluntary character] *Absent in* **AB**.

¹⁰⁹ C] in nature. It] in nature (for example, between well-known plants and insects, contributing to their fertilization and propagation). It **AB**.

¹¹⁰ C] must have] has **A**.

¹¹¹ C] natural] *Absent in* **A**.

¹¹² C] alone be] alone fully be **AB**.

tory, nothing would be left not only of our freedom, but also of our very existence. To deny this fact of unavoidable dependence would be sheer madness. Not having sufficient *strength*, we need *help* in order for our freedom to be realized and not merely a verbal claim. However, the help that a person gets from the world is only fortuitous, temporary and partial, whereas the help promised from God through the universal church is true, eternal and complete. Only with such help can we be really free, that is, have the strength sufficient [475]to satisfy our will. Real human freedom is obviously incompatible with the necessity of what we do not want and with the impossibility of what our will demands.¹¹³ However, every desired object, everything that is good, is possible for us only on condition that we ourselves live and that those whom we love live. Consequently, there is one fundamental object of desire, namely, the continuation of life, and one fundamental object that is not desired, namely, death. However, all the help in the world proves¹¹⁴ to be inadequate in the face of this. The disaster of all disasters, death, proves to be unconditionally necessary, and the good of all goods, immortality, proves to be an unconditional impossibility. That is, we cannot obtain real freedom from the world. Only Divine humanity, or¹¹⁵ the Church, founded on an inner unity and a comprehensive combination of the overt and covert life in the realm of the Kingdom of God, only the Church affirming the essential primacy of the spirit and promising the ultimate resurrection of the flesh, reveals to us the sphere in which our freedom will be positively realized, i.e., in which our will will be actually satisfied. To believe or not to believe this does not depend on a philosophical argument. However, if the most perfect philosophy can neither provide nor erase faith, then the simplest act of logical reflection is sufficient for us to recognize that a person who wants to live but is sentenced to death cannot, seriously speaking, be considered free. Moreover, from the secular or natural point of view every person and all of humanity is undoubtedly in this position. Consequently, only in another, a super-worldly order, represented by the universal Church, can a person, in general, find positive freedom. Only in this way is positive equality possible for us.

The natural dissimilarity of people is as inevitable as it is desirable. For it would be very sad if all people were mentally and physically the same. The multitude of peoples would make no sense. Their direct equality as particular or separate individuals is quite impossible. They can be equal not in themselves, but only through their identical relationship to something other, general and higher. Such is the equality of all before the law, or civil equality. For all its importance in the realm of our secular existence,¹¹⁶ this equality by its nature remains only formal and negative. The law affirms certain general limits [476]to human activity equally binding on all and each of us, but it is not part of anyone's life; it does not provide essential goods¹¹⁷ to any-

¹¹³ E] Cf. Romans 7: 19—"For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

¹¹⁴ C] all the help in the world proves] all the relics and help in the world are found **A**.

¹¹⁵ C] Divine humanity, or] *Absent in AB*.

¹¹⁶ C] in the realm of our secular existence] *Absent in AB*.

¹¹⁷ C] essential goods] essential intrinsic goods **A**.

one and indifferently leaves to some its helpless nothingness, but to others it leaves all kinds of excessive advantages. Secular society can recognize the unconditional value of each person in the sense of an abstract possibility or fundamental right, but the realization of this possibility or of this right is given only by the Church, which really introduces each of us into the security of divine humanity. It imparts to each of us the absolute content of life and thereby equalizes everyone as equal finite quantities with respect to the infinite. If in Christ, as the apostle says, “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily”¹¹⁸ and Christ lives in all who believe, then where is there a place for inequality? The introduction to the absolute content of life through the universal Church, liberating and equalizing all in a positive way makes of all believers a single unconditional solidarity or a perfect brotherhood.

However, insofar as this brotherhood, which is essentially perfect, was created at the start as something that temporally has become and is becoming, it requires corresponding forms for its divine-human connection with the past as such. It requires religious succession, or a *spiritual patronymic*. This requirement is satisfied by the last definition of the church as *apostolic*.

X

Since our lives proceed temporally, our dependence on the divine principle as a historical phenomenon¹¹⁹ must be temporally preserved and temporally transmitted. By virtue of this connection, our present spiritual¹²⁰ life begins not *with itself* but with earlier or older bearers of the grace of divine humanity.¹²¹ The one, holy, collective (catholic) church is necessarily the apostolic church. An apostolate or ministry is the opposite of imposture. The ministry is the religious foundation of activity, and imposture is the anti-religious foundation. It is precisely in this that Christ shows the opposition between Himself and the lawless man (the antichrist): I came in the name of the Father, and you do not believe Me, but another [477] will come *in his own name* and you will believe him.¹²² The original foundation of religion, namely, a pious recognition of our dependence on our forefather, finds its perfect expression in Christianity. “The Father hath sent me.”¹²³ “The will of the Father which hath sent me.”¹²⁴ The only begotten Son is, for the most part, a messenger, essentially the apostle of God, and, properly speaking, the most profound and eternal sense of the church’s vocation as apostolic (on which the other, the most

¹¹⁸ E] Colossians 2: 9.

¹¹⁹ C] as a historical phenomenon] *Absent in AB*.

¹²⁰ C] spiritual] *Absent in A*.

¹²¹ C] earlier or older bearers of the grace of divine humanity.] the past. **A**.

¹²² E] I came in the name ... will believe him.] Cf. John 5: 43—“I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come *in his own name*, him ye will receive.”

¹²³ E] John 5: 36.

¹²⁴ C] “The will of the Father which hath sent me.”] *Absent in A E*] John 5: 30.

direct meaning, viz., the historical, depends).¹²⁵ “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”¹²⁶ Born of Christ by word and spirit, the apostles are sent by Him for the spiritual birth of new generations in order to transmit continuously through time the eternal connection between the Father and the Son, the one who sends and the one who is sent.

The filial relationship is the prototype of piety, and the only begotten Son of God—the *son par excellence*—is piety itself incarnate as an individual. The church as the collective organization of piety must be entirely determined in its social system by him both in terms of its teachings and its rites. Christ as the embodiment of piety is the way, the truth and the life¹²⁷ of his church.

The way of piety for all that exists (of course, except for the one First Principle and the First Object of all piety¹²⁸) lies in proceeding not from oneself and not from what is lower, but from what is higher, older and comes before. This is the hierarchical way, the way of holy succession and tradition. By virtue of this, regardless of the external forms the order of the church government might take under the influence of historical conditions, the church’s strictly religious form of succession by way of the laying of hands always proceeds in an hierarchical order from the top down. Not only can lay people not ordain spiritual fathers, but the order of degrees in spiritual rank itself is also necessary so that only the highest order—the *bishops*—represent the¹²⁹ active principle, bestowing consecration on the other two.

The truth of the church is due to the same piety, though from another side or in another, a theoretical, respect. The truth of the church, conveying to us the mind of Christ, is neither scientific nor philosophical nor even theological. It contains only *dogmas of piety*. This fact provides the key to understanding Christian dogmatics and the councils that were engaged in its formulation. In the sphere of religious dogma, the interest [478] of piety lies obviously in the fact that nothing in our representations of the deity detracts from the complete character of our religious attitude towards the deity given at the start in Christ as the Son of God and the son of man. All “heresies” from which the church shielded itself with its dogmatic definitions rejected in one way or another this religious completeness or the entirety and comprehensiveness of our adoption by God through the perfect divine-human being. Some recognized Christ to be a demigod, others a demi-man. Later, instead of a divine-man some accepted Christ as having a dual personality. Next, some limited the divine-human combination to a single intelligible side, seeing the deity as incapable of palpable expression, etc.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ C] (on which the ... depends.)] (which does not exclude the other, the most direct meaning, viz., the historical). **AB**.

¹²⁶ E] “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”] John 20: 21.

¹²⁷ E] Cf. John 14: 6—“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life....”

¹²⁸ C] and the First Object of all piety] *Absent in AB*.

¹²⁹ C] represent the] represent here the **A**.

¹³⁰ F] I have more clearly specified in other works the deep and important meaning of dogmatic disputes that concerned the very essence of the Christian religion, or piety. See “*Velikij spor i khristianskaja politika*” (1883), “*Dogmaticheskoe razvitie cerkva*” (1886), *La Russie et l’Eglise universelle* (1889). This meaning is particularly clear in the dispute concerning icons, which concluded

The legitimate *way* of the hierarchical order, as well as the truth of faith, has its fulfillment and justification in the *life* of the church. Human life must be intrinsically collected, united and consecrated by an act of God and thus transformed into a divine-human life. The essence of this concern and the principle of piety demand that the process of regeneration begin at the top, from God, so that its foundation be an act of grace and not the natural human will separately. It requires that the process be *divine-human* and not human-divine. Here lies the meaning of the *sacraments* as the proper foundation of a new life. The moral sense (with respect to religious morality, or piety) that belongs to the sacraments in general lies precisely in the fact that we accept here our proper attitude of unconditional dependence on a completely real but at the same time completely mysterious moral good that is unknowable by the senses. This moral good is given to us but is not created by us. The human will entirely disclaims all that is its own in the presence of a sacrament. It remains in a state of complete potentiality, or purity, and thereby becomes capable, as a pure form, of accepting superhuman content. Through the sacraments, the one and holy essence, which is the Church [479] in itself (the *Ding an sich*, or *noumenon* of the church, in philosophical terminology) actually unites with itself or incorporates the intrinsic essence of the human being and makes our lives divine-human ones.

This life, which is supernatural to the other¹³¹ kingdoms of nature (finishing with the rational-human one) but completely natural to the Kingdom of God, has its regular cycle of development, the principal moments of which are designated by the church primarily in the so-called seven sacraments. This life is born (in baptism), receives the start of a correct organization, growth and strengthening (in confirmation), recovers from attendant injuries (in repentance), is nourished for eternity (in the Eucharist), completes or integrates the individual human being (in marriage), creates a spiritual father as the foundation of the true social order (in the priesthood, or ordination) and finally sanctifies the sick and dying corporeality for the full integration of future resurrection (in extreme unction).¹³²

XI

The real and mysterious pledges of the higher life, or Kingdom of God, received in the church sacraments, do not depend at first and in their essence on the human will. Nevertheless, this higher life, as a *divine-human* life, cannot be satisfied by our passive participation alone. As a process, it requires the conscious and voluntary as-

the circle of dogmatic development in the Christian East. E] For “Velikij,” SS, vol. 4: 3–114; for “Dogmaticheskoe,” see SS, vol. 4: 262–336; for *La Russie*, see Soloviev 1889. In SS, the title of “Dogmaticheskoe” appears as “Razbor glavnykh predrazcudkov protiv teokraticheskago dela v Rossii.”

¹³¹ C] other] lower A.

