The Tragic Sense of Life

MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO

1864–1936

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Del sentimiento trágico de la vida

Translated from the Spanish with AI (Claude) and edited



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The Tragic Sense of Life · Miguel de Unamuno (1864–1936)

Translated from the Spanish with AI (Claude) and edited. Reading edition, Forage, September 2026. forage.com/unamuno/tragic-sense-of-life

Spanish text: the first edition in book form, *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida en los hombres y en los pueblos* (Madrid: Renacimiento, [1913]), from the University of Toronto copy scanned by the Internet Archive (archive.org/details/delsentimientotoounam) (public domain), transcribed from the Archive's OCR and corrected against a second digitization of the same text; Greek quotations garbled by the OCR are restored from standard texts, and the original's spelling (*fué*, *sér*, *recojer*) is kept. English: translated from the Spanish with AI (Claude), then edited for accuracy and consistency. Not reviewed by a human specialist. Free to reuse under CC BY-SA 4.0. The small numbers set in the text are chapter and paragraph ("3.12" is Chapter III, paragraph 12; "C.5" is the Conclusion, paragraph 5); an unnumbered chapter reference marks Unamuno's epigraph. Numbered notes are Unamuno's own. Where the original uses a term now considered offensive, a neutral term is shown in brackets instead.

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INTRODUCTION

The Tragic Sense of Life in Men and in Peoples (1913) is the central book of Miguel de Unamuno (1864–1936): Basque, professor of Greek and rector of the University of Salamanca, poet, novelist and Spain's great public controversialist. It began as a series of essays in the review *La España Moderna* and was published as a book in Madrid in 1913.

Unamuno starts not from humanity in the abstract but from "the man of flesh and bone, the one who is born, suffers and dies —above all, dies." What drives philosophy and religion alike, he argues, is the hunger for immortality: the longing not to die. Reason cannot prove that the soul survives, and it dissolves every argument that it does; but life cannot accept reason's verdict. The two meet in a struggle that neither can win, and from that struggle comes the tragic sense of life: a faith that lives on doubt, a hope that is uncertain, and an ethic of acting so that, if nothingness awaits us, it will be an injustice.

The book ranges through Spinoza, Kant, Kierkegaard, William James, the Church Fathers, Spanish mystics and poets, quoted in half a dozen languages. It ends with Don Quixote, whom Unamuno takes as the patron of this tragicomedy and of Spain's quarrel with modern Europe, and with a blessing that is also a challenge: "May God deny you peace, and give you glory!"

I. The Man of Flesh and Bone

El hombre de carne y hueso
Philosophy begins with the concrete man who is born, suffers and dies, and with his longing not to die.

1.1 *Homo sum; nihil humani a me alienum puto* [I am a man; I count nothing human foreign to me], said the Latin comic poet. And I would rather say, *nullum hominem a me alienum puto*: I am a man, and I count no other man a stranger. For the adjective *humanus* is as suspect to me as its abstract noun *humanitas*, humanity. Neither the human nor humanity, neither the simple adjective nor the adjective made into a noun, but the concrete noun: man. The man of flesh and bone, the one who is born, suffers and dies—above all, dies—the one who eats and drinks and plays and sleeps and thinks and wills, the man who is seen and heard, the brother, the true brother.[1]

1.2 For there is another thing that is also called man, and it is the subject of not a few more or less scientific digressions. It is the featherless biped of the legend, the ζῷον πολιτικόν [political animal] of Aristotle, the social contractor of Rousseau, the *homo oeconomicus* [economic man] of the Manchester school, the *homo sapiens* of Linnaeus, or, if you like, the vertical mammal. A man who is not from here or from there, nor of this age or of another, who has neither sex nor country: an idea, in short. That is to say, a no-man.

1 The Latin comic poet is Terence (2nd century BC); the line comes from his play *Heauton Timorumenos* (*The Self-Tormentor*).

1.3 Ours is the other one, the one of flesh and bone: I, you, my reader; that other man over there; all of us who weigh upon the earth.

1.4 And this concrete man, of flesh and bone, is at once the subject and the supreme object of all philosophy, whether certain self-styled philosophers like it or not.

1.5 In most of the histories of philosophy that I know, the systems are presented to us as arising one from another, and their authors, the philosophers, appear as little more than mere pretexts. The inner biography of the philosophers, of the men who philosophized, occupies a secondary place. And yet it is this inner biography that explains the most to us.

1.6 It falls to us to say, first of all, that philosophy leans closer to poetry than to science. All the philosophical systems that have been forged, in any period whatever, as a supreme harmonizing of the final results of the particular sciences have had far less consistency and less life than those others that represented the integral longing of their author's spirit.

1.7 And the reason is that the sciences, important as they are to us and indispensable as they are for our life and our thought, are in a certain sense more foreign to us than philosophy. They serve a more objective end—that is, one more outside of us. At bottom, they are a matter of economics. A new scientific discovery, of the kind we call theoretical, is like a mechanical discovery—the steam engine, the telephone, the phonograph, the airplane: a thing that is useful for something. Thus the telephone may serve us to communicate at a distance with the woman we love. But what use is she to us? One takes the electric tram to go and hear an opera, and asks oneself: which, in this case, is more useful, the tram or the opera?

1.8 Philosophy answers to the need to form for ourselves a unified and total conception of the world and of life, and, as a consequence of that conception, a feeling that gives rise to an inner attitude and even to action. But it turns out that this feeling, instead of being a consequence of that conception, is its cause. Our philosophy—that is, our way of understanding or not under-

standing the world and life—springs from our feeling toward life itself. And this, like everything affective, has subconscious roots, perhaps unconscious ones.

1.9 It is not usually our ideas that make us optimists or pessimists; rather, it is our optimism or our pessimism—of physiological or perhaps pathological origin, the one as much as the other—that makes our ideas.

1.10 Man, they say, is a rational animal. I do not know why it has not been said that he is an affective or feeling animal. And perhaps what distinguishes him from the other animals is feeling rather than reason. I have more often seen a cat reason than laugh or weep. Perhaps it weeps or laughs inwardly—but then, inwardly, perhaps the crab too solves quadratic equations.

1.11 And so what ought to matter most to us in a philosopher is the man.

THE MAN KANT

Kant tore down God with his head and rebuilt him with his heart, for immortality's sake.

1.12 Take Kant, the man Immanuel Kant, who was born and lived in Königsberg at the end of the eighteenth century and up to the threshold of the nineteenth. In the philosophy of this man Kant —a man of heart and head, that is, a man—there is a significant leap, as Kierkegaard would have said, another man—and what a man!—the leap from the *Critique of Pure Reason* to the *Critique of Practical Reason*. In the latter he rebuilds—say what they will, those who do not see the man—what he tore down in the former. After examining and pulverizing with his analysis the traditional proofs of the existence of God—of the Aristotelian God, who is the God that corresponds to the ζῷον πολιτικόν, of the abstract God, of the unmoved prime mover—he rebuilds God once more, but the God of conscience, the author of the moral order: the Lutheran God, in short. That leap of Kant's is already present in germ in the Lutheran notion of faith.

1.13 The one God, the rational God, is the projection into infinity of the outside of man, man by definition—that is, of abstract man, of the man who is no man; and the other God, the God of feeling or of will, is the projection into infinity of the inside of man, man by life—of concrete man, of flesh and bone.

1.14 Kant rebuilt with his heart what he had torn down with his head. For we know, from the testimony of those who knew him and from his own testimony in his letters and private statements, that the man Kant—the somewhat selfish old bachelor who taught philosophy in Königsberg at the end of the century of the Encyclopedia and of the goddess Reason—was a man much preoccupied with the problem. I mean the one true vital problem, the one that reaches deepest into our very core: the problem of our individual and personal destiny, of the immortality of the soul. The man Kant could not resign himself to dying altogether. And because he could not resign himself to dying altogether, he made that leap, the immortal leap, from the one critique to the other.[2]

1.15 Whoever reads the *Critique of Practical Reason* attentively and without blinkers will see that, strictly speaking, the existence of God is deduced in it from the immortality of the soul, and not the latter from the former. The categorical imperative leads us to a moral postulate which in turn demands, in the teleological or rather eschatological order, the immortality of the soul; and to sustain this immortality God appears. All the rest is the sleight of hand of a professional of philosophy.

1.16 The man Kant felt morality as the basis of eschatology, but the professor of philosophy inverted the terms.

1.17 Another professor, the professor and man William James, has said somewhere or other that for the generality of men God is the producer of immortality. Yes: for the generality of men, including the man Kant, the man James, and the man who is tracing these lines that you, reader, are reading.

1.18 One day, talking with a peasant, I put to him the hypothesis that there might indeed be a God who rules heaven and

2 A play on *salto mortal*, literally "mortal leap", the Spanish for a somersault.

earth, a Consciousness of the Universe, but that the soul of each man was not for that reason immortal in the traditional and concrete sense. And he answered me: "Then what is God for?" And that is how the man Kant and the man James answered themselves in the hidden court of their conscience. Only, when they acted as professors, they had to justify rationally an attitude so little rational. Which does not mean, of course, that it is absurd.

1.19 Hegel made famous his aphorism that all that is rational is real and all that is real is rational; but there are many of us who, unconvinced by Hegel, go on believing that the real, the really real, is irrational; that reason builds upon irrationalities. Hegel, a great definer, set out to reconstruct the universe with definitions, like that artillery sergeant who said that cannons are made by taking a hole and covering it with iron.