¹³² F] See my further discussion in *Dukhovnyja osnovy zhizni*, 3rd ed. 1897 and *La Russie et l’Eglise universelle* (last chapter). C] in *Dukhovnyja osnovy zhizni*, 3rd ed. 1897] *Religioznyja osnovy zhizni* AB.

sistance of the human soul with the supreme Spirit. Although the positive forces for this assistance come at the very start from the grace of God (a disregard of this truth produces the pernicious errors of semi-Pelagianism), they¹³³ are assimilated by the human will, which is formally distinguished from the will of God and is manifested in its own actions. (The forgetting of this second truth, which is as important as the first, was reflected in the Christology of the monothelite heresy and, in the sphere of moral doctrine, in quietism.)

Properly speaking, human actions or behavior, conforming to the grace of God (and evoked by its preceding action) obviously must express the normal¹³⁴ attitude of a person to God, to people and to our material nature corresponding to the three general [480]foundations of morality: piety, pity and shame. The first concentrated active expression of religious feeling or piety—its primary *expression*—is *prayer*. The primary expression of pity is *charity*, and that of shame is abstinence or *fasting*.¹³⁵ These three expressions condition in human beings the start and the development of a new life of grace. This is shown with amazing¹³⁶ clarity and simplicity in the sacred narrative of the pious centurion Cornelius, who “gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always”¹³⁷ and later as he himself said, “Four days ago I was *fasting* until this hour; and at the ninth hour I *prayed* in my house; and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, Cornelius, *thy prayer* is heard, and *thine alms* are had in remembrance in the sight of God.”¹³⁸ (Then follows the command to invite Simon, called Peter, who possesses the words of salvation.) (“Acts of the Apostles”: X) The hidden, anticipatory effect of God’s grace, which Cornelius did not reject, prompted him to do human good and supported him in these—in prayer, charity and fasting. These very deeds, as directly indicated, called forth new overt effects of Divine grace. The appearance of a heavenly angel was merely an exceptional means for adhering to the established path of piety, inviting the earthly messenger of God, the earthly mediator of the higher truth and life. Likewise, it is also remarkable that the unusual and abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit’s gifts on the new catechumens in the house of Cornelius after Peter’s preaching did not make redundant the usual, so to speak, organic means of really and mysteriously initiating the life of grace, namely, through baptism (*ibid.*, end of chapter).

Even more significant in this typical narrative is *what is not in it*.¹³⁹ Neither the angel of God nor the apostle Peter, the messenger of *Christ’s peace*,¹⁴⁰ nor the voice of the Holy Spirit itself, which was suddenly revealed in the new converts, told the centurion of the Italian cohort what was, according to the latest conception of Christianity, the most important and pressing need for a Roman soldier. They

¹³³ C] they] these forces **A**.

¹³⁴ C] normal] proper **AB**.

¹³⁵ F] These three religio-moral *deeds* were examined by me in detail in the first part of my work *Dukhovnyja osnovy zhizni*. C] *Dukhovnyja osnovy zhizni*] *Religioznyja osnovy zhizni* **AB**.

¹³⁶ C] amazing] remarkable **A**.

¹³⁷ E] Acts 10: 2.

¹³⁸ E] Acts 10: 30–31.

¹³⁹ C] is *what is not in it*.] is that about the first Christian among the pagans. **A**.

¹⁴⁰ C] the messenger of *Christ’s peace*.] *Absent in* **AB**.

did not tell him that in becoming a Christian **[481]**he *first of all* had to lay down his weapon and *certainly abandon military service*. There is not a word about this supposed necessary condition of Christianity, nor is there even a hint of it in the entire narrative, even though the narrative concerns a representative of the military. A renunciation¹⁴¹ of military service is not included in the New Testament conception of what is required of the mundane warrior in order to become a full-fledged citizen of the Kingdom of God. In addition to the conditions already fulfilled by the centurion Cornelius, namely, praying, giving to charity and fasting, he still, in addition, had “to call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.”¹⁴² And Cornelius said to Peter who had come: “Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.”¹⁴³ But in all that God ordered the apostle to impart to the Roman soldier for his salvation, there was nothing about military service. “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.”¹⁴⁴

We have paused on the story of Cornelius the centurion, strictly speaking,¹⁴⁵ not in order to return to the special issue of military service¹⁴⁶ but because we find here a vivid hint for solving the general issue of the relation of the church to the state, **[482]**of Christianity to the Empire, of the Kingdom of God to the worldly kingdom or, what amounts to the same thing, the issue of a Christian state. If the centurion Cornelius, having become fully Christian, remained a soldier and yet was not split into two alien and disconnected personalities, then clearly he became a Christian soldier. A collection¹⁴⁷ of such soldiers forms a Christian army. However, an army

¹⁴¹ C] A renunciation] However, just as this military calling did not prevent Cornelius earlier from enjoying the approval of the entire Jewish nation, so a renunciation **A**.

¹⁴² E] Acts 11: 13–14.

¹⁴³ E] Acts 10: 33.

¹⁴⁴ E] Then Peter opened ... heard the word.”] Acts 10: 34–44.

¹⁴⁵ C] strictly speaking] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁴⁶ F] See above in the chapter “The Meaning of War”.

¹⁴⁷ C] collection] multitude **AB**.

is both the ultimate expression and the first real foundation of a state. Consequently, if there can be a Christian army, then by the same token even more can there be a Christian state. That historical Christianity solved the issue in this way is an indubitable fact. Only the issue of the intrinsic bases of this fact is open to argument.¹⁴⁸

XII

When the centurion Cornelius was a pagan, a feeling of pity prompted him, and he “gave much alms.”¹⁴⁹ It certainly moved him to protect the weak from any offense and to force violent offenders to obey the law. He knew that a law, as with any human utility, is only a relative moral good and is subject to abuse, and perhaps he heard of the outrageous abuse of legal power which the procurator Pontius allowed when, under the influence of the envious and spiteful Jerusalem priests, the virtuous rabbi from Nazareth was condemned to death. But as a just man Cornelius knew that abuses non tollit usum¹⁵⁰ and did not infer a general rule from exceptional cases. As a true Roman (judging by his name), he was aware¹⁵¹ with noble pride of his share in the general destiny of the city that held sway over the world.

...to rule over nations mightily,
to be a gentle protector, subduing the haughty by arms.¹⁵²

And this was not an abstract conviction for him. In Palestine, where his cohort was based, only Roman arms halted, albeit only for a time, fierce internecine wars, both dynastic and partisan, that were accompanied by savage massacres. It was only under the cover of the same Roman [483]power that the neighboring Edom and Arab clans began slowly to leave the state of continuous war and brutal barbarism.

Thus, Cornelius did not diverge from the truth when, respecting his vocation, he considered the state and its chief organ, the army, to be necessary for the common good. Should he have altered his judgment, having become a Christian? A new, higher and purely spiritual life opened up *in him*, but would this really eliminate the evil *outside him*? Surely the pity that justified his military service concerned those suffering from an *external* evil, which remained as before. Or perhaps the higher life that was revealed within him should, without eliminating the external evil, have eliminated the intrinsic moral good within him—the very pity or charity which is “had in remembrance in the sight of God”¹⁵³ (see above) and replaced it with indifference to the suffering of others? However, such¹⁵⁴ indifference, or

¹⁴⁸ C] is open to argument.] remains unresolved. A.

¹⁴⁹ E] Acts 10: 2.

¹⁵⁰ E] Latin: do not eliminate use.

¹⁵¹ C] was aware] was certainly aware A.

¹⁵² E] Virgil 1982: book 6, 851. Solov’ev had already quoted these same lines in Chap. 14. Here, however, relying perhaps on memory he cites Virgil slightly differently.

¹⁵³ E] Acts 10: 31.

¹⁵⁴ C] such] *Absent in A.*

callousness,¹⁵⁵ is the distinctive feature of a stone—of the lower and not of the higher stage of being. Or is it that without abandoning compassion the Christian receives also along with a new life a special power to overcome any external evil without resisting it by force—to vanquish it with an immediate moral act alone or by a miracle of grace? This assumption is remarkably unfounded and is possible only with a complete misunderstanding of both the essence of grace as well as of its moral conditions.¹⁵⁶ We know that Christ himself encountered on Earth a human environment where his grace could not work miracles “because of their unbelief.”¹⁵⁷ We know that even in the very best environment—among His apostles—He found “the son of perdition.”¹⁵⁸ Finally, we know that of the two thieves on the cross only one repented. It is unknown whether he would have submitted to the divine power under other circumstances,¹⁵⁹ but we do know that his comrade remained outside its influence even under *these* circumstances.¹⁶⁰

Those who claim that every criminal can be immediately reformed and kept from crime by the immediate effect of the inner power of grace alone have not at all thought through what they are saying. If it is a matter of the intrinsic, purely spiritual power of the moral good, then surely its distinguishing feature is that it acts not like a mechanical motor that inevitably produces actual external changes, but that it acts only on the condition of its intrinsic assimilation by the person [484] upon whom it acts. Consequently, the result of the effect is never predetermined by the good will of the one who acts, but depends ultimately on the reaction of the other side. (A truth that the example of Judas Iscariot, it would seem, should have made clear even to those who are blind.)

The power of Christ’s grace acted on those who were sinners owing to the weakness of their flesh, and not to the hardness of their evil will. It acted on those who were unhappy in sinning, hurt by it and felt the need for a doctor. Concerning these patients ready to be healed, Christ said they will enter the Kingdom of God before the complacent righteous, who, for this reason, hated and reproached Him for condescending to associate with tax collectors and sinners.¹⁶¹ His enemies could also find no basis to accuse Him of pandering to bloodthirsty killers, profane blasphemers, shameless molesters and all kinds of professional criminals, enemies of human social life. Yet did He leave them in peace? Indeed, there was no reason for Him to be concerned with them when there were Jewish and Roman authorities designated specifically to provide adequate forceful resistance to evil.

According to the spirit (as well as the letter) of the Gospel, we should not turn to the authorities for an enforced defense of ourselves against attacks on our person and property. We should not drag into court and jail a person who hits us or steals

¹⁵⁵ C] or callousness,] or callousness, which is the same thing, **AB**.

¹⁵⁶ C] and is possible ... moral conditions.] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁵⁷ E] Mark 6: 6.

¹⁵⁸ E] John 17: 12.

¹⁵⁹ C] circumstances,] conditions, **AB**.

¹⁶⁰ C] circumstances,] conditions, **AB**.

¹⁶¹ E] tax collectors and sinners] Cf. Mark 2: 16.

our coat. We should forgive with all our heart the criminal for the crimes committed and not provide any resistance to this person on our account. This is clear and simple. It is also clear that we should not give in to an evil feeling against someone who offends our neighbors. We must forgive this person in our hearts and not stop seeing this offender as the same kind of person that we are. However, what *practical* obligation does the moral principle impose on us in this case? Can my obligation really be the same in the case of an offense against me as in that against another? To allow an offense against myself means to sacrifice myself. Such would be a feat of self-sacrifice. To allow an offense against others means to sacrifice others, which cannot possibly be called self-sacrifice. A moral obligation to others, psychologically based on pity, must not in practice grant rights to aggressors and villains alone. Peaceful and weak individuals are also entitled to our active [485]pity, or help, and since we, as individuals, cannot always and adequately help all who are injured, we are obliged to do this as a collective group of people, i.e., through the state. A political organization is a natural and human good, as necessary to our life as is our physical organism. Christianity, giving us a higher, spiritual good, does not rob us of the lower, natural goods and does not pull out from under our feet the ladder that we are climbing.

With the emergence of Christianity, with its proclamation of the Kingdom of God, did the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms really disappear before us? If they were not eliminated, then why should the natural human kingdom, embodied in our political organization, have been eliminated? It is just as necessary as part of the historical process as the others mentioned are in the cosmic process. We cannot stop being animals, but should cease being citizens! Is there any more blatant absurdity?¹⁶²

From the fact that the purpose of Christ's coming to Earth could not lie in the creation of a kingdom of this world or state—which was created already long ago—should he really have taken a negative attitude towards the state? Only if the Gospel appeared before the state was founded in a lawless, extrajudicial and powerless society could anything be inferred from the fact that the Gospel is not concerned with the external means of protecting humanity from the crude ravages of evil forces. But why should the Gospel again provide the civic and juridical statutes of social life that were already given many centuries earlier in the Pentateuch? If Christ did not wish to reject them, the only thing he could do was confirm them, *which is indeed what He did*: “one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law”¹⁶³ ... “I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”¹⁶⁴

It might be said that the grace and the truth that appeared in Christ eliminated, as it were, the law.¹⁶⁵ When, however, did this happen, when precisely? Was it when Judas betrayed his master; was it when Ananias and Sapphira deceived the

¹⁶² C] According to the spirit (as well as the letter) ... blatant absurdity?] *Absent in AB.*

¹⁶³ E] Matthew 5: 18.

¹⁶⁴ E] Matthew 5: 17.

¹⁶⁵ C] the law.] the law in a society composed of Christ's disciples. A.

apostles¹⁶⁶; was it when the deacon Nicolas on the pretext of fraternity introduced sexual promiscuity¹⁶⁷ or when a Corinthian Christian indulged in incest?¹⁶⁸ Or was it when the Spirit wrote through the prophet of the New Testament to the churches and [486]said to one of their representatives: “I know they works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead,” (Revelations 3: 1) and said to another: “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth” (Revelations 3: 15–16).

And if grace and truth from its first appearance to this day have not taken¹⁶⁹ hold of all or even most of Christian humanity, the question arises: How and in whom is the law eliminated? Could¹⁷⁰ the law be eliminated by grace in those who have neither grace nor the law? But is it not clear that for them, i.e., for the majority of humanity, the law, before its implementation according to God’s word, must remain in full force precisely as an external limit on their freedom? And in order actually to be such a limit, the law itself¹⁷¹ must have sufficient compulsory¹⁷² power. That is, it must be embodied in the organization of the state with its courts, police force and armies, and since Christianity has not eliminated the law, it also could not eliminate the state. From this rational and necessary fact, viz., the retention of the state as an external force, it by no means follows that the intrinsic attitude of people towards this force, and thereby also the very character of their activity, remained unchanged either in general or in particular cases. A chemical substance does not disappear in vegetables and in animal bodies but takes on new features in them, and not for nothing is there an entire science of “organic chemistry.” The foundation of *Christian politics* is similar.¹⁷³ If it is not just an empty term, the Christian state must have certain differences from the pagan state although as *states* they both have the same foundation and a common task.

XIII

“A peasant went out into the field to plow the land, but a Polovets¹⁷⁴ came upon him, killed him and drove away his horse. Then in a crowd the Polovtsi came to a village, slaughtered all the peasants, burned the houses and led the women away,

¹⁶⁶ E] Cf. Acts 5: 1–10.

¹⁶⁷ E] Cf. Revelations 2: 6–15.

¹⁶⁸ E] Cf. 1 Corinthians 5: 1.

¹⁶⁹ C] not taken] not yet taken **A**.

¹⁷⁰ C] Could] Can **A**.

¹⁷¹ C] itself] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁷² C] compulsory] *Absent in A*.

¹⁷³ C] A chemical substance ... is similar.] *Absent in AB*.

¹⁷⁴ E] The Polovtsi were a medieval nomadic Turkish people who conquered large areas of the Eurasian steppe but who in turn were later conquered by the Mongols.

while the princes at this time were engaged in fighting among themselves.”¹⁷⁵ In order not to be limited to sentimental words alone, pity for these peasants should naturally [487]pass to the organization of a strong and united governmental authority sufficient to defend the peasants from princely strife and Polovtsian raids.

In another country, the greatest of its poets exclaimed with great sorrow, which he showed not merely in the words:

Ahi, serva Italia dei dolor’ ostello,
Nave senza nocchiero in gran tempesta!¹⁷⁶

This same pity directly induced him to summon from beyond the Alps the supreme bearer of state authority, the one who established the social order, a strong defender against continuous and unbearable petty acts of violence. This pity, expressed in so many places in *The Divine Comedy* for the real disasters of Italy, and this appeal for a sovereign state as a necessary means of salvation took the form of a clear, well-thought-out conviction in Dante’s book *On Monarchy*.¹⁷⁷

The disasters accompanying life in an anarchy or in a weak state evoked the pity of Vladimir Monomakh¹⁷⁸ and Dante. They are eliminated or curbed only by a strong¹⁷⁹ state, and with its disappearance such disasters would inevitably happen again. The purely moral motivations, which intrinsically keep people from mutual destruction, were obviously inadequate in the XII and¹⁸⁰ XIII centuries. Although at the present time they may have developed and grown stronger, which is debatable, it would be ridiculous to say¹⁸¹ that they have now become quite sufficient in themselves. If the inhabitants of Italian cities do not manifest their party enmity with a massacre every minute, then it is quite clear that¹⁸² they refrain from doing so only because of a compulsory order from the state with its army and police. As for Russia—not to speak of the princely internecine wars and of pugilistic popular rule—Moscovy and the Russian Empire, without a doubt, pushed the savage foreign elements with great difficulty farther and farther away towards the borders of the country. There, these foreign elements proved to be obedient in this rather than submit to being re-born. And if, God forbid, the bayonet and the lance were to disappear or to lose their effectiveness on the Transcaucasian, Turkestan or Siberian

¹⁷⁵ E] Cross 1953: 200. This English-language translation is based on the Russian text found in Likhachev 1950: 183. The source for Solov’ëv’s alleged quotation is unclear. Solov’ëv again allegedly cites these lines in the first of his “Three Conversations” from 1899–1900, but there the quotation reads somewhat differently, leading to the conclusion that again he draws on memory rather than some text before him. See SS, volume 10: 108; cf. Solovyov 1990: 50.

¹⁷⁶ E] “Ah, slavish Italy, dwelling of grief, ship without a pilot in a great storm.” Dante 2003: 97.

¹⁷⁷ E] Dante 1996.

¹⁷⁸ E] Grand Prince of Kiev (1113–1125).

¹⁷⁹ C] or curbed only by a strong] only by the **AB**.

¹⁸⁰ C] XII and] *Absent in AB as well as in Opravdanie dobra*. n. d. and *Opravdanie dobra*. 1914. *However, it is given in the list of corrections at the end of the 1899 edition and incorporated in Opravdanie dobra*. 1988.

¹⁸¹ C] it would be ridiculous to say] in any case, it is impossible to claim **AB**.

¹⁸² C] it is quite clear that] *Absent in AB*.

frontiers, every moralist [488] would immediately understand the true essence of these excellent institutions.¹⁸³

Just as the church is collectively-organized piety, so the state is collectively-organized pity. Therefore, to assert that the Christian religion in essence rejects the state is to assert that this religion in essence rejects pity. In fact, the Gospel not only insists on the morally obligatory meaning of pity, or altruism, but decisively confirms the view, already expressed in the Old Testament, that without altruism there can be no true pity: “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.”¹⁸⁴

If we recognize the existence of pity, in principle, then it is logically necessary to admit the historical organization¹⁸⁵ of social forces and deeds,¹⁸⁶ which elevates pity from the level of an impotent and strictly limited feeling and gives it reality, its broad application and development. If I take the point of view of pity, I cannot reject the institution thanks to which one can *in fact pity, i.e., provide help and protection*, to tens and hundreds of millions of people, instead of to tens and at most hundreds of individuals.

The definition of a state (with respect to its moral sense) as organized pity can be rejected only out of a misunderstanding. We need to examine some of these misunderstandings before passing to the concept of a *Christian* state.

XIV

The harsh and brutal character of the state is often pointed out as obviously contradictory to its definition as organized pity. Such an argument, however, does not distinguish necessary [489] and appropriate severity from useless and arbitrary cruelty. The former is not contrary to pity, and the latter, as a form of abuse, is *contrary to the very notion of the state*. Consequently, of course, neither alternative speaks against the definition of the normal state as organized pity. The alleged contradiction is based just as much on a superficiality as the claim that the senseless cruelty of an unsuccessful surgical operation—and, incidentally, a patient’s suffering, even in the case of a successful operation—obviously contradicts the concept of surgery as a beneficial way to help people suffering from certain bodily pains. It is quite obvious that such representatives of state authority as Ivan the Terrible no more

¹⁸³ F] As a child, my father heard first-hand recollections of how armed bands of foreigners on the Volga openly robbed and kidnapped Russian travelers with entire families taking them into captivity and torturing them in every way. This does not happen at the present time on the Volga, but it does happen on the Amur, as is well known. For this reason, authorized military missions have still not ended, and if the virtuous centurion Cornelius were alive today in Russia, there is no moral motive that would prevent him from being a Cossack colonel in the Ussuri region. C] *Entire note absent in A C*] centurion Cornelius were alive today in Russia,] colonel Cornelius were alive today, **B**.

¹⁸⁴ E] Matthew 9: 13.

¹⁸⁵ C] historical organization] historical, objective organization **AB**.

¹⁸⁶ C] deeds] elements **AB**.

serve as examples against the philanthropic foundation of the state as bad surgeons do against the benefits of surgery itself. I am aware that the educated reader might rightly feel offended at being reminded of such a basic point, but if we are familiar with the latest intellectual trends in Russia, the reader will not hold me guilty of any offense.