1.20 Another man, the man Joseph Butler, an Anglican bishop who lived at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and of whom the Catholic cardinal Newman says that he is the greatest name in the Anglican Church, wrote these pregnant words at the end of the first chapter of his great work on the analogy of religion (*The Analogy of Religion*), a chapter that deals with the future life: "This credibility of a future life, on which so much has been insisted here, however little it may satisfy our curiosity, seems to answer all the purposes of religion as well as a demonstrative proof would. In reality, a proof, even a demonstrative one, of a future life would not be a proof of religion.[3] For that we are to live after death is something as consistent with atheism, and something atheism can take into account as readily, as the fact that we are alive now; and nothing, therefore, can be more absurd than to argue from atheism that there can be no future state."

1.21 The man Butler, whose works the man Kant may perhaps have known, wanted to save faith in the immortality of the soul, and to that end he made it independent of faith in God. The first

3 Joseph Butler (1692–1752), bishop of Durham; *The Analogy of Religion* appeared in 1736.

chapter of his *Analogy* deals, as I tell you, with the future life, and the second with the government of God by rewards and punishments. And the fact is that, at bottom, the good Anglican bishop deduces the existence of God from the immortality of the soul. And since the good Anglican bishop started from there, he did not have to make the leap that the good Lutheran philosopher had to make at the end of that same century. Bishop Butler was one man, and Professor Kant was another.

SPINOZA'S STRIVING

Each thing strives to persist in its being, so our very essence is the longing never to die.

1.22 And to be a man is to be something concrete, unitary and substantive; it is to be a thing, *res*. And we already know what another man, the man Benedict Spinoza—that Portuguese Jew who was born and lived in Holland in the middle of the seventeenth century—wrote of every thing. Proposition 6 of Part III of his *Ethics* says: *unaquaeque res, quatenus in se est, in suo esse perseverare conatur*; that is, each thing, insofar as it is in itself, strives to persevere in its being. Each thing insofar as it is in itself—that is, insofar as it is substance, since, according to him, substance is *id quod in se est et per se concipitur*: that which is by itself and is conceived by itself. And in the following proposition, the 7th, of the same part he adds: *conatus, quo unaquaeque res in suo esse perseverare conatur, nihil est praeter ipsius rei actualem essentiam*; that is, the effort with which each thing tries to persevere in its being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing itself. This means that your essence, reader, and mine, and that of the man Spinoza, of the man Butler, of the man Kant, and of every man who is a man, is nothing but the striving, the effort he puts into going on being a man, into not dying.[4] And the proposition that follows these two, the 8th, says: *conatus, quo unaquaeque res in suo esse perseverare conatur, nullum tempus*

4 "Striving" renders *conato*, Spinoza's *conatus*: the effort of each thing to persist in its being.

finitum, sed indefinitum involvit; that is, the effort with which each thing strives to persevere in its being involves no finite time, but indefinite time. That is to say, you and I and Spinoza want never to die, and this longing of ours never to die is our actual essence. And yet this poor Portuguese Jew, exiled in the Dutch mists, could never come to believe in his own personal immortality, and all his philosophy was nothing but a consolation he forged for that lack of faith of his. Just as a hand or a foot or the heart or the head aches in other men, God ached in Spinoza. Poor man! And poor men, all the rest of us!

IS MAN A THING?

Positivism dissolved the self; what makes a man one is a principle of unity and of continuity.

1.23 And man, this thing—is he a thing? Absurd as the question may seem, there are those who have asked it. Not long ago a certain doctrine that we used to call positivism went about the world, doing much good and much harm. And among the other harms it did was to bring us a kind of analysis under which facts were pulverized, reduced to a dust of facts. Most of what positivism called facts were nothing but fragments of facts. In psychology its effect was deleterious. There were even scholastics turned men of letters—I do not say philosophers turned poets, for poet and philosopher are twin brothers, if not the same thing—who carried positivist psychological analysis into the novel and the drama, where concrete men of flesh and bone have to be set on their feet; and by dint of states of consciousness, consciousnesses disappeared. What happened to them is what, they say, often happens when certain complicated organic, living chemical compounds are examined and tested: the reagents destroy the very body under examination, and what we obtain is nothing more than products of its composition.

1.24 Starting from the evident fact that contradictory states file through our consciousness, they came not to see consciousness, the self, clearly. To ask someone about his self is like asking him

about his body. And note that when I speak of the self I speak of the concrete and personal self—not of Fichte's self, but of Fichte himself, the man Fichte.

1.25 And what determines a man, what makes him *a* man, one and not another, the one he is and not the one he is not, is a principle of unity and a principle of continuity. A principle of unity first in space, thanks to the body, and then in action and in purpose. When we walk, one foot does not go forward and the other backward; nor, when we look, does one eye look north and the other south—so long as we are healthy. At each moment of our life we have a purpose, and the synergy of our actions conspires toward it. Even if at the next moment we change our purpose. And in a certain sense a man is the more a man the more unitary his action is. There are those who in their whole life pursue only one single purpose, whatever it may be.

1.26 And a principle of continuity in time. Without going into the discussion—an idle one—of whether or not I am the one I was twenty years ago, it is indisputable, it seems to me, that the one I am today derives, through a continuous series of states of consciousness, from the one who was in my body twenty years ago. Memory is the basis of individual personality, just as tradition is the basis of the collective personality of a people. We live in memory and by memory, and our spiritual life is, at bottom, nothing but the effort of our memory to persevere, to become hope—the effort of our past to become future.

1.27 All this is a truism of the most glaring kind, I know; but the fact is that, knocking about the world, one comes across men who seem not to feel themselves. One of my best friends, with whom I walked every day for many years on end, used to tell me, whenever I spoke to him of this sense of one's own personality: "Well, I don't feel myself; I don't know what that is."

1.28 On one occasion this friend I am alluding to said to me: "I would like to be So-and-so" (here a name), and I said to him: that is what I can never manage to understand—that one should want to be someone else, anyone else. To want to be another is to want to cease being the one one is. I can understand someone

wishing to have what another has, his wealth or his knowledge; but to be another is something I cannot understand.

1.29 It has been said more than once that every unhappy man would rather be who he is, even with his misfortunes, than be another without them. And that is because unhappy men, when they keep their sanity in their unhappiness—that is, when they strive to persevere in their being—prefer misfortune to nonexistence. For myself I can say that when I was a young man, and even as a child, the moving pictures of hell that were painted for me never managed to stir me, for even then nothing seemed to me so horrible as nothingness itself. It was a furious hunger to be, an appetite for divinity, as our ascetic writer said.

1.30 To go to someone with the message that he should be another, that he should make himself another, is to go to him with the message that he should cease to be himself. Each of us defends his personality, and accepts a change in his way of thinking or feeling only insofar as that change can enter into the unity of his spirit and mesh with its continuity; insofar as that change can be harmonized and integrated with all the rest of his way of being, thinking and feeling, and can at the same time be linked to his memories. Neither of a man nor of a people—which is, in a certain sense, also a man—can one demand a change that breaks the unity and the continuity of his person. He can be changed a great deal, even almost completely; but within continuity.

1.31 It is true that there occurs in certain individuals what is called a change of personality; but this is a pathological case, and as such it is studied by alienists. In such changes of personality memory, the basis of consciousness, is completely ruined, and all that is left to the poor patient as a substratum of individual—though not personal—continuity is the physical organism. Such an illness is equivalent to death for the person who suffers it; the ones for whom it is not equivalent to his death are those who are to inherit from him, if he has any fortune. And that illness is nothing but a revolution, a true revolution.

1.32 An illness is, in a certain respect, an organic dissociation: it is some organ or element of the living body that rebels, breaks the vital synergy, and conspires toward an end different from the one toward which the other elements coordinated with it conspire. Its end may be, considered in itself—that is, in the abstract—higher, nobler, more... anything you like; but it is a different one. It may be better to fly and breathe in the air than to swim and breathe in the water; but if the fins of a fish took it into their heads to turn into wings, the fish, as a fish, would perish. And it is no use saying that it would end up becoming a bird, unless there was a process of continuity in it. I do not know for certain, but perhaps it may happen that a fish engenders a bird, or another fish closer to the bird than itself; but a fish, this fish, cannot itself, and within its own lifetime, become a bird.

1.33 Everything in me that conspires to break the unity and continuity of my life conspires to destroy me, and therefore to destroy itself. Every individual in a people who conspires to break the spiritual unity and continuity of that people tends to destroy it and to destroy himself as part of that people. That some other people is better? Very well—though we do not quite understand what this business of better or worse means. That it is richer? Granted. That it is more cultured? Granted too. That it lives more happily? That, now... but, well, let it pass! That it conquers—what they call conquering—while we are conquered? Congratulations. All that is well and good, but it is another. And that is enough. For to me, making myself another, breaking the unity and continuity of my life, is to cease being the one I am—that is, it is simply to cease to be. And that, no: anything rather than that!

1.34 That another would fill the role I fill as well as I do, or better? That another would carry out my social function? Yes, but not I.

MAN IS AN END

No idol called Humanity may swallow the individual: the world exists for each consciousness.