However, there are contrarians who say that the state, even in its most normal manifestations, inevitably happens to be pitiless. In taking pity on peaceful people whom it defends, the state must deal with predatory offenders without pity. *Such unilateral pity does not correspond to the moral ideal.* This is indisputable, but again this does not speak against our definition of the state. For, in the first place, pity, even though it be unilateral, is still pity and not something else. In the second place, the state even a normal one is in no way an expression of an attained moral ideal, but only one of the chief organizations necessary for attaining this ideal. The ideal condition of humanity, once *achieved*, or the Kingdom of God, once realized, is obviously incompatible with the state, but it is also incompatible with pity. When everything will once again be “very good,”¹⁸⁷ then for whom can one have pity? As long as there is someone to pity, there is someone to defend and a moral need for an appropriate and broadly organized system of protection. That is, the moral significance of the state remains valid.¹⁸⁸ The factually undeniable pitilessness of a state to those from whom or against whom a peaceful society [490]has to be defended is unconditionally inevitable and fatal. But is this pitilessness unalterable? Is it really a historical fact that the relation of a state to its enemies progresses precisely towards less cruelty and, consequently, towards greater pity? Formerly, the entire families, both nuclear and extended, of state enemies were painfully exterminated (as even now happens in China). Later, everyone had to answer for oneself. Next, the very character of responsibility changed. Criminals ceased to be tortured for the sake of torturing alone. Now, finally, the positive task of morally helping them is being raised. What is the ultimate basis behind these changes? When the state limits or eliminates the death penalty, abolishes torture and corporal punishment, expresses concern with improving prisons and places of exile is it not clear that, although pitying and defending peaceful victims of crime, it is beginning to extend its pity also to the opposing side, to the criminals themselves? Consequently, this reference to a unilateral pity is, as a matter of fact, beginning to lose its force. It is precisely only thanks to the state that organized pity is ceasing to be unilateral. The popular mob is still guided towards the enemies of society in most cases by such old pitiless maxims as: “dog eat dog”; “you get what you deserve”; and “it will teach you a lesson.” Such maxims are losing their practical force thanks to the state, which in one way or another is freer¹⁸⁹ in this matter from partiality. Imperiously restraining the vindictive instincts of the mob, which is ready to tear the criminal apart, the state at the same time never relinquishes its humanitarian obligation, namely to counteract

¹⁸⁷ E] Cf. Genesis 1: 31.

¹⁸⁸ C] and a moral need for ... state remains valid.] and an appropriately organized system of protection on a wide scale, i.e., state, remains valid. **AB.**

¹⁸⁹ C] freer] free **AB.**

criminal behavior, as the strange moralists, who, in fact,¹⁹⁰ pity only aggressors, rapists and predators, would want the state to do with complete indifference towards the victims. Here indeed, we actually have unilateral pity!¹⁹¹

XV

A less crude misunderstanding concerning our conception of the state may come from legal philosophers who see [491]the state as the embodiment of law, understood as an unconditionally independent principle distinct from morality in general and from motives of mercy in particular. We pointed out above the real difference between law and morality.¹⁹² This difference¹⁹³ does not eliminate the connection between them but, on the contrary, is a result of precisely this connection. In order to replace this difference with separation and opposition, we need to find an unconditional principle that ultimately determines every legal relation as such outside the moral sphere and as far removed from it as possible.

Such an amoral and even immoral principle as a basis for law is, above all, *might* or power. *Macht geht vor Recht*.¹⁹⁴ That the historical order of legal relations follows those based on violence is as indisputable as the fact that in the history of our planet organic life appeared after and on the basis of inorganic processes. However, it certainly does not follow from this that the true principle of organic forms as such is inorganic matter. The play of natural forces in humanity is only¹⁹⁵ the *material* for legal relations but in no way is it their principle. For otherwise what would be the difference between a right and the absence of a right? A right is a *limitation* of power, but our concern is precisely *what* limits power. Similarly, morality can be defined as the overcoming of evil. It does not follow from this, though, that evil is the principle of morality.

We will not advance further towards a definition of right if we replace the concept of might, taken from the physical sphere, with the more human concept of freedom. It is indubitable that at the deepest level all legal relations are based on individual freedom. However, is it really the unconditional principle of law? It is impossible for two reasons: In the first place, because in reality it is not *unconditional*, and, in the second place, because it is in general not the determining principle of *right*. As for the first point, I am not saying that human freedom never happens to be uncon-

¹⁹⁰ C] , in fact,] *Absent in A*.

¹⁹¹ F] See the above chapter "The Penal Question from the Moral Point of View." C] In **A**, this note reads: Cf. my 1895 *Vestnik Evropy* article "Princip nakrazanija s npravstvennoj točki zrenija."

¹⁹² F] See the earlier chapter "Morality and Right."

¹⁹³ C] We pointed out above the real difference between law and morality. This difference] The real difference between law and morality **A**.

¹⁹⁴ E] *Macht geht vor Recht*] The expression is commonly, though unjustifiably, attributed to Bismarck. The lineage of the expression, or at least its intent, goes back at least to the ancient Greeks.

¹⁹⁵ C] only] *Absent in AB*.

ditional, but just that it does not have this character in the sphere of concrete relations in which and for which right exists. Let us suppose that some flesh and blood person on [492]Earth really possesses unconditional freedom, i.e., that this person by a sheer act of will alone, independent of any external conditions and necessary intermediate processes, can accomplish all that this person wants. Clearly, such a person would stand outside the sphere of legal relations. If this person's unconditionally free will were determined to side with evil, no outside action could restrain it. This will would lie outside the reach of law and authority. If, however, it were determined to side with the good, it would render all authority and law superfluous.

Thus, with regard to law there is nothing to be said about unconditional freedom, since it belongs to a quite different sphere of relations. Right deals only with conditional and limited freedom, and so the question is precisely what kind of restrictions and conditions have a *legal* character. The freedom of one person is limited by the freedom of another. However, it is not the case that every such restriction falls within the scope of rights. If the freedom of one person is limited by the freedom of that person's neighbor who wants to wring his neck or put him in chains at his discretion, this in general is not his right. In any case, such a restriction of freedom does not represent any of the specific features of a legal principle as such. These features must be sought not in the fact of some limitation of freedom, but in the uniform and universal character of the limitation. If the freedom of one person is restricted to the same extent as the freedom of another, or if the free activity of everyone is bound by a restriction that applies to everyone, only then does this limitation of freedom acquire a legal character.

Thus, the principle of right is freedom within the bounds of equality, or a freedom conditioned by equality, consequently a conditional freedom. However, the equality that determines it is also not an unconditionally independent principle for right. An essential feature of the legal norm dictates that, in addition to the demand for equality, it also necessarily answers the demand for *justice*. Although related, these two concepts are by no means identical to each other. When the Egyptian pharaoh issued a decree commanding the murder of all Jewish new-borns, the injustice of this decree certainly did not stem merely from its unequal treatment of Jewish and Egyptian babies. If the pharaoh had commanded the murder of not just Jewish babies alone but of all [493]new-borns in general, no one would dare call this new¹⁹⁶ decree just, even though it would have satisfied the requirement of equality. Justice is not a matter of simple equality, *but equality in fulfilling*¹⁹⁷ *what ought to be*. A just debtor is not someone who refuses to pay all one's creditors equally, but one who equally pays all acquired debts. A just father is certainly not one who is equally indifferent to all his children, but one who shows all of them equal love.

Therefore, there is both unjust equality and just equality, and right is determined by the latter, i.e., ultimately by justice. With this conception, we already pass directly into the moral sphere. Here, as we know, each virtue is not a separate cell, but all of them, including justice, are different modifications of the one, or more precisely,

¹⁹⁶ C] new] *Absent in A.*

¹⁹⁷ C] *fulfilling*] *Absent in AB.*

of the triadic principle that determines our proper relation to everything. Justice, belonging to the sphere of moral interaction between people, is only a modification of the fundamental proper motive behind such relations, namely pity: *Justice is pity applied uniformly*.¹⁹⁸

Thus, since right is determined by justice, it is essentially connected to the moral sphere. All definitions of right that try to separate it from morality fail to reach the heart of the matter. So, besides the things mentioned, what is the meaning of the famous definition (that of Jhering) according to which “a right is a protected or shielded interest?”¹⁹⁹ There is no doubt that a right protects interests, but not every interest. So just what are these interests? It obviously protects only just interests, or, in another words, it protects every interest insofar as it is just. What, though, is meant by justice here? To say that a just interest is an interest protected as a right obviously would be to fall into the crudest vicious circle. It can be avoided only if justice is understood here in its essence, i.e., in a moral sense. This does not prevent us from recognizing [494] that owing to inevitable conditions²⁰⁰ the moral principle can be implemented to various degrees and in various spheres. It does not prevent us from recognizing the distinction between external, formal or strictly speaking legal justice and intrinsic, essential or purely moral justice. The supreme and definitive measure²⁰¹ of right and wrong is one and the same principle, namely, the moral principle. Possible conflict between “outer” and “inner” justice in particular cases by itself says nothing against their homogeneity, since there can be significant conflicts with the realization of the simplest and most basic moral motives. For example, pity requires²⁰² that I save two drowning people in the water, but if there is no possibility of saving both I must choose between them. The fact of a conflict between two expressions of pity does not prove that pity is a principle that can contradict itself. Likewise, instances of a difficult choice between complex²⁰³ applications of right and morality in the strict sense do little to convince us of their essential and irreducible opposition, and the claim that our conceptions of justice and morality historically change is equally unconvincing. If rights and laws remained unchanged, the claim could mean something. However, they do change even more over time and from place to place. So what then? Our conceptions of justice change; our conceptions of right and law change. One thing, however, remains unchanged, namely, that our rights and our laws be just. Consequently, there is the intrinsic dependence of right on morality independent of any external conditions. In order to avoid this conclusion, one would have to go quite far, to the country seen by the pilgrims in

¹⁹⁸ F] Cf. the above chapter “On Virtues”.

¹⁹⁹ E] “Rechte sind rechtlich geschützte Interessen, Recht ist die rechtliche Sicherheit des Genusses.” Jhering 1906: volume III, 1, §61, 351.

²⁰⁰ C] owing to inevitable conditions] *Absent in AB*.

²⁰¹ C] measure] criterion **AB**.

²⁰² C] requires] impels **AB**.

²⁰³ C] of a difficult choice between complex] of a conflict between concrete **AB**.

Ostrovsky's play,²⁰⁴ where legitimate requests to the Turkish Mahmut and to the Persian Mahmut had to begin with the appeal: "Judge me, *unjust* judge."