1.35 "I, I, I, always I!—some reader will say—and who are you?" I could answer him here with Obermann, with the enormous man Obermann: "To the universe, nothing; to myself, everything"; but no, I prefer to remind him of a doctrine of the man Kant, namely that we should regard our neighbors, other men, not as means but as ends. For it is not a question of me alone: it is a question of you, reader, who grumble so; it is a question of the other, of each and every one. Singular judgments have the value of universals, say the logicians. The singular is not particular; it is universal.[5]

1.36 Man is an end, not a means. All civilization is directed toward man, toward each man, toward each self. Or what is that idol—call it Humanity or whatever you will—to which each and every man must be sacrificed? For I sacrifice myself for my neighbors, for my fellow countrymen, for my children, and they in turn for theirs, and theirs for their own, and so on in an endless series of generations. And who receives the fruit of this sacrifice?

1.37 The same people who speak to us of this fantastic sacrifice, this dedication without an object, usually also speak to us of the right to life. And what is the right to life? They tell me I have come to fulfill some social end or other; but I feel that I, like each of my brothers, have come to fulfill myself, to live.

1.38 Yes, yes, I see it: an enormous social activity, a mighty civilization, a great deal of science, a great deal of art, a great deal of industry, a great deal of morality; and then, when we have filled the world with industrial marvels, with great factories, with roads, with museums, with libraries, we shall fall

5 Obermann is the hero of *Obermann* (1804), a novel in letters by Étienne Pivert de Sénancour (1770–1846).

exhausted at the foot of it all, and it will remain—for whom? Was man made for science, or was science made for man?

1.39 "Come now!—the same reader will exclaim again—we are back to that bit of the Catechism: Q. For whom did God make the world? A. For man." Well, yes: that is how a man who is a man should answer. The ant, if it were aware of this and were a person, conscious of itself, would answer: for the ant; and it would answer rightly. The world is made for consciousness, for each consciousness.

1.40 A human soul is worth the whole universe, someone or other has said—and said it superbly. A human soul, mind you. Not a life. Not this life. And it happens that the less one believes in the soul—that is, in its conscious, personal and concrete immortality—the more the value of this poor passing life will be exaggerated. From this spring all the soft sentimentalities against war. Yes, one must not want to die—but it is the other death one must not want. "Whoever would save his life shall lose it," says the Gospel; but it does not say whoever would save his soul, the immortal soul. Or the soul we believe, and want, to be immortal.

1.41 And none of the definers of objectivism notice—or rather, they do not want to notice—that when a man affirms his self, his personal consciousness, he affirms man, concrete and real man; he affirms true humanism—which is not the humanism of the things of man but of man—and in affirming man he affirms consciousness. For the only consciousness we are conscious of is that of man.

1.42 The world is for consciousness. Or rather, this *for*, this notion of purpose—and better than a notion, a feeling—this teleological feeling arises only where there is consciousness. Consciousness and purpose are, at bottom, the same thing.

1.43 If the sun had consciousness, it would doubtless think that it lived to give light to the worlds; but it would also think, and above all, that the worlds exist so that it may give them light and delight in giving them light, and so live. And it would think rightly.

1.44 And all this tragic battle of man to save himself, that immortal longing for immortality that made the man Kant take that immortal leap I was telling you about—all of it is nothing but a battle for consciousness. If consciousness is, as some inhuman thinker has said, nothing more than a flash of lightning between two eternities of darkness, then there is nothing more execrable than existence.

1.45 Someone may see an underlying contradiction in everything I am saying, longing at times for unending life and saying at others that this life does not have the value given to it. Contradiction? I should say so! The contradiction of my heart, which says yes, and my head, which says no! Contradiction, naturally. Who does not remember those words of the Gospel: "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"? Contradiction! Naturally! Since we live only on contradictions, and by them; since life is tragedy, and tragedy is perpetual struggle, without victory or the hope of it; it is contradiction.

THINKING WITH THE WHOLE BODY

Affective values are beyond reasons, and those who think only with the brain become pedants.

1.46 It is, as you see, a question of an affective value, and against affective values reasons are of no avail. For reasons are nothing more than reasons—that is, they are not even truths. There are definers of that sort, pedants by nature and by grace, who strike me like that gentleman who goes to console a father who has just lost a son, dead suddenly in the flower of his years, and says to him: "Patience, my friend, for we all have to die!" Would you be surprised if this father grew angry at such an impertinence? For it is an impertinence. Even an axiom can, in certain cases, become an impertinence. How often might one not say those lines: "to think as you do, all one needs / is to have nothing more than intelligence."

1.47 There are people, in fact, who seem to think only with the brain, or with whatever other organ may be the specific one for

thinking; while others think with the whole body and the whole soul, with the blood, with the marrow of the bones, with the heart, with the lungs, with the belly, with life. And the people who think only with the brain turn into definers; they become professionals of thought. And do you know what a professional is? Do you know what a product of the differentiation of labor is?

1.48 Here you have a professional boxer. He has learned to throw punches with such economy that he concentrates his strength in the punch and brings into play hardly any muscles but those needed to achieve the immediate and concrete aim of his action: to knock his opponent down. A blow struck by a non-professional may not have so much immediate objective effect; but it invigorates the one who strikes it far more, making him bring almost his whole body into play. The one is a boxer's punch, the other a man's. And it is well known that circus strongmen and fairground athletes are not usually healthy. They knock down their opponents, they lift enormous weights, but they die, either of consumption or of dyspepsia.

1.49 If a philosopher is not a man, he is anything but a philosopher; he is, above all, a pedant—that is, an imitation of a man. The cultivation of any science—chemistry, physics, geometry, philology—may be, and even this only in a very restricted way and within very narrow limits, a work of differentiated specialization; but philosophy, like poetry, is either a work of integration, of reconciliation, or it is nothing but philosophastry, pseudo-philosophical erudition.

1.50 All knowledge has a purpose. Knowing for the sake of knowing is, say what one will, nothing but a gloomy begging of the question. One learns something either for an immediate practical end or to complete the rest of our knowledge. Even the doctrine that seems most theoretical to us—that is, of least immediate application to the non-intellectual needs of life—answers to a need (for that too is a need), an intellectual one: to a matter of economy in thinking, to a principle of unity and continuity of consciousness. But just as a piece of scientific knowledge has its purpose in the rest of knowledge, the philosophy

one is to embrace has another, extrinsic purpose: it bears on our whole destiny, on our attitude toward life and the universe. And the most tragic problem of philosophy is that of reconciling intellectual needs with the needs of feeling and the needs of the will. For it is there that every philosophy that claims to dissolve the eternal and tragic contradiction, the basis of our existence, comes to grief. But does everyone face this contradiction?

1.51 Little can be expected, for example, of a ruler who has never once, even in an obscure way, concerned himself with the first principle and the last end of all things, and above all of men —with their first why and their last wherefore.

1.52 And this supreme concern cannot be purely rational; it has to be affective. It is not enough to think our destiny; we must feel it. And he who, claiming to lead his fellow men, says and proclaims that he does not care in the least about what lies above the rooftops does not deserve to lead them. Which does not mean, of course, that any particular solution must be demanded of him. Solution! Is there one, by any chance?

1.53 For my part, I will never willingly surrender myself, and give my trust, to any leader of peoples who is not imbued with the conviction that in leading a people he is leading men, men of flesh and bone, men who are born, suffer, and, though they do not want to die, die; men who are ends in themselves, not merely means; men who must be what they are and not others; men, in short, who seek what we call happiness. It is inhuman, for example, to sacrifice one generation of men to the generation that follows it when one has no feeling for the destiny of those who are sacrificed. Not for their memory, not for their names, but for them themselves.

1.54 All this talk of living on in one's children, or in one's works, or in the universe, is vague lucubration that satisfies only those who suffer from affective stupidity—who may, for the rest, be persons of a certain cerebral eminence. For one may have great talent, what we call great talent, and be stupid in feeling and even morally deficient. There have been such cases.

1.55 These affectively stupid people with talent are fond of saying that there is no use trying to delve into the unknowable or kicking against the pricks. It is as if one were to tell a man who has had to have a leg amputated that it does him no good to think about it. And we all lack something; only some feel it and others do not. Or they pretend not to feel it, and then they are hypocrites.

1.56 A pedant who saw Solon weeping for the death of a son said to him: "Why do you weep so, if it does no good?" And the sage answered him: "That is precisely why—because it does no good." Of course weeping does some good, if only as relief; but the profound meaning of Solon's answer to the impertinent fellow is plain to see. And I am convinced that we would resolve many things if we all went out into the street and, bringing our sorrows to light—which might turn out to be one single common sorrow—set ourselves together to weep for them, and to cry out to heaven, and to call upon God. Even if he did not hear us; though hear us he would. The holiest thing about a temple is that it is the place where people go to weep together. A *Miserere* [Have mercy], sung together by a multitude lashed by fate, is worth as much as a philosophy. It is not enough to cure the plague; one must know how to weep for it. Yes, one must know how to weep! And perhaps this is the supreme wisdom. What for? Ask Solon.[6]

THE TRAGIC SENSE OF LIFE

Unamuno names the tragic sense of life and lists individuals and peoples who have had it.

1.57 There is something which, for lack of another name, we shall call the tragic sense of life, which carries with it a whole conception of life itself and of the universe, a whole philosophy more or less formulated, more or less conscious. And this sense can be had—and is had—not only by individual men but by whole

6 The *Miserere* is Psalm 51, "Have mercy on me, O God", sung in penitential services.

peoples. And this sense, rather than springing from ideas, determines them, even though afterward, of course, these ideas react upon it and reinforce it. Sometimes it may come from an adventitious illness, a dyspepsia for example; but at other times it is constitutional. And there is no point, as we shall see, in talking of healthy and unhealthy men. Apart from there being no normative notion of health, nobody has proved that man must be naturally cheerful. What is more: man, by being man, by having consciousness, is already, compared with the donkey or a crab, a sick animal. Consciousness is a disease.