Jhering's definition changes the formula, according²⁰⁵ to which right is the *differentiation* of interests as against morality, which *evaluates* them. That right differentiates interests is just as indubitable as the fact that it protects them. In itself, though, this does not provide any idea at all of the essence of right, for interests are differentiated on bases that do not have a juridical character. Consequently, Jhering's definition turns out to be too broad.²⁰⁶ So, if bandits in a forest rob from [495]travelers, taking their possessions but leaving them with their lives, this would indubitably be a differentiation of interests, but the only thing this differentiation has in common with right is if we take all violence to be an expression of a right, namely, the right of the fist, or the right of force. To be serious, right is certainly determined not by the facts of differentiated interests, but by the common and constant *norm* of such a differentiation. In order to have the character of a right, the differentiation of interests must be regular, normal or just. In distinguishing normal differentiations from abnormal ones and saying only the former have the character of a right, we obviously make an *evaluation* of them. Consequently, a pseudo-opposition between right and morality fails on its own account. When we find certain laws to be unjust and seek their legal repeal, then, though we do not leave the juridical sphere, our concern is not with any real differentiation of interests, but above all with evaluating the existing differentiation. In its own day, that differentiation was also conditioned by an evaluation, but it just happens to be one with which we do not now agree.

Thus, if morality is defined as the evaluation of interests, right, in essence, is a part of morality. By no means is this contradicted by the fact that the criterion for evaluating right and that for morality (in the strict sense) are not one and the same. This very distinction, i.e., the necessity to admit a sphere of juridical relations outside that of purely moral relations has, again, no other than a moral basis in the demand that the highest, definitive moral good be realized without any external compulsion, consequently with a certain scope for a choice between moral good and evil. To put it paradoxically, the highest morality requires a certain freedom for immorality. The law realizes this by requiring the individual will to do only the minimum of moral good necessary for social life, and the law protects the will in the interest of true morality, i.e., of free perfection, from senseless and malicious attempts of compulsory righteousness and forced holiness.^{207, 208}

So, if the state is the objective dispensation of right, then [496]precisely for this reason it enters inevitably into the moral, i.e., proper, organization of humanity that is obligatory for the morally good will.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁴ E] See Ostrovsky 1899: 37.

²⁰⁵ C] formula, according] formula, adapted for us by Prof. Korkunov, according **AB**.

²⁰⁶ C] Consequently, ... too broad.] *Absent in AB*.

²⁰⁷ F] Cf. above the chapter "Morality and Law."

²⁰⁸ C] in the interest of ... forced holiness.] from any compulsory righteousness and forced holiness, in the interests of true moral perfection. **AB**.

²⁰⁹ C] moral, i.e., proper, organization of humanity that is obligatory for the morally good will.] moral organization of humanity. **B**.

XVI

The connection between right and morality provides us with the possibility to speak of a Christian state. It would be unjust to assert that prior to Christianity the state²¹⁰ was devoid²¹¹ of a moral foundation. The prophets expressly set moral demands to the kingdoms of Judaea and Israel and denounced them when they failed to meet those demands. With regard to the pagan world, it is enough to recall, for example, the Athenian King²¹² Theseus, who liberated his subjects from the cannibalistic tribute to Crete at the risk of his own life in order to recognize the fundamental moral motive of the state, namely, pity, which demands active help for the offended and the suffering. Consequently, the difference between the Christian and the pagan²¹³ state lies not in their natural foundation, but in other respects. From the Christian point of view, the state is only one part in the organization of the collective human being—one part conditioned by another higher part, which is the church and from which the state receives its blessing and its ultimate purpose. The state in the secular sphere serves indirectly and in its own way this absolute goal, namely, the preparation of humanity and the entire Earth for the Kingdom of God, which the church directly serves. Hence, there are two main tasks for the state: one conservative and the other progressive. The first is *to guard the foundations of social life without which humanity could not exist, and then the second is to improve the conditions of this existence* by assisting the free development of all human faculties, which must become the means of this future perfection and, consequently, without which the Kingdom of God could not be realized in humanity. Clearly, just as without the conservative activity of the state humanity would disintegrate and there would be *no one* to enter into the completeness of the higher life, so without its progressive activity humanity would always remain at the same stage of the historical process never ultimately attaining the ability to accept or reject the Kingdom of God. As a result, people would have *nothing* to live for.

In paganism, the conservative task of the state [497] prevailed exclusively. Although the state contributed to historical progress, it did so only unwillingly and unconsciously. Its leaders did not themselves pose the higher goal to be the active concern of the state. It was not a goal for them who had not yet heard “the gospel of the kingdom.”²¹⁴ Although formally distinguished from the gradual perfecting process of the kingdoms of external nature, historical progress under paganism did not have, however, in essence a purely human character: It is unworthy of a person to move involuntarily to an unknown goal. The word of God beautifully depicts the great pagan monarchies in the form of mighty and savage *beasts* that quickly appear and just as quickly disappear.²¹⁵ The natural, earthly people are depicted as having

²¹⁰ C] prior to Christianity the state] the non-Christian state **A**.

²¹¹ C] was devoid] was entirely devoid **AB**.

²¹² C] King] *Absent in* **AB**.

²¹³ C] pagan] non-Christian **AB**.

²¹⁴ E] Matthew 4: 23.

²¹⁵ C] The word of God ... quickly disappear.] *Absent in* **AB**.

no definitive²¹⁶ value and cannot have any. A state created by such people is their collective embodiment. However, the pagan state, being in essence conditional and transitory, claimed itself to be absolute. Pagans began with the deification of individual *bodies* (astral, vegetable, animal and especially human) in a multitude of all possible gods and ended by deifying the collective body, namely, the state (the cult of monarchs in eastern despotisms, the apotheosis of the Roman caesars).

The pagan error consisted not in recognizing the positive²¹⁷ value of the state, but only in considering²¹⁸ it as having this value *on its own account*. This was obviously false. Neither the individual nor the collective human body has life on its own account, but receives it from the spirit living inside each body. This is clearly²¹⁹ proven by the decay of both individual and collective bodies. The perfect body is the one in which the Spirit of God lives. Therefore, Christianity demands of us not that we reject or limit the sovereignty²²⁰ of the state, but that we fully recognize the principle that²²¹ can give the state its real, complete meaning, namely, its moral solidarity with the concern of the Kingdom of God on Earth, with the intrinsic subordination of all secular goals to the one Spirit of Christ.²²²

XVII

Having arisen with the appearance of Christianity, the question of the relation of the church to the state receives a definitive, principled solution from the mentioned point of view. [498]The Church, as we know, is a divine-human organization, morally determined by piety. By its very essence, the divine principle in the church decisively predominates over the human. In the relationship between them, the former is predominantly active, and the latter predominantly passive. Obviously, it must be this way with a direct correlation of the human will to the highest principle. The active manifestation of this will demanded by the Deity itself is possible only in the secular sphere collectively represented by the state, which existed before the revelation of the divine principle and is not directly dependent on it.²²³ The *Christian* state is connected with the Deity as is the church. In a certain sense,²²⁴ it too is a divine-human organization, but in it the human principle predominates, a fact that is

²¹⁶ C] definitive] absolute **AB**.

²¹⁷ C] positive] absolute **AB**.

²¹⁸ C] considering] supposing **AB**.

²¹⁹ C] clearly] incontestably **AB**.

²²⁰ C] sovereignty] absolute or positive nature A] absolute nature or sovereignty **B**.

²²¹ C] the principle that] what **A**.

²²² C] its moral solidarity ... Spirit of Christ.] its intrinsic subordination to the Spirit of Christ, its organic solidarity with the concern of the Kingdom of God on Earth. **A**.

²²³ C] which existed before ... dependent on it.] *Absent in A*.

²²⁴ C] In a certain sense,] *Absent in A*.

possible only because the divine principle in the state is realized²²⁵ *not within itself* but *for* it in the Church. Thus, in the state the Deity gives full²²⁶ *play* to the human principle and to serve *independently* the highest purpose. From the moral point of view, both independent human activity and our unconditionally subordinate relation to the divine as such are equally necessary. The solution to this antinomy, the combination of both positions, is possible only by distinguishing the two spheres of life (the religious and the political)²²⁷ and their two immediate motives (piety and pity), which correspond to the difference in the respective immediate object of the action, given that the ultimate goal is the same. A pious attitude towards the (perfect) Deity demands pity for humans. The Christian church demands a Christian state. Here, as elsewhere, a *separation* instead of a *distinction*²²⁸ leads inevitably to a *confusion*, and confusion leads to discord and strife. A complete separation of church from state forces the church to undertake one of two courses. Either it refrains from any active service to the Moral Good²²⁹ and devotes itself to quietism and indifference, which is contrary to the spirit of Christ, or it, with zeal, actively prepares the world for the coming of the Kingdom of God. However, being separate and alienated from the state and having no means to realize its spiritual activity, the church, through its authoritative representatives, itself seizes the existing instruments for acting in the world and intervenes in all earthly concerns. Concerned with the means, it gradually forgets its indubitable purity and original lofty goal. [499] If such confusion were allowed to consolidate itself, the church would lose the very basis of its existence. Such a separation would turn out to be no less damaging to the other side. Separated from the church, the state entirely abandons spiritual interests and is deprived of its higher blessing and dignity. After the loss of moral respect, the state also loses the material submission of its subjects. The other possibility is for the state to recognize the importance of spiritual interests in human life. With its alienation from the church, however, and not having a competent, independent instantiation of these interests to which it could entrust the highest care of the spiritual welfare of its subjects, namely, the preparation of the people for the Kingdom of God, the state resolves to take this concern entirely into its own hands. To do this, it would consistently have to appropriate for itself *ex officio* the highest spiritual authority, which would be an insane and pernicious usurpation reminiscent of the “man of lawlessness”²³⁰ of the last days. It is clear that in forgetting its filial position with respect to the church the state would act in its own name and not in the name of the Father.

Thus, the normal relation between the Church and the state is for *the state to recognize the universal Church as having the highest spiritual authority, which indicates the general direction of the morally good will of humanity and the ultimate*

²²⁵ C] realized] embodied **AB**.

²²⁶ C] full] *Absent in AB*.

²²⁷ C] (the religious and the political)] *Absent in AB*.

²²⁸ C] instead of a *distinction*] between what is only different **AB**.

²²⁹ C] service to the Moral Good] role **AB**.

²³⁰ E] “man of lawlessness”] 2 Thessalonians 2: 3.