1.58 Among men of flesh and bone there have been typical examples of those who have the tragic sense of life. I think now of Marcus Aurelius, Saint Augustine, Pascal, Rousseau, *René*, *Obermann*, Thomson, Leopardi, Vigny, Lenau, Kleist, Amiel, Quental, Kierkegaard—men laden with wisdom rather than with knowledge.[7]

1.59 Some will think that any one of these men adopted his attitude—as if such attitudes could be adopted, the way one adopts a pose—to draw attention, or perhaps to ingratiate himself with the powerful, with his superiors perhaps; for there is nothing meaner than man when he sets about imputing motives to others. But *honni soit qui mal y pense* [shame on him who thinks ill of it]. And I say this so as not to set down here and now another proverb, a Spanish one, much more forceful, but one that perhaps borders on coarseness.

1.60 And there are also, I believe, peoples who have the tragic sense of life.

1.61 That is what we must now look at, beginning with this matter of health and illness.

7 *René* is the hero of Chateaubriand's novel of that name; Thomson is the Scottish poet James Thomson ("B.V."), author of *The City of Dreadful Night*, and Quental the Portuguese poet Antero de Quental.

II. The Starting Point

El punto de partida
Reason and feeling; knowledge in the service of life; the question behind every philosophy: what will become of me?

2.1 Perhaps the reflections I have been making may seem to someone to be of a somewhat morbid character. Morbid? But what is this thing, illness? What is health?

2.2 And perhaps illness itself is the essential condition of what we call progress, and progress itself an illness.

2.3 Who does not know the mythical tragedy of Paradise? Our first parents lived there in a state of perfect health and perfect innocence, and Yahweh allowed them to eat of the tree of life, and had created everything for them; but he forbade them to taste the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But they, tempted by the serpent—the model of prudence for Christ—tasted the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and became subject to all illnesses and to the one that is the crown and consummation of them all, death, and to labor and to progress. For progress, according to this legend, springs from original sin.[1] And so it was that the curiosity of the woman, of Eve—the one most bound to organic needs and the needs of preservation—was what brought about the fall, and with the fall the redemption; it was what set us on the road to God, to reaching him and being in him.

2.4 Do you want a version of our origin? Very well. According to it, what we come from is not, strictly speaking, man, but a

1 An allusion to Matthew 10:16: "be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

kind of gorilla, orangutan, chimpanzee or some such thing, hydrocephalic or something of the sort. An anthropoid ape once had a sick offspring—sick from the strictly animal or zoological point of view, sick, truly sick—and that illness turned out to be, besides a weakness, an advantage in the struggle for persistence. The one vertical mammal, man, ended up standing upright. The erect posture freed his hands from having to bear his weight in walking, and he could oppose the thumb to the other four fingers, and grasp objects and make himself tools; and the hands, as is well known, are great forgers of intelligence. And that same posture placed his lungs, trachea, larynx and mouth in a position to articulate language, and speech is intelligence. And that posture too, by making the head bear vertically on the trunk, allowed a greater weight and development of the head, where thought is seated. But since this required stronger and sturdier pelvic bones than in the species whose trunk and head rest on four limbs, woman, the author of the fall according to Genesis, had to give passage in childbirth to young with larger heads between harder bones. And Yahweh condemned her, for having sinned, to bring forth her children in pain.

2.5 The gorilla, the chimpanzee, the orangutan and their kin must regard man as a poor sick animal, one that even stores away its dead. What for?

2.6 And that first sickness, and all the sicknesses that follow it: are they not perhaps the chief element of progress? Arthritis, let us say, infects the blood. It puts ashes into it, the dregs of an imperfect organic combustion. But does this very impurity not perhaps make that blood more stimulating? Might not that impure blood, precisely because it is impure, provoke a keener cerebration? Chemically pure water is undrinkable. And is physiologically pure blood not perhaps also unfit for the brain of the vertical mammal who has to live by thought?

2.7 The history of medicine, moreover, teaches us that progress consists not so much in driving out of ourselves the germs of diseases, or rather the diseases themselves, as in accommod-

ating them to our organism, perhaps enriching it, in steeping them in our blood. What else do vaccination and all the serums mean? What else does immunization over the course of time mean?

2.8 If this thing called health were not an abstract category, something that strictly speaking is never found, we could say that a perfectly healthy man would no longer be a man but an irrational animal. Irrational for want of any sickness to kindle his reason. And it is a real sickness, and a tragic one, that gives us the appetite to know for the sheer pleasure of knowing, for the delight of tasting the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

2.9 Πάντες ἄνθρωποι τοῦ εἰδέναι ὀρέγονται φύσει, "all men by nature strive to know." So Aristotle begins his *Metaphysics*, and ever since it has been repeated thousands of times that curiosity, or the desire to know, is the origin of science. According to Genesis, it was this that led our first mother into sin.

KNOWING IN ORDER TO LIVE

Knowledge begins in the need to survive; curiosity and science grow out of that need.

2.10 But here we must distinguish between two things. One is the desire or appetite to know, apparently and at first sight for love of knowledge itself: the yearning to taste of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. The other is the need to know in order to live. The latter gives us direct and immediate knowledge, and in a certain sense, if it did not sound paradoxical, it might be called unconscious knowledge. Man shares it with the animals. What distinguishes us from them is reflective knowledge, the knowing of knowing itself.

2.11 Men have disputed much about the origin of knowledge, and they will go on disputing much, since the world was handed over to their disputes. But let us leave for later what knowledge may be in the deep heart of existence. This much is established and certain. In the apparent order of things, in the life of beings

endowed with some knowing or perceiving, however hazy, or that seem by their acts to be endowed with it, knowledge shows itself to us bound up with the need to live and to procure the sustenance for living. It is a consequence of that very essence of being which, according to Spinoza, consists in the striving to persevere indefinitely in its own being.[2] In terms whose concreteness perhaps verges on crudeness, one may say that the brain, as regards its function, depends on the stomach. Consider the beings at the very bottom of the scale of living things. Some of their acts show signs of being voluntary and seem bound up with a more or less clear consciousness. Those acts are directed toward procuring subsistence for the being that performs them.

2.12 Such is what we may call the historical origin of knowledge, whatever its origin may be in another respect. Beings that seem endowed with perception perceive in order to be able to live, and they perceive only insofar as they need to in order to live. This knowledge began by being useful and later ceased to be so. But perhaps, hoarded up, it has come to form a store far exceeding what life requires.

2.13 There is, then, first the need to know in order to live. From it develops that other kind, which we might call knowledge of luxury or of excess, and which may in its turn come to constitute a new need. Curiosity, the so-called innate desire to know, awakens and acts only once the need to know in order to live has been satisfied. In the present conditions of our race it may sometimes happen otherwise, and curiosity may get the better of need, and science of hunger. Even so, the primordial fact is that curiosity sprang from the need to know in order to live. And this is the dead weight and the crude matter that science carries within it. Science aspires to be a knowing for the sake of knowing, a knowing of the truth for truth's own sake, yet the needs of life force and twist it into putting itself at their service. And men, while they believe they are seeking truth for its own sake, are in fact seeking life in truth. The variations of science depend

2 "The world was handed over to their disputes" echoes Ecclesiastes 3:11 in the Vulgate: *mundum tradidit disputationi eorum*.

on the variations of human needs, and men of science usually work, willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or not, in the service of the powerful, or of the people who ask them to confirm their longings.

2.14 But is this really a dead weight and a crude matter in science, or is it not rather the innermost source of its redemption? The fact is that so it is, and it is great foolishness to try to rebel against the very condition of life.

2.15 Knowledge is at the service of the need to live, and primarily at the service of the instinct of personal preservation. And this need and this instinct have created in man the organs of knowledge, giving them the reach they have. Man sees, hears, touches, tastes and smells what he needs to see, hear, touch, taste and smell in order to preserve his life. The impairment or loss of any one of these senses increases the dangers that surround his life. And if it does not increase them so much in the state of society in which we live, that is because some people see, hear, touch, taste or smell for others. A blind man on his own, without a guide, could not live long. Society is another sense, the true common sense.

2.16 Man, then, in his state as an isolated individual, sees, hears, touches, tastes and smells no more than he needs in order to live and preserve himself. If he does not perceive colors below red or above violet, it is perhaps because the others are enough for him to preserve himself. And the senses themselves are apparatuses of simplification. They eliminate from objective reality everything we do not need to know in order to use objects for the preservation of life. In complete darkness, the animal that does not perish ends up going blind. Parasites live in the entrails of other animals, feeding on the nutritive juices those others have already prepared. Since they need neither to see nor to hear, they neither see nor hear. Instead, turned into a kind of sac, they stay attached to the being on which they live. For these parasites neither the visual world nor the world of sound can exist. It is enough that the creatures who keep them in their entrails see and hear.

2.17 Knowledge, then, is primarily at the service of the instinct of preservation, which is rather, as we said with Spinoza, its very essence. And so it may be said that it is the instinct of preservation that makes for us the reality and truth of the perceptible world. From the unfathomable and unlimited field of the possible, it is this instinct that draws out and sets apart what exists for us. There exists for us, in fact, everything that in one way or another we need to know in order that we ourselves may exist. Objective existence, in our knowing, depends on our own personal existence. And no one can deny that there may exist, and perhaps do exist, aspects of reality that are unknown to us, at least today, and perhaps unknowable, because they are in no way necessary to us for preserving our own present existence.

REASON AS A SOCIAL PRODUCT

Reason springs from language and society; hunger makes the sensible world and love the ideal one.

2.18 But man neither lives alone nor is an isolated individual. He is a member of society, and there is no little truth in the saying that the individual, like the atom, is an abstraction. Yes: the atom outside the universe is as much an abstraction as the universe apart from the atoms. And if the individual is sustained by the instinct of preservation, society owes its being and its maintenance to the individual's instinct of perpetuation. And from this instinct, or rather from society, reason springs.

2.19 Reason, what we call reason, reflex and reflective knowledge, the knowledge that distinguishes man, is a social product.

2.20 It owes its origin perhaps to language. We think articulately, that is, reflectively, thanks to articulate language, and this language sprang from the need to convey our thought to our neighbors. To think is to talk with oneself, and each of us talks with himself because we have had to talk with one another. In ordinary life it often happens that one finds an idea one was looking for, manages to give it form, that is, to obtain it, drawing it out of the nebula of obscure perceptions that it stands for. One

does so thanks to the efforts one makes to present it to others. Thought is inner language, and inner language springs from outer language. From which it follows that reason is social and common. A fact pregnant with consequences, as we shall see.

2.21 There is a reality which, insofar as it is known, is the work of the instinct of personal preservation and of the senses that serve it. If so, must there not be another reality, no less real than that one? Insofar as it is known, it would be the work of the instinct of perpetuation, the instinct of the species, and would be at its service. The instinct of preservation, hunger, is the foundation of the human individual. The instinct of perpetuation, love, in its most rudimentary and physiological form, is the foundation of human society. And just as man knows what he needs to know in order to preserve himself, so society, or man as a social being, knows what it needs to know in order to perpetuate itself in society.

2.22 There is one world, the world of the senses, that is the child of hunger, and there is another world, the ideal, that is the child of love. There are senses at the service of knowing the world of the senses. In the same way there are senses at the service of knowing the ideal world, though today they are for the most part asleep, because social consciousness is barely dawning. And why should we deny objective reality to the creations of love, the instinct of perpetuation, when we grant it to those of hunger, the instinct of preservation? Suppose it is said that these other creations are only creations of our fantasy, without objective value. Can it not equally be said of the former that they are only creations of our senses? Who is to say there is not an invisible and intangible world, perceived by the inner sense that lives at the service of the instinct of perpetuation?

2.23 Human society, as a society, has senses that the individual would lack but for it. Just so, the individual, man, who is in turn a kind of society, has senses that the cells composing him lack. The blind cells of hearing, in their dim consciousness, must know nothing of the existence of the visible world. If they were told of it, they would perhaps judge it an arbitrary creation of

the deaf cells of sight. And these in their turn must judge the world of sound that the others create to be an illusion.

2.24 We mentioned earlier the parasites that live in the entrails of higher animals, on the nutritive juices these prepare. They need neither to see nor to hear, and so for them there exists no visible world and no world of sound. And if they had some sort of consciousness and realized that the creature at whose expense they live believes in another world, they would perhaps judge it the ravings of imagination. And so there are social parasites, as Mr. Balfour very rightly observes[3]. They receive the motives of their moral conduct from the society in which they live, yet they deny that belief in God and in another life is needed as a foundation for good conduct and a bearable life. They can do so because society has already prepared for them the spiritual juices on which they live.[4] An individual on his own can bear life and live it well, even heroically, without believing in any way either in the immortality of the soul or in God. But the fact is that he lives the life of a spiritual parasite. What we call the sense of honor is, even in non-Christians, a Christian product. And I say more. If faith in God is found in a man together with a life of purity and moral elevation, it is not so much that believing in God makes him good as that being good, thanks to God, makes him believe in God. Goodness is the best source of spiritual clear-sightedness.

2.25 Nor am I unaware that I may be told that all this is metaphor: hunger creating the world of the senses and love the ideal world, the blind cells of hearing and the deaf cells of sight, the spiritual parasites, and so on. So it is, and I claim to do nothing else than reason in metaphors. The fact is that this social sense, child of love, father of language and of reason and of the ideal world that springs from it, is at bottom nothing other than what we call fantasy or imagination. From fantasy springs reason.

3 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. *The Foundations of Belief, being notes introductory to the study of theology* by the Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour.

4 Arthur James Balfour (1848–1930), British Conservative statesman and philosopher, prime minister from 1902 to 1905.

And if fantasy is taken to be a faculty that forges images capriciously, I shall ask what caprice is. In any case, the senses and reason err too.

2.26 And we shall see that it is this inner social faculty, the imagination that personalizes everything, that reveals to us the immortality of the soul and God, once it is put at the service of the instinct of perpetuation. God is thus a social product.

2.27 But that is for later.

WHY PHILOSOPHIZE?

Every philosophy has a practical purpose, and knowledge for its own sake is a contradiction.

2.28 And now: why does one philosophize? That is, why does one investigate the first principles and the final ends of things? Why does one seek disinterested truth? For that business of all men tending by nature to know is all very well. But what for?

2.29 Philosophers seek a theoretical or ideal starting point for their human work, the work of philosophizing. But they usually neglect to seek its practical and real starting point, its purpose. What is the purpose in doing philosophy, in thinking it out and then setting it forth to one's fellows? What does the philosopher seek in it and by means of it? Truth for truth's own sake? Truth, so as to subject our conduct to it and to determine by it our spiritual attitude toward life and the universe?

2.30 Philosophy is a human product of each philosopher, and each philosopher is a man of flesh and bone who addresses other men of flesh and bone like himself. And let him do what he will, he philosophizes not with reason alone but with the will, with feeling, with his flesh and his bones, with his whole soul and his whole body. It is man who philosophizes.

2.31 And I do not want to use "I" here and say that when I philosophize it is I who philosophize and not man. This concrete, circumscribed I, of flesh and bone, suffers from toothache and does not find life bearable if death is the annihilation of personal consciousness. I would not want it confused with that

other I, the smuggled-in I, the I with a capital letter, the theoretical I that Fichte introduced into philosophy. Nor would I want it confused with Max Stirner's Unique One, which is theoretical too. It is better to say "we." But we who are circumscribed in space.[5]

2.32 To know for the sake of knowing! Truth for truth's sake! That is inhuman. And if we say that theoretical philosophy is directed toward practice, truth toward the good, science toward morality, I shall ask: and the good, what is it for? Is it perhaps an end in itself? Nothing is good except what contributes to the preservation, perpetuation and enrichment of consciousness. The good is directed toward man, toward the maintenance and perfection of human society, which is made up of men. And this, what is it for? "Act in such a way that your action may serve as a norm for all men," Kant tells us. Very well, and what for? There has to be a what-for.

2.33 At the starting point of every philosophy, the true starting point, the practical and not the theoretical one, there is a what-for. The philosopher philosophizes for something more than philosophizing. *Primum vivere, deinde philosophari* [First live, then philosophize], says the old Latin adage. The philosopher is a man before he is a philosopher, so he needs to live in order to be able to philosophize, and in fact he philosophizes in order to live. And he usually philosophizes either to resign himself to life, or to seek some purpose in it, or to amuse himself and forget his sorrows, or as sport and play. A good example of the last is Socrates, that terrible Athenian ironist. Xenophon tells us in his *Memorabilia* that Socrates explained to Theodote the courtesan the arts she should use to draw lovers to her house. He explained them so well that she asked the philosopher to be her fellow huntsman, συνθηρατής: her procurer, in a word. And the fact is that philosophy not infrequently turns into an art of pro-

5 Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814) made the absolute I (*Ich*) the ground of his philosophy. Max Stirner's *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (1844) centers on the individual as "the Unique One."

curing, even if a spiritual one. And at other times into an opium to lull sorrows.[6]

2.34 I take up at random a book of metaphysics, the one nearest to hand, *Time and Space: A Metaphysical Essay*, by Shadworth H. Hodgson. I open it, and in the fifth paragraph of the first chapter of its first part I read: "Metaphysics is not, properly speaking, a science but a philosophy; that is, a science whose end is in itself, in the gratification and education of the minds that cultivate it, not in any external purpose, such as that of founding an art conducive to the welfare of life." Let us examine this. We shall see first that metaphysics is not, speaking properly—*properly speaking*—a science, "that is," *that is*, that it is a science whose end, et cetera.[7] And this science, which is not properly a science, has its end in itself, in the gratification and education of the minds that cultivate it. So which is it? Does it have its end in itself, or is its end to gratify and educate the minds that cultivate it? It is either the one or the other! Then Hodgson adds that the end of metaphysics is not any external purpose, such as that of founding an art conducive to the welfare of life. But is not the gratification of the mind of whoever cultivates philosophy part of the welfare of his life? Let the reader look closely at that passage of the English metaphysician and tell me whether it is not a tissue of contradictions.