*goal of its historical activity. The church grants the state full power to reach an agreement between legitimate secular interests and this supreme will and to get political relations and deeds to conform to the demands of this ultimate goal. In this matter, the church has no coercive power, and the coercive power of the state has no contact with the religious sphere.*²³¹

The state is the intermediate social sphere between the Church, on the one hand, and material society, on the other. The unconditional goals of the religio-moral order which are posed and represented by the Church could not and cannot be realized in the given human material without the formal mediation of the legitimate authority of the state (in the secular sphere of its activity).²³² It *restrains* the forces of evil within certain relative limits as long as all human wills are not ready for the decisive choice between the absolute moral good and unconditional [500]evil. The direct and fundamental reason for such restraint is pity, which determines the entire progress of right and of the state. This progress is not found in the principle, but in its application. The sphere of compulsory state action at the same time contracts before individual freedom and expands with aid in times of public disasters. *The rule of true progress is that the state constrains a person's inner moral world as little as possible, leaving that to the free spiritual activity of the church while at the same time providing as reliably and broadly as possible the external conditions for a decent existence and for human perfection.* A state that on its own authority would like to teach its subjects true theology and sound philosophy, while allowing them to remain ignorant, to be slaughtered on the highways or to die of starvation or of infection, would lose its reason to exist. The voice of the true church could say to such a state: "I am entrusted with the care for²³³ the spiritual salvation of these people. All that is demanded of you is pity for their everyday burdens and infirmities. It is said that we shall not live by bread *alone*,²³⁴ but it is not said that we shall live without any bread. Pity is obligatory for all as well as for me. Therefore, if you do not want to be the collective organ of my pity, if you do not want to give me the moral possibility to devote myself entirely to the work of pity by properly dividing it between us, I will have to take it on myself as in ancient times when you, the state, were not yet called Christian. I myself will take care that there is no starvation, no excessive work, no sick lacking care, no offended part without satisfaction and no criminals without correction. But then will not all people say, 'Why do we have a state, which has no pity for us, when we have a church, which has pitied not only our souls but also our bodies?'" A Christian state worthy of this designation is one

²³¹ C] is for the state to recognize the universal Church ... with the religious sphere.] is that the Church has the unconditional fundamental authority to determine the direction of the will of humanity and the ultimate goal of its historical activity. The state has the full power to reach an agreement between legitimate secular interests and the supreme will, as well as to adapt secular relations and deeds as the means or instruments of this ultimate goal. **AB.**

²³² C] (in the secular sphere of its activity).] *Absent in B.*

²³³ C] the care for] *Absent in B.*

²³⁴ E] Cf. Matthew 4: 4—"Man shall not live by bread alone."

which without interfering in priestly matters²³⁵ within its scope acts in the *royal*²³⁶ spirit of Christ, who pitied the hungry and the sick, who taught the ignorant and forcefully curbed abuses (expelling the money changers²³⁷) and who yet showed kindness to the Samaritans and pagans and forbade his disciples to employ violence against non-believers.

[501]XVIII

Just as the fundamental moral motive of piety, which determines our proper attitude towards the absolute principle, is organized in the church and the other moral foundation, namely, pity, which determines our proper attitude towards our neighbors, is organized in the state, so our fundamental moral attitude towards all of lower nature (our own and that of the external world) is organized objectively and collectively in a third general sphere of human life, namely, society as an economic union²³⁸ or along the Russian model of a *zemstvo*.

The moral obligation of abstinence, which in fact rests on the feeling of shame inherent in human nature, is the true principle of human economic life and of the social organization corresponding to it with respect to its own special tasks. The economic task of the state, acting on the basis of pity, lies in forcefully securing for everyone a certain minimum degree of material well-being as a necessary condition for a dignified human existence. This resolves the economic problem correctly but only from one side, namely, the sphere of interpersonal relations. However, the human relation to material nature is of essential importance to economic activity as such. Since the unconditional and complete nature of the moral principle necessarily requires that this relation be included within the norm of the moral good or perfection, humanity must be morally organized not only within the spheres of church and state relations, but especially within the economic sphere. Just as between the church and the state, so between all three spheres of collective moral organization there must be *a unity without confusion and a distinction without separation*.

What form should the moral good take in material-economic society as such? Of course, moral philosophy can specify only the organizing principle and the definitive goal of this society as it should be. This principle is the abstention from unrestrained evil carnality, and this goal is the transformation of material nature—of one's own as well as of external nature—into the free form of the human spirit, which does not confine it [502]from the outside, but unconditionally completes its inner and outer existence.

What, however, is common between these ideas and the economic reality whose principle is the immeasurable proliferation of needs and whose goal is the same

²³⁵ C] without interfering in priestly matters] *Absent in B*.

²³⁶ C] *royal*] *Absent in B*.

²³⁷ E] Cf. John 2: 15.

²³⁸ C] as an economic union] as such **B**.

proliferation of things that satisfy these needs? Certainly, there is something in common between shame and shamelessness, between the spiritualization of the body and the materialization of the soul, between the resurrection of the flesh and the mortification of the spirit. This commonality is only negative, but so what? The factual rejection of the moral norm does not abolish, but only emphasizes its inner meaning. There is no rational basis for assuming in the economic sphere such a perfect conformity to an ideal that we do not find in the empirical reality of the church and of the state.²³⁹ No doubt, there is a certain contradiction between the feeling of shame and the usual operations of the stock market,²⁴⁰ but it is no greater (and probably less) than that between piety in the spirit of Christ and the politics of the medieval Church. There is a discrepancy between the principle of abstinence and monetary²⁴¹ speculations, but again it is no greater, and probably less, than that between the moral and juridical principle of the state and the institution of *lettres de cachet*, the dragonnades or the mass expulsion of infidels.²⁴² On the basis of what has happened and is happening,²⁴³ one can see in every economic sphere only a field of self-interest and greed just as others find the entire significance of the church and religion to be merely its hierarchical ambition and the superstitiousness of people. Similarly, others perceive in the entire political realm only the tyranny of rulers and the blind obedience of the crowd. Such views exist, but they only express either an unwillingness or an inability to understand the essential sense of the matter. The following argument is more serious. Rejecting the unjust demand for ideal perfection in human relationships,²⁴⁴ we must, nevertheless, demand two things before recognizing such relationships as having any moral dignity and value: 1) The moral principle they allege as a norm must not be entirely foreign to them, but be manifested even though imperfectly, and 2) in their historical development, they must approach the norm or become more perfect. However, if we understand it as a certain organization²⁴⁵ of material relations, economic life does not completely satisfy these [503]two necessary requirements. Despite all the possible abuses in the ecclesiastic sphere, it is impossible to deny seriously that the moral principle of piety is inherent in the church. It is impossible to deny, for example, that the temples of God are created in general out of this feeling of piety and that the majority of people who gather for a church service are moved by it. It is also impossible to deny that in some, if not in all, respects the life of the church is improving²⁴⁶ and that a number of old abuses

²³⁹ C] for assuming in the ... church and of the state.] for seeking in the economic sphere the same conformity to an ideal that we do not demand of the church and of the state. **B**.

²⁴⁰ C] operations of the stock market,] operations of a bank, **B**.

²⁴¹ C] monetary] stock-market **B**.

²⁴² C] institution of *lettres de cachet*, the dragonnades or the mass expulsion of infidels.] institution of the *oprchnina*. **B** E] *oprchnina*] the personal bodyguards and much feared secret police of Ivan the Terrible in the sixteenth century.

²⁴³ C] On the basis of what has happened and is happening,] *Absent in B*.

²⁴⁴ C] relationships,] institutions **B**.

²⁴⁵ C] a certain organization] a moral organization **B**.

²⁴⁶ C] improving] progressing **B**.

have already become impossible. Similarly, no just person will deny that state institutions—courts of law, police, schools, hospitals, etc.—have an inherent moral purpose, namely, to protect people from harm and disasters²⁴⁷ and to promote their well-being, nor that the state's way of achieving this goal is by gradually improving in the sense of becoming more altruistic.²⁴⁸ Where, though, in the economic sphere is there any institution that would embody the virtue of abstinence and that would serve to spiritualize material nature? The moral principle, which should determine our material life and transform our external environment has no reality in the economic sphere, and consequently there is nothing here to improve.

This complete and factually indubitable alienation of economic life from its moral purpose has, however, from our point of view a satisfactory explanation. The moral organization of humanity whose principle is set out in Christianity could not be *uniformly* realized in all its parts. A certain historical sequence followed from the very essence of the matter. First and foremost, there was the religious task, the organization of piety in the church. This was not only the chief and fundamental concern but also in a certain sense²⁴⁹ the simplest and the least conditioned from the human side. In fact, the human connection with the unconditional principle revealed to us cannot, as the highest principle, be determined by something else. It rests on its own foundation, on what is given. The second task of the moral organization—the task of the Christian state—is, in addition to its own motive of collective pity, conditioned by the highest religious principle, which liberates this worldly pity from [504]the limitations it had while in the pagan state. We also see that the political task of historical Christianity is more complex and conditional than the ecclesiastic and appears after it. Thus, there was a period in the Middle Ages when the church had already adopted firm organic forms, while the Christian state appeared to be in the same condition of apparent non-existence as we now find the Christian economy. Did the guild law of the Middle Ages²⁵⁰ really more closely correspond to the moral norm of the state than contemporary²⁵¹ banks and stock exchanges to the moral norm of economic relations? The practical realization of the latter naturally appears after all the others, since this sphere is the extreme boundary of the moral principle. The proper organization of this sphere, i.e., the layout of the moral connection between the human being and material nature is not simple and in essence is especially conditioned first by the normal religious attitude of humanity established in the church and second by the normal inter-human or altruistic relations organized in the state. It is no surprise, then, that the true economic task, which some socialists of the first half of the nineteenth century only gropingly approached and from which contemporary socialists are as far removed as their opponents, has up to now not even theoretically received a solid and definite expression.

²⁴⁷ C] and disasters] *Absent in B.*

²⁴⁸ C] sense of becoming more altruistic] sense of being the greatest altruism **B.**

²⁴⁹ C] in a certain sense] *Absent in B.*

²⁵⁰ C] of the Middle Ages] *Absent in B.*

²⁵¹ C] contemporary] *Absent in B.*

However indefinite may be the nature of the last practical task, the changes in the prevailing moral sentiments in the history of the Christian world already now point out to us the three chief epochs with sufficient clarity. During the *epoch of piety*, the prevailing aspiration was for the “divine” coupled with an indifference and distrust of the human principle, with hostility and fear of nature. This epoch, despite all its vitality and longevity bore, however, within itself its own seed of destruction. The unilateral, exclusive piety of the Middle Ages was contrary to the spirit of the full nature of Christian truth, which was regarded *literally* as the absolute norm. When this contradiction found its direct and extreme expression in the inhumanity and ruthlessness of “pious” religious persecutions, a reaction arose first in the form of an idealistic humanism and then in a practical pity and love of humanity. This movement of *human morality* characterizes the second epoch of Christian history extending from the 15th to the 19th centuries inclusive. A transition began during the nineteenth century to [505] a third epoch, when two preparatory truths dawned in the living popular consciousness. The first of these is that any actual manifestation of a love of humanity must include the sphere of *material life*, and the second is that the norm of material life is abstinence. This truth is one that was already clear to the philosophical schools in antiquity but which now only flickers and glimmers, rather than glows, in the general consciousness. This flickering, indubitably, appeared in the nineteenth century in such phenomena as the ascetic morality of the fashionable philosopher Schopenhauer, the success of vegetarianism, the dissemination of Hinduism and Buddhism, which, though poorly understood, were seen from their ascetic angle, the success of the *Kreuzer Sonata*,²⁵² and the fear of morally good people, as if preaching abstinence would lead to a sudden discontinuation of the human race, etc.

Economism and asceticism are two, apparently, completely heterogeneous kinds of ideas and phenomena that at the beginning of the nineteenth century were brought together in a completely external and crude way in Malthusianism. The intrinsic, essential connection between them lies, as mentioned, in our positive obligation to save material nature from the necessity of putrefaction and death and to prepare for the universal resurrection of the body.^{253,254}

²⁵² E] *Kreuzer Sonata*] A reference to Leo Tolstoy’s novella from 1889 with an argument for sexual abstinence.

²⁵³ C] However indefinite may be the nature ... resurrection of the body.] *Absent in B*.

²⁵⁴ E] Cf. Nicene Creed: “We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.”

XIX

According to the current consensus, the purpose of economic activity is the accumulation of wealth. However, unless one adheres to the point of view of “The Miserly Knight,”²⁵⁵ the purpose of wealth itself is to possess the full scope of physical existence. Such an existence, without doubt, depends on our relation to material nature, and here we come upon two paths. We can either selfishly exploit terrestrial nature, or we can nurture it with love. We have come to know this first path, and although it has not been without some indirect benefit for our intellectual development and to our material culture, it cannot achieve our chief goal. Nature superficially yields to us; it leads us to think that we dominate it. However, the pseudo-treasures attained through violence do not bring happiness, and they scatter like ashes. We cannot by means of the external exploitation of terrestrial forces ensure our material²⁵⁶ well-being, above all, cure our physical ills and give us immortality. [506] We cannot intrinsically possess nature, not knowing its true essence. Thanks to our reason and our conscience, though, we already know²⁵⁷ the moral conditions that lie within our own control and that can place us into a proper relation with nature. Reason reveals to us that every real phenomenon and relation in the world is subject to the immutable law of the conservation of energy. Carnal desires seek to link the soul to the surface of nature, to material things and processes and to transform the inner, potential infinity of the human essence into an evil, external boundless set of passions and lusts. Our conscience, even in its most elementary form, namely, shame, condemns this path as *unworthy*, and reason shows that it is *pernicious* and why it is pernicious. For the more²⁵⁸ the soul squanders itself outwardly, on the superficiality of things, the less remains of its inner force to penetrate into the essence of nature and to take possession of it. Clearly, we can truly spiritualize nature or arouse and elevate the inner life in it only from an abundance of our own spirituality. It is just as clear that we can achieve spirituality ourselves only at the expense of our external, outward facing mental drives and aspirations. Our mental drives and aspirations must *be pulled inside*, and thereby they will increase in intensity. The human being, now powerful, spiritualized and strengthened from within, will then commune not with the material superficiality of nature, but with nature’s inner essence.

What is needed is not a human renunciation of our external influence on nature and of our cultural work, but only a shift of life’s goals and of the center of gravity

²⁵⁵ E] “The Miserly Knight,”] A play by Pushkin, one of his so-called “Little Tragedies” completed in 1830, though only published later in that decade. For an English translation, see Pushkin 2000: 37–54.

²⁵⁶ C] our material] our actual material **B**.

²⁵⁷ C] Thanks to our reason and our conscience, though, we already know] Where do we get this knowledge that God failed to provide? But God did provide through our reason and our conscience **B**.

²⁵⁸ C] For the more] For, according to the law of the conservation of energy, the more **B**.

of our will. Presently, the majority of people passionately chase external objects as their goal, expending on this pursuit their inner mental powers of feeling and will. However, these objects must entirely become merely the means and the instruments, while our inner drives, collected and concentrated within, must be applied as a powerful lever to raise the burden of material existence, which overwhelms both our diffused human soul and the fragmented soul of nature.

The normal principle of economic activity is economy, i.e., the saving or the accumulation of psychic forces through a conversion of one sort of mental energy (external, or extensive) into [507]another form of energy (internal, or intensive). Human beings either squander their sensuous soul or gather it up. In the first case, nothing is achieved either for oneself or for nature; in the second, both are healed and saved. In its most general definition, an organization is the coordination of many means and instruments of a lower order in order to achieve one common goal of a higher order. Therefore, the dominant principle of economic activity up to now, namely, the indefinite multiplication of external and particular needs and the recognition of external means to satisfy them as independent goals, is the principle of disorganization and of social decay. However, the principle of moral philosophy, namely, the gathering or absorbing of all external, material goals into the one intrinsic, mental goal of the complete reunification of the human being with the essence of nature, is the principle of organization and of universal reconstruction.

Along with this, however, it must be remembered that this is the *third* task in the business of the general moral organization of humanity and that the real solution to it is dependent on the first two. The techniques of personal²⁵⁹ asceticism can be normal and expedient only if there is a pious attitude towards God and pity for people, for otherwise the model ascetic would turn out to be the devil. Likewise, the collective layout of the material life of humanity on the basis of gathering inner drives and restraining external needs can be properly and successfully realized not by isolated actors in the economic sphere in themselves, but only on the condition of a recognition²⁶⁰ of the absolute goal, namely, the Kingdom of God, represented by the church and with the help of the rightful resources of the state organization. We, neither as individuals nor as a collective whole, can properly arrange material, or natural, life if we do not realize the moral norm in our religious and interpersonal relationships.

The moral organization of humanity, or its rebirth in divine humanity, is an indivisible triune task. Its absolute goal is posited by the church as organized piety, collectively receptive of divine action. Its formal means and instruments are given by the purely human, free principle of just pity or sympathy and collectively organized in the state. Only the final substrate or [508]material of the divine-human organism is found in the sphere of economic life, which is determined by the principle of abstinence.

²⁵⁹ C] personal] individual **B**.

²⁶⁰ C] of a recognition] *Absent in B*.

XX

By its essence, the participation of the individual principle is inseparable from the social, or collective, aspect of the moral organization of humanity. It is only through the activity of the individual bearers of the supreme principles of life that humanity is improving, or is morally organized in the various spheres of our existence. The unity, the completion and the correct course of general moral progress depend on the harmonious actions of these leading or “representative” individuals. The normal connection between church and state would find its essential condition and manifest²⁶¹ a real expression in a constant agreement between their highest representatives, the high priest and the king. The latter’s power would be consecrated by the authority of the former, while the former could carry out his authoritative will only through the full power of the latter. The high priest of the church, the direct bearer of the divine principle,²⁶² the representative of spiritual *patrimony*, the father *par excellence*, should recall, with every temptation to abuse²⁶³ his authority by making it a coercive power, the words of the gospel that the Father judges no one, that all judgment was given to the Son, *for he is the son of man*.²⁶⁴ In turn, the Christian sovereign, the son of the church *par excellence*, in response to the temptation to raise his supreme²⁶⁵ secular power to the level of the highest²⁶⁶ spiritual authority, allowing him to interfere in matters of faith and conscience,²⁶⁷ should recall²⁶⁸ that even the Heavenly King works only by *the will of the Father*.²⁶⁹

However, priestly authority as well as state power, both inextricably connected with external advantages, are exposed to temptations that are too powerful. The inevitable disputes, usurpations²⁷⁰ and misunderstandings between them obviously cannot be definitively²⁷¹ decided in favor of one of the interested parties. All external obligatory restrictions are, in principle, or in terms of an ideal,²⁷² incompatible with the supreme dignity of both the high priest’s authority and royal power. However, a purely moral control by the free forces of the nation and by society²⁷³ on them is not [509]just possible but desirable to the highest degree.²⁷⁴ In ancient

²⁶¹ C] essential condition and manifest] *Absent in A.*

²⁶² C] the direct bearer of the divine principle.] *Absent in A.*

²⁶³ C] with every temptation to abuse] if he would want to abuse **AB.**

²⁶⁴ E] Cf. “And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.” John 5: 27.

²⁶⁵ C] supreme] unlimited **AB.**

²⁶⁶ C] highest] *Absent in A.*

²⁶⁷ C] allowing him to interfere in matters of faith and conscience,] *Absent in B.*

²⁶⁸ C] allowing him to interfere in matters of faith and conscience, should recall] could recall **A.**

²⁶⁹ E] Cf. John 5: 30—“I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.”

²⁷⁰ C] usurpations] *Absent in A.*

²⁷¹ C] definitively] *Absent in A.*

²⁷² C] , in principle, or in terms of an ideal,] *Absent in AB.*

²⁷³ C] by the free forces of the nation and by society] *Absent in A.*

²⁷⁴ C] but desirable to the highest degree] but also necessary. **A.**

Israel, there was a third²⁷⁵ supreme calling, namely, that of the prophet. De jure²⁷⁶ eliminated by Christianity, it, in fact,²⁷⁷ virtually disappeared from the historical scene only to appear in exceptional instances for the most part in a distorted form. Hence, we have all the anomalies of medieval and modern history. The restoration of the prophetic calling is not a matter of the human will, but a reminder that its purely moral significance is quite timely in our own day²⁷⁸ and appropriate at the end of our treatment of moral philosophy.²⁷⁹

Just as the high priest of the church is the pinnacle of piety and the Christian sovereign that of mercy and justice, so²⁸⁰ the true prophet is the pinnacle of shame and conscience. In this inner essence of the prophetic calling lies the foundation of its external features. The true prophet is a social figure who is unconditionally independent, fearless in the face of anything external and subordinate to nothing external. Along with the bearers of unconditional authority and power, there must be bearers of unconditional freedom in society. This freedom cannot belong to the masses; it cannot be an attribute of democracy. Certainly, everyone desires moral²⁸¹ freedom just as everyone, perhaps, desires supreme authority and power. However, such desire is not enough. Supreme authority and power are given by the grace of God, and genuine human freedom must be earned by inner deeds. *The right to be free* is based in the human essence itself and must be protected externally by the state. However, the extent to which this right *is realized* depends precisely on inner conditions, on the degree to which moral awareness has been attained. Only those who are internally unconnected to anything external have real freedom, both inner and outer. Only they, in the final analysis, know no other standard of judgment and behavior than the good will and a pure conscience.

The high priest is only the tip of a large and complex priestly hierarchy, through which the former is connected with the entire laity. Likewise, royal power fulfills its calling among the people through a complex system of civil and military services each with its individual representative. Similarly, free agents of the highest ideal fulfill it in social life through a number of more or less full participants [510] in their aspirations. The easiest way to distinguish the three services is to say that the clergy is chiefly concerned with pious devotion to the true traditions of the past, the king to a correct understanding of the true needs of the present and the prophet to faith in a true vision of the future. The prophet differs from the idle dreamer in that for the former the flowers and fruits of the ideal future do not float in the air of some

²⁷⁵ C] a third] this third **A**.

²⁷⁶ C] De jure] *Absent in A*.

²⁷⁷ C] , in fact,] *Absent in A*.

²⁷⁸ C] in our own day] *Absent in B*.

²⁷⁹ C] a reminder that its purely moral significance is quite timely in our own day and appropriate at the end of our treatment of moral philosophy.] a reminder of its extremely timely moral essence. **A**.