2.35 This is inevitable when one tries to pin down *humanly* this notion of a science, of a knowing, whose end is in itself. It is the notion of knowing for knowing's sake, of attaining truth for truth's own sake. Science exists only in personal consciousness, and thanks to it. Astronomy and mathematics have no reality other than the one they have as knowledge in the minds of those who learn and cultivate them. Suppose that one day all personal consciousness on earth is to come to an end. Suppose that one day it is to return to nothingness, that is, to the absolute unconsciousness from which the human spirit sprang, and no spirit

6 Xenophon, *Memorabilia* III.11.

7 Shadworth Hollway Hodgson (1832–1912), English philosopher; the book appeared in 1865.

will remain to make use of all our accumulated science. What, then, is that science for? For we must not lose sight of the fact that the problem of the personal immortality of the soul implies the future of the whole human species.

2.36 The Englishman falls into that series of contradictions when he tries to explain to us this business of a science whose end is in itself. It is easily understood in an Englishman who is above all a man. Perhaps a German specialist would explain better this business of a science whose end is in itself, and of knowing for knowing's sake. I mean a philosopher who has made philosophy his specialty and has buried his humanity in it, after first killing it.

2.37 Take the man Spinoza, that Portuguese Jew exiled in Holland. Read his *Ethics* for what it is, a despairing elegiac poem, and tell me whether you do not hear in it the mournful echo of the prophetic psalms, beneath the bare and seemingly serene propositions set out *more geometrico* [in the geometrical manner]. That is not the philosophy of resignation but the philosophy of despair. He wrote that the free man thinks of everything but death, and that his wisdom is a meditation not on death but on life itself: *homo liber de nulla re minus quam de morte cogitat, et eius sapientia non mortis, sed vitae meditatio est* (*Ethics*, part IV, prop. LXVII). When he wrote this, he felt himself a slave, as we all feel ourselves slaves, and he was thinking of death, and he wrote it to free himself, though in vain, from that thought. Nor, surely, did he feel what he was writing when he wrote proposition XLII of part V, that "happiness is not the reward of virtue but virtue itself." For this is usually why men philosophize: to convince themselves, without succeeding. And this wanting to convince oneself, that is, this wanting to do violence to one's own human nature, is usually the true inner starting point of not a few philosophies.

WHERE AM I GOING?

Behind the questions of origin and destiny lies the wish not to die, with three possible answers.

2.38 Where do I come from, and where does the world come from in which I live and on which I live? Where am I going, and where is everything around me going? What does this mean? Such are the questions of man as soon as he frees himself from the brutalizing necessity of having to sustain himself materially. And if we look closely, we shall see that beneath these questions lies not so much the desire to know a why as the desire to know the what-for. It is not the cause we want to know, but the purpose. Well known is the definition of philosophy that Cicero gave, calling it "the science of things divine and human, and of the causes in which they are contained," *rerum divinarum et humanarum, causarumque quibus hae res continentur*. But in reality those causes are, for us, ends. And the Supreme Cause, God, what is he but the Supreme End? The why interests us only in view of the what-for. We want to know where we come from only so as to find out better where we are going.

2.39 This Ciceronian definition, which is the Stoic one, is also found in that formidable intellectualist Clement of Alexandria, canonized by the Catholic Church, who sets it out in chapter V of the first of his *Stromata*. But this same Christian philosopher (Christian?), in chapter[8] XXII of his fourth *stroma*, tells us that knowledge, gnosis, should be enough for the gnostic, that is, for the intellectual. And he adds: "And I would dare to say that whoever pursues knowledge for the sake of the divine science itself will not choose it out of a wish to be saved. Knowing tends, through exercise, toward knowing always. But knowing always, made the essence of the knower by continual mingling and made eternal contemplation, remains a living substance. And suppose someone were to ask the intellectual which he would

8 Clement of Alexandria (c. AD 150–c. 215), Greek Church Father; his *Stromata* ("Miscellanies") sought to reconcile Greek philosophy with Christian faith.

prefer, the knowledge of God or eternal salvation, and suppose these things could be had separately, though they are rather one and the same. He would choose the knowledge of God without hesitating." May he, may God himself, whom we long to enjoy and possess eternally, deliver us from this Clementine gnosticism or intellectualism!

2.40 Why do I want to know where I come from and where I am going, where what surrounds me comes from and where it is going, and what all this means? Because I do not want to die altogether, and I want to know whether I am to die for good or not. And if I do not die, what will become of me? And if I die, then nothing makes sense any more. And there are three solutions. *a)* Either I know that I die altogether, and then there is irremediable despair. Or *b)* I know that I do not die altogether, and then there is resignation. Or *c)* I cannot know either the one or the other, and then there is resignation in despair, or despair in resignation. That means a despairing resignation, or a resigned despair, and struggle. "The best thing," some reader will say, "is to leave alone what cannot be known." Is that possible? In his most beautiful poem *The Ancient Sage*, Tennyson said: "You cannot prove the ineffable (*The Nameless*), O my son, nor can you prove the world in which you move; you cannot prove that you are body alone, nor can you prove that you are spirit alone, nor that you are both in one; you cannot prove that you are immortal, nor yet that you are mortal; yes, my son, you cannot prove that I, who speak with you, am not you speaking with yourself, for nothing worthy of being proved can be proved or disproved; therefore be prudent, cling always to the sunnier side of doubt, and climb to Faith beyond the forms of Faith!" Yes, perhaps, as the sage says, nothing worthy of being proved can be proved or disproved. *for nothing worthy proving can be proven, / nor yet disproven*; but can we restrain that instinct which leads man to want to know, and above all to want to know whatever may lead to living, and to living forever? To living forever, not to knowing forever like the Alexandrian gnostic. For living is one thing and knowing another. As we shall see, there is

perhaps such an opposition between them that we may say that everything vital is anti-rational, not merely irrational, and everything rational is anti-vital. And this is the basis of the tragic sense of life.

DESCARTES AND THE COGITO

Descartes left the real man out of his philosophy; the truth is "I am, therefore I think."

2.41 What is wrong with Descartes's *Discourse on Method* is not the preliminary methodical doubt. It is not that he began by wanting to doubt everything, which is no more than a mere device. It is that he wanted to begin by leaving himself out, leaving out Descartes, the real man of flesh and bone, the man who does not want to die, so as to be a mere thinker, that is, an abstraction. But the real man came back and got into his philosophy.

2.42 *"Le bon sens est la chose du monde la mieux partagée"* [Good sense is the most evenly shared thing in the world]. So the *Discourse on Method* begins, and that good sense saved him. And he goes on talking about himself, about the man Descartes. He tells us, among other things, that he greatly esteemed eloquence and was in love with poetry, and that he delighted above all in mathematics because of the certainty and evidence of its reasonings. He revered our theology and aspired, as much as anyone else, to win heaven: *et je prétendais autant qu'aucun autre à gagner le ciel*. And it was this aspiration that prevented him from drawing all the consequences of methodical doubt. For the rest, I believe it a very laudable aspiration, and above all a very natural one. The man Descartes aspired, as much as anyone else, to win heaven; "but having learned, as a very certain thing, that the way to it is no less open to the most ignorant than to the most learned, and that the revealed truths which lead there are above our understanding, I would not have dared to submit them to the weakness of my reasonings, and I thought that to undertake their examination and succeed in it one needed some extraordinary assistance from heaven and to be more than a man." And here is

the man. Here is the man who did not feel himself, thank God, in any condition that obliged him to make a trade, a *métier*, of science for the relief of his fortune. Nor did he make it his profession to despise glory, like a cynic. And then he tells us how he had to stop in Germany, and how, shut up in a stove-heated room, a *poêle*, he began to philosophize his method. In Germany, but shut up in a stove-heated room! And so it is: a stove-room discourse, and a German stove-room at that, even though the philosopher shut up in it was a Frenchman who meant to win heaven.

2.43 And he arrives at the *cogito ergo sum*, which Saint Augustine had already anticipated. But the *ego* implicit in this enthymeme, *ego cogito, ergo ego sum*, is an *ego*, an unreal I, that is, an ideal one, and its *sum*, its existence, is something unreal too. "I think, therefore I am" can only mean "I think, therefore I am a thinking being." The being of that "I am," derived from "I think," is nothing more than a knowing. That being is knowledge, but not life. And what is primary is not that I think but that I live, for those who do not think live too, even if that living is not true living. What contradictions, my God, when we try to marry life and reason!

2.44 The truth is *sum, ergo cogito*, I am, therefore I think, although not everything that is thinks. Is not the consciousness of thinking, first of all, consciousness of being? Is a pure thought possible, without consciousness of self, without personality? Can there be pure knowledge, without feeling, without the kind of materiality that feeling lends it? Is not thought felt? And does one not feel oneself at the same time as one knows oneself and wills oneself? Could not the man of the stove-room have said, "I feel, therefore I am"? Or "I will, therefore I am"? And to feel oneself: is it not to feel oneself imperishable? To will oneself: is it not to will oneself eternal, that is, not to want to die? The sad Jew of Amsterdam spoke of the essence of the thing, the striving it makes to persevere indefinitely in its being: self-love, the yearning for immortality. Might this not be the first and fundamental condition of all reflective or human knowledge? And

might it not therefore be the true basis, the true starting point of all philosophy, even though philosophers, perverted by intellectualism, do not recognize it?

2.45 It was, moreover, the *cogito* that introduced a distinction which, though fruitful in truths, has also been fruitful in confusions: the distinction between object, *cogito*, and subject, *sum*. There is hardly a distinction that does not also serve to confuse. But we shall come back to this.