²⁸⁰ C] Just as the high priest ... so] If the high priest is the pinnacle of piety and the tsar that of pity, so **A**.

²⁸¹ C] moral] *Absent in A*.

personal imagination, but are held up by the manifest trunk of present social needs and by the mysterious roots of religious tradition. It is this very fact that connects the prophet's calling with that of the priest and the king.^{282,283}

²⁸² C] just as everyone, perhaps, desires ... of the priest and the king.] just as everyone desires authority and power. However only those who are capable of being free from everything external can have real freedom, both inner and outer. A.

²⁸³ C] The high priest ... and the king.] And then, undoubtedly, all will be unconditionally free—in the kingdom of God. B.

Conclusion

[511] The Definitive Determination of the Moral Meaning of Life and the Transition to Theoretical Philosophy¹

Our life acquires moral meaning and value when a connection is established between it and the perfect Moral Good that *grows ever more perfect*. It follows from the very idea of the perfect Moral Good that all life and all that exists are connected to it, and their meaning lies in this connection. Does an animal's life really have no meaning? And what of its nourishment and reproduction—is there no meaning to them? Nevertheless, the indubitable and important meaning they have simply expresses a passive and partial connection of the individual creature with the common moral good. Human life could not be satisfied with such a meaning. *Our* reason and will, both being forms of the infinite, demand something else. Our spirit is nourished by knowledge of the perfect Moral Good and is disseminated by its deeds, i.e., by realizing the universal and unconditional in all particular and conditional respects. Intrinsically *demanding* a perfect union with the absolute Moral Good, we show that what is demanded is not yet given to us, and, consequently, the moral meaning of our lives can only lie in *reaching* for this perfect connection with the Moral Good or in the *perfecting* of our existing intrinsic connection with it.

The general idea of the absolute Moral Good and its necessary attributes are given in the demand for moral perfection. It must be all-encompassing. That is, it must include the norm for our moral relation to everything. With respect to morality, [512]the three categories of dignity exhaust everything that exists and that can exist: what is above us, what is on a par with us, and what is below us. It is logically impossible to find a fourth category. Since we have not yet attained a perfect union with Him, the inner testimony of consciousness informs that above us is the absolute Moral Good, or God, as well as everything that is in such a perfect union. On the same level with us by nature is everything that, like ourselves, is capable of independent moral improvement, everything that is on the way to the absolute and can see that advancing goal, namely, all human beings. Below us is everything that is incapable of inner, independent improvement and only through us can enter into a perfect relation with the absolute, namely, material nature. This triple relation in its

¹ C] This "Conclusion" appeared for the first time in **B** and spans pages 636–643. E] Recall here the subtitle of the "Preface to the First Edition," viz., *A Preliminary Conception of the Moral Meaning of Life*.

most general form is a fact. We are, in fact, subordinate to the absolute, regardless of what we may call it. Likewise, by the fundamental attributes of human nature, we are in fact equal to other people, and through heredity, history and social life we find ourselves in solidarity with them in the general fortunes of life. In fact, we really possess essential advantages over material creation. Therefore, *the task of morality can consist only in perfecting what is given*. The triplicity of the factual relation must be converted into a triadic norm of rational and voluntary activity. Unavoidable subordination to a higher power must be turned into conscious and free service to the perfect Moral Good. Natural solidarity with other people must pass into sympathetic and harmonious cooperation with them. Our actual advantages over material nature must be converted into a rational mastery of it for its own good as well as ours.²

The actual start of our moral improvement involves the three fundamental feelings inherent in human nature and which constitute its natural virtue: the feeling of *shame*, which protects our higher dignity against the clutches of our animal inclinations; the feeling of *pity*, which establishes our internal equality with others; and, finally, the *religious* feeling, in which our recognition of the highest Moral Good is expressed. These feelings represent our morally *good nature*, which from the outset strives for what *should be*. (For an awareness, however vague, of their normality is inseparable from these feelings—an awareness that we should be ashamed of the boundless expanse of our carnal inclinations and of our slavery to our animal [513]nature, that we should pity others, that we should humble ourselves before the Deity, and that this is so is good and the contrary is evil.) In these feelings and the accompanying testimony of our conscience, we find the simple, or more precisely, the triune foundation of moral improvement. *Conscientious reason, generalizing the impulses of our morally good nature, elevates them into a law*. The content of the moral law is the same as that given in morally good feelings but now invested merely with the form of a universal and necessary (i.e., obligatory) demand or command. The moral law arises from the testimony of our conscience, just as conscience itself is a feeling of shame developed not with respect to its material, but merely its formal side.

As for our lower nature, in generalizing the immediate feeling of modesty the moral law always commands us to prevail over all of our sensual inclinations, taking them to be only a subordinate element within the bounds of reason. Morality does not find expression here (as it does in the elementary feeling of shame) in the simple, instinctive repulsion of the hostile element or in a cowardly retreat. Instead, it demands an actual *struggle* with the flesh. With regard to other people, the moral law imparts the form of justice to the feeling of pity or sympathy, demanding that we recognize each of our neighbors as having the same unconditional significance as ourselves, or that we treat others just as we could, without contradiction, wish them to treat us independently of this or that feeling. Finally, with regard to the deity the moral law affirms itself as the expression of his legislative will and demands unconditional recognition for the sake of

² C] for its own good as well as ours.] *Absent in B.*

that will's own dignity or perfection. However, the person who has achieved such a *pure* recognition of the Divine will as the all-one and all-united Moral Good must clearly see that only the strength of its own inner *activity* in the human soul can reveal the *full scope* of this will. Having reached this summit, formal or rational morality enters into the sphere of absolute morality—the moral good of divine *grace* suffuses the moral good of the rational law.

According to the customary teachings of true Christianity, which is in accordance with the essential point here, grace does not destroy nature and natural morality, but “perfects” it. That is, grace leads what is natural to the state of perfection. In the same way, grace does not abolish law, but fulfills it. [514] Only by virtue of its actual fulfillment, and to the extent that this is so, is law made unnecessary.

Whether by nature or by law, the fulfillment of the moral principle cannot be limited to the personal life of the human individual for two reasons, one natural and the other moral. The natural reason is that an isolated individual does not exist. From a practical point of view, this would be reason enough. For strict moralists, however, for whom what is important is not what is but what should be, there is also a moral reason, viz., the discrepancy between the idea of a single isolated human individual and the idea of perfection. Thus, for both natural and moral reasons the process of achieving perfection, which forms the moral meaning of our lives, can be thought of only as a collective process taking place in the collective person, i.e., in the family, in the nation, and in humanity. These three forms of the collective person are not a substitute for but mutually support and complement each other, and each in its own way proceeds to perfection. The “person” in the form of a family progresses, morally speaking, in connection with its ancestors by spiritualizing and immortalizing the significance of its “personal” past. It progresses in the present through a true marriage and, with regard to the future, in raising new generations. The “person” in the form of a nation progresses by deepening and extending its natural solidarity with other nations in the sense of moral communion. The “person” in the form of humanity progresses by organizing the moral good in the general forms of religious, political and socio-economic culture, making all of them conform more and more to the ultimate goal, viz., preparing humanity for the unconditional moral order, or Kingdom of God. Religious good or piety is organized in the church, which must perfect its human side by making it conform all the more to its Divine side. Interpersonal good, or just pity, is organized in the state, which progresses by extending the moral truth and mercy at the expense of arbitrariness and violence within the nation and between nations. Finally, physical good or the moral relation of people to material nature is organized in an economic union, the perfection of which lies not in the accumulation of things, but in the spiritualization of matter as the condition for a normal and eternal physical existence.

[515] The moral meaning of life, or the Moral Good, in all its purity, full scope and power, receives its definitive justification in the constant interaction between personal moral feats and the organized moral work of the collective person. The intellectual reproduction of this process in its totality is the moral philosophy expounded in this book. It follows the story of what has been achieved and anticipates what must still be done. To summarize its entire content by a single expression, we find

the perfect Moral Good is definitively defined as the *indivisible organization of a triadic love*. The feeling of reverence or piety is expressed at first through a timid and passive submission and then later through a free filial submission to the highest principle. Knowing its object to be absolute perfection, it is transformed into a pure, all-encompassing and boundless love for this object, conditioned only by a recognition of its absolute nature, in other words, *an ascending love*. However, in conforming to its all-encompassing object,³ this love also embraces everything in God but, above all, those who, like us, can participate in it, i.e., all human beings. Here our physical and then moral and political pity for people becomes a spiritual love for them, in other words, *an equalization of love*. But the divine love as all-encompassing and which is acquired by humans cannot stop with this. Becoming *a descending love*, it acts on material nature, bringing it also into the full scope of the absolute good as the living throne of divine glory.

When this universal justification of the moral good, i.e., its dissemination into all aspects of life, becomes in fact historically clear to every mind,⁴ then for each individual only the practical problem of the will remains. Either we accept this perfect moral meaning of life, or we reject it. However, as long as the end, even though immanent, has not yet come, as long as the righteousness of the moral good in everything has not become obvious to everyone, a theoretical doubt is still possible. Although such a doubt is unresolvable within moral or practical philosophy, this in no way undermines the obligatory nature of its principles for those of a good will.

If the moral meaning of life essentially amounts to an all-round struggle and triumph of the moral good over evil, there arises the eternal question: What is the source of this evil? If it is the moral good itself, [516] is this struggle a misunderstanding? If evil arises independently of the moral good, how can the moral good be unconditional, since the condition for the realization of the moral good is independent of it? If the moral good is not unconditional, what is its fundamental advantage and the ultimate guarantee of its triumph over evil?

A rational faith in the absolute Moral Good rests on inner experience and on what follows with logical necessity from it. However, inner religious experience is a personal matter and is, from an external point of view, contingent. This is why a rational faith based on it that becomes a set of general theoretical assertions demands theoretical justification.

The question of the origin of evil is purely intellectual and can be resolved only by a true metaphysics, which, in turn, presupposes an answer to other questions: What is truth, what is its validity, and how do we know it?

The independence of moral philosophy within its own sphere does not exclude an intrinsic connection between the moral sphere and the concerns of theoretical philosophy, i.e., epistemology and metaphysics.

³ C] However, in conforming to its all-encompassing object,] being all-encompassing **B**.

⁴ C] i.e., its dissemination into all aspects of life, becomes in fact historically clear to every mind,] becoming a historical fact, fully becomes a justification, **B**.

A believer in the absolute Moral Good should least of all fear and consider improper a philosophical investigation of truth, as though the moral meaning of the world could lose by being definitively explained and as though union with God in love and harmony with the Divine will in life could leave us uninvolved in the Divine mind. Having justified the Moral Good as such in moral philosophy, we must justify the Moral Good *as Truth* in theoretical philosophy⁵

⁵ C] Having justified ... in theoretical philosophy.] *Absent in B.*

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