2.46 Let us rest for now in this strong suspicion. The longing not to die, the hunger for personal immortality, the striving with which we tend to persist indefinitely in our own being, which is our very essence according to the tragic Jew: that is the affective basis of all knowing. It is the inner personal starting point of all human philosophy, forged by a man and for men. And we shall see how the solution to that inner affective problem colors all the rest of philosophy, even when the solution is the despairing renunciation of solving it. Even beneath the so-called problem of knowledge there is nothing but this human affect, just as beneath the inquiry into the why of the cause there is nothing but the search for the what-for, for the purpose. All the rest is either deceiving oneself or wanting to deceive others. And wanting to deceive others in order to deceive oneself.

2.47 And this personal and affective starting point of all philosophy and all religion is the tragic sense of life. Let us look at it.

III. The Hunger for Immortality

El hambre de inmortalidad
The longing to be always, to be everything; fame, vanity and the fear of annihilation.

3.1 Let us pause over this immortal longing for immortality, even though the gnostics, or intellectuals, may say that what follows is rhetoric and not philosophy. The divine Plato, too, discoursing in his *Phaedo* on the immortality of the soul, said that it is fitting to make up legends about it, μυθολογεῖν.

3.2 Let us first recall once more, and it will not be the last time, what Spinoza says. Each being strives to persevere in its being, and this striving is its very actual essence and involves indefinite time. Finally, the mind, whether in its clear and distinct ideas or in its confused ones, tends to persevere in its being for an indefinite duration, and is aware of this effort. (*Ethics*, part III, propositions VI–IX.)

3.3 It is impossible for us, in fact, to conceive ourselves as not existing, and no effort is enough for consciousness to grasp absolute unconsciousness, its own annihilation. Try, reader, to picture to yourself, wide awake, what the state of your soul is in deep sleep. Try to fill your consciousness with the representation of non-consciousness, and you will see. The attempt to understand it causes the most anguished vertigo. We cannot conceive ourselves as not existing.

3.4 The visible universe, the one that is the child of the instinct of preservation, is too narrow for me. It is like a cage too small for me, and my soul beats against its bars as it flutters; I lack air to breathe in it. More, more, and ever more! I want to be myself,

and, without ceasing to be myself, to be the others as well. I want to take into myself the totality of things visible and invisible, to extend myself into the boundlessness of space and prolong myself into the endlessness of time. If I am not everything, and forever, it is as though I were not. At the very least I want to be wholly myself, and to be so forever and ever. And to be wholly myself is to be all the others. All or nothing!

3.5 All or nothing! And what other meaning can Shakespeare's *To be or not to be* have? It was the same poet who, in his *Coriolanus* (V, 4), had it said of Marcius that he needed only eternity to be a god: *he wants nothing of a god but eternity*. Eternity! Eternity! That is the longing. The thirst for eternity is what is called love among men, and whoever loves another wants to make himself eternal in that other. What is not eternal is not real either.

3.6 This tremendous vision of the flowing waves of life has wrung cries from the depths of the soul from the poets of every age. It runs from Pindar's "dream of a shadow," σκιᾶς ὄναρ, to Calderón's "life is a dream" and Shakespeare's "we are made of the stuff of dreams." This last saying is even more tragic than the Castilian's. The Castilian declares only our life to be a dream, and not us who dream it, but the Englishman makes us too a dream, a dream that dreams.[1]

3.7 The vanity of the world and how it passes, and love: these are the two radical, deep-rooted notes of true poetry. And they are two notes of which one cannot sound without the other resounding at the same time. The sense of the vanity of the passing world drives us into love. Love is the only thing in which the vain and transitory is overcome, the only thing that fills life full and makes it eternal. In appearance, at least, for in reality... And love, above all when it struggles against destiny, plunges us into the sense of the vanity of this world of appearances. It opens to us a glimpse of another world in which destiny is overcome and freedom is the law.

1 Pindar, *Pythian* 8; Calderón's play *La vida es sueño* (*Life Is a Dream*, 1635); Shakespeare, *The Tempest* IV.1.

3.8 Everything passes! Such is the refrain of those who have drunk from the fountain of life, mouth to the spout, of those who have tasted of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

3.9 To be, to be forever, to be without end! Thirst to be, thirst to be more! Hunger for God! Thirst for a love that makes eternal and is eternal! To be forever! To be God!

3.10 "You shall be as gods!" So Genesis (3:5) tells us the serpent said to the first pair of lovers. "If in this life alone we are to hope in Christ, we are the most pitiable of men," wrote the Apostle (1 Cor. 15:19). And every religion begins, historically, in the cult of the dead, that is, of immortality.

3.11 The tragic Portuguese Jew of Amsterdam wrote that the free man thinks of nothing less than of death. But that free man is a dead man, freed from the mainspring of life, lacking love, a slave to his freedom. This thought that I must die, and the enigma of what will come after, is the very beating of my consciousness. When I contemplate the serene green countryside, or a pair of clear eyes through which a soul akin to mine looks out, my consciousness swells. I feel the diastole of the soul, I soak myself in the life around me, and I believe in my future. But at once the voice of mystery whispers to me, "You will cease to be!" The Angel of Death brushes me with his wing, and the systole of the soul floods my spiritual entrails with the blood of divinity.

3.12 Like Pascal, I do not understand the man who claims not to care a straw about this matter. That negligence in a thing "where it is a question of themselves, of their eternity, of their all, irritates me more than it moves me; it astonishes and appalls me." Whoever feels that way "is for me," as for Pascal, whose words these are, "a monster."[2]

2 From Pascal's *Pensées*, on those who are indifferent to the question of immortality.

THE CULT OF THE DEAD

Religion begins with keeping the dead, and facing our mortality in the end fortifies us.

3.13 It has been said a thousand times and in a thousand tones that it is the cult of dead ancestors that, as a rule, sets primitive religions going. Strictly speaking, one may say that what most sets man apart from the other animals is that he keeps his dead, in one way or another, instead of abandoning them to the neglect of his mother earth, the all-bearing. He is an animal that keeps its dead. And what does he keep them from, in this way? What is the poor creature protecting them from? The poor consciousness flees from its own annihilation. As soon as an animal spirit tears itself loose from the world as from a placenta, sees itself facing the world and knows itself to be distinct from it, it must want to have another life than that of the world itself. And so the earth would be in danger of turning into a vast cemetery, before the dead themselves die a second time.

3.14 When nothing was built for the living but huts of earth or straw cabins, which the weather has destroyed, burial mounds were raised for the dead, and stone was used for tombs before it was used for dwellings. It is the houses of the dead, not those of the living, that have conquered the centuries by their strength; not the dwellings of passage, but those of abiding.

3.15 This cult, not of death but of immortality, begins and preserves religions. In the delirium of destruction, Robespierre has the Convention declare the existence of the Supreme Being and "the consoling principle of the immortality of the soul." The reason is that the Incorruptible was terrified at the idea of having to be corrupted one day.[3]

3.16 Sickness? Perhaps; but whoever takes no care over sickness neglects health, and man is an essentially and substantially sick animal. Sickness? Perhaps it is, like life itself, to which it is

3 Robespierre, nicknamed "the Incorruptible," had the National Convention decree the cult of the Supreme Being in May 1794, at the height of the Terror.

bound fast, and the only possible health is death; but that sickness is the wellspring of all mighty health. From the depths of this anguish, from the abyss of the sense of our mortality, one comes out into the light of another heaven, as Dante came out of the depths of hell to see the stars again: *e quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle.*[4]

3.17 Although this meditation on our mortality may at first fill us with anguish, in the end it fortifies us. Withdraw into yourself, reader, and imagine yourself slowly coming undone. The light goes out for you; things fall mute and give you no sound, wrapping you in silence; the objects you hold on to melt from between your hands; the ground slips from under your feet; your memories fade as in a swoon; everything goes dissolving into nothing, and you dissolve too; and not even the consciousness of nothingness remains to you, not even as the phantom handhold of a shadow.

3.18 I have heard tell of a poor reaper who died in a hospital bed. When the priest came to anoint his hands in extreme unction, he refused to open his right hand, in which he clutched a few dirty coins. He did not realize that very soon his hand would no longer be his, nor he his own. And so we close and clench not only our hand but our heart, trying to clutch the world in it.

3.19 A friend confessed to me that, foreseeing, in the full vigor of physical health, the nearness of a violent death, he thought of concentrating his life, living it in the few days he reckoned he had left, so as to write a book. Vanity of vanities!

3.20 When the body that sustains me dies—the body I call mine to distinguish it from myself, who am I—suppose my consciousness returns to the absolute unconsciousness from which it sprang, and the same befalls the consciousness of all my brothers in humanity. Then our toil-worn human race is nothing but an ill-fated procession of phantoms going from nothingness to nothingness, and humanitarianism is the most inhuman thing known.

4 The last line of Dante's *Inferno* (XXXIV, 139). "Anguish" renders *congoja*, one of Unamuno's key words: the anguished dread of annihilation.

3.21 And the remedy is not that of the popular song that says:

Every time that I consider
that I shall have to die,
I spread my cloak upon the ground
and can never sleep enough.

3.22 No! The remedy is to consider it face to face, with one's gaze fixed on the gaze of the Sphinx, for that is how the spell of its evil eye is broken.

3.23 If we all die utterly, what is it all for? What for? It is the Sphinx's "What for?", the "What for?" that gnaws at the marrow of our soul. It is the father of anguish, which gives us the love of hope.

3.24 Among the poetic laments of poor Cowper there are some lines written under the weight of delirium. In them, believing himself the target of divine vengeance, he exclaims that hell might afford a shelter to his miseries. *Hell might afford my miseries a shelter.*[5]

3.25 This is the Puritan feeling, the preoccupation with sin and predestination. But read these other, far more terrible words of Sénancour, expressive of Catholic despair, not Protestant, when he has his *Obermann* say (letter XC): "L'homme est périssable. Il se peut; mais périssons en résistant, et, si le néant nous est réservé, ne faisons pas que ce soit une justice" [Man is perishable. That may be; but let us perish resisting, and if nothingness is what awaits us, let us not make it a justice]. And I must confess, indeed, however painful the confession, that never, in the days of the naive faith of my youth, did descriptions of the tortures of hell make me tremble, however gruesome they were. I always felt nothingness to be far more terrifying than hell. Whoever suffers lives, and whoever lives suffering loves and hopes, even if over the gate of his dwelling they set the "Abandon all hope!" It is better to live in suffering than to cease to be in peace. At bottom, the truth was that I could not believe in that atrocity

5 William Cowper (1731–1800), English poet who suffered bouts of religious melancholy and the conviction that he was damned.

of a hell, of an eternity of punishment, and I saw no truer hell than nothingness and the prospect of it. And I still believe that if we all believed in our salvation from nothingness, we would all be better.

3.26 What is this relish for living, *la joie de vivre*, that they talk to us about nowadays? Hunger for God, thirst for eternity, for survival, will always stifle in us that poor enjoyment of life that passes and does not remain. It is the unbridled love of life, the love that wants it unending, that most often drives us to the yearning for death. "Once I am annihilated, if indeed I die utterly," we tell ourselves, "the world is over for me, it is finished. And why should it not be finished as soon as possible, so that no new consciousnesses come to suffer the grievous deception of a passing and merely apparent existence? If, once the illusion of living is shattered, living for living's sake, or for others who must also die, does not fill our soul, why live? Death is our remedy." And so it is that people chant dirges to endless rest out of fear of it, and call death the liberator.

3.27 Already the poet of suffering, of annihilation—that Leopardi who, having lost the last illusion, that of believing himself eternal, *Perì l'inganno estremo / ch'eterno io mi credei*, spoke to his heart of *l'infinita vanità del tutto* [the infinite vanity of everything]—saw the close kinship between love and death. He saw how, when "a loving affection is born in the depths of the heart, languid and weary, together with it one feels in the breast a desire to die."[6] In most of those who take their own lives, it is love that moves their arm. It is the supreme yearning for life, for more life, to prolong and perpetuate life, that leads them to death, once they are persuaded of the vanity of their yearning.

6 Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837), Italian poet; the lines come from "A se stesso" (To Himself) and "Amore e Morte" (Love and Death).

"I DO NOT WANT TO DIE"

Unamuno rejects every reasoning against immortality and insists on the survival of his own self.

3.28 The problem is tragic, and eternal, and the more we try to flee from it, the more we run into it. It was the serene—serene?—Plato who, twenty-four centuries ago, in his dialogue on the immortality of the soul, let slip from his own soul that profound saying. He was speaking of how doubtful our dream of being immortal is, and of the *risk* that it may not be vain: beautiful is the risk!, καλὸς γὰρ ὁ κίνδυνος; beautiful is the chance we may run that our soul may never die. This saying is the seed of Pascal's famous argument of the wager.[7]

3.29 Faced with this risk, and to do away with it, they give me reasonings to prove how absurd belief in the immortality of the soul is. But those reasonings make no dent in me, for they are reasons and nothing more than reasons, and it is not on reasons that the heart feeds. I do not want to die—no, I do not want to, and I do not want to want to; I want to live forever, forever, forever, and to live as myself, this poor self that I am and feel myself to be here and now. That is why the problem of the duration of my soul, of my very own soul, tortures me.

3.30 I am the center of my universe, the center of the universe, and in my supreme distress I cry out with Michelet: "My self! They are snatching away my self!" What does it profit a man to gain the whole world if he loses his soul? (Matthew 16:26.) Egoism, you say? There is nothing more universal than the individual, for what belongs to each belongs to all. Each man is worth more than all humanity, and there is no use in sacrificing each to all, except insofar as all sacrifice themselves to each. What you call egoism is the principle of psychic gravity, the necessary postulate. "Love your neighbor as yourself!" we were told, presupposing that each one loves himself; and we were not

7 Plato, *Phaedo* 114d. Pascal's wager argues that it is reasonable to stake one's life on God's existence.

told, "Love yourself!" And yet we do not know how to love ourselves.

3.31 Take away one's own persistence, and ponder what they tell you. Sacrifice yourself for your children! And you sacrifice yourself for them because they are yours, part and prolongation of you. They in turn will sacrifice themselves for theirs, and these for theirs, and so it will go on without end: a sterile sacrifice from which nobody benefits. I came into the world to make my self, and what will become of all our selves? Live for Truth, Goodness, Beauty! We shall see the supreme vanity and the supreme insincerity of this hypocritical position.

3.32 "That art thou!" they tell me, with the Upanishads. And I tell them: yes, I am that, when that is *I*, and everything is mine, and the totality of things is mine. And as mine I love it. I love my neighbor because he lives in me and as part of my consciousness; because he is like me, he is mine.[8]

3.33 Oh, if only one could prolong this sweet moment, and fall asleep in it, and in it make oneself eternal! Here and now, in this soft and diffuse light, in this pool of stillness, when the storm of the heart is calmed and the echoes of the world do not reach me! Insatiable desire sleeps and does not even dream; habit, holy habit, reigns in my eternity; disillusionments have died with memories, and fears with hopes!

3.34 And they come trying to deceive us with a deception of deceptions. They tell us that nothing is lost, that everything is transformed, shifts and changes; that not the least scrap of matter is annihilated, nor does the least little push of force vanish entirely. And there are those who claim to console us with this! Poor consolation! I am not troubled about my matter or my force, for they are not mine so long as I am not myself mine—that is, eternal. No, what I long for is not to be drowned in the great All, in infinite and eternal Matter or Force, or in God. It is not to be possessed by God, but to possess him, to make myself God without ceasing to be the I who am now telling you this.

8 "That art thou" (*tat tvam asi*): the formula of the Chandogya Upanishad identifying the individual self with the absolute.

Monist trickery is no use to us; we want the body of immortality, not its shadow!

3.35 Materialism? Materialism, you say? No doubt; but the point is that our spirit too is some kind of matter, or it is nothing. I tremble at the idea of having to tear myself away from my flesh; I tremble still more at the idea of having to tear myself away from everything perceptible and material, from all substance. Yes, perhaps this deserves the name of materialism. And if I cling to God with all my faculties and all my senses, it is so that he may carry me in his arms beyond death, looking into my eyes with his heaven when mine are about to go out forever. That I am deceiving myself? Do not talk to me of deception, and let me live!

3.36 They also call this pride—"stinking pride," Leopardi called it—and they ask us who we are, vile earthworms, to aspire to immortality. By what grace? What for? By what right? "By what grace?" you ask—and by what grace do we live? "What for?"—and what are we for? "By what right?"—and by what right do we exist? Existing is as gratuitous as going on existing forever. Let us not speak of grace, or of right, or of the what-for of our longing, which is an end in itself, for we shall lose our reason in a whirlpool of absurdities. I claim no right or merit whatsoever; it is only a necessity; I need it in order to live.

3.37 And who are you? you ask me. And with Obermann I answer you: for the universe, nothing; for myself, everything! Pride? Is it pride to want to be immortal? Poor men! It is a tragic fate, no doubt, to have to found the affirmation of immortality on the shifting and crumbling stone of the desire for it. But it is a great blunder to condemn the longing because one believes it proved, without proving it, that it cannot be attained. That I am dreaming...? Let me dream; if that dream is my life, do not wake me from it. I believe in the immortal origin of this longing for immortality, which is the very substance of my soul. But do I really believe in it...? And what do you want to be immortal for? you ask me. What for? Frankly, I do not understand the question,

because it is asking for the reason of the reason, the end of the end, the beginning of the beginning.

3.38 But of these things one cannot speak.

PAUL ON THE AREOPAGUS

The tolerant Athenian intellectuals listen to Paul until he speaks of the resurrection of the dead.

3.39 The book of the Acts of the Apostles tells how, wherever Paul went, the zealous Jews stirred one another up against him to persecute him. They stoned him in Iconium and in Lystra, cities of Lycaonia, in spite of the wonders he worked in the latter; they scourged him in Philippi in Macedonia; and his own kinsmen persecuted him in Thessalonica and in Berea. But he came to Athens, the noble city of the intellectuals, over which the lofty soul of Plato kept watch—Plato of the beauty of the risk of being immortal. And there Paul disputed with Epicureans and Stoics, who said of him either, What does this babbler *(σπερμολόγος)* mean? or else, He seems to be a preacher of new gods! (Acts 17:18). And "taking him, they brought him to the Areopagus, saying: May we know what this new doctrine is that you speak of? For you bring strange things to our ears, and we want to know what this means" (verses 19–20). The book adds this wonderful portrayal of those Athenians of the decadence, those gluttons with a sweet tooth for curiosities: "for then all the Athenians and the foreign guests among them spent their time in nothing else but telling or hearing something newer" (v. 21). A wonderful touch! It shows us what had become of those who learned in the *Odyssey* that the gods plot and bring about the destruction of mortals so that those who come after may have something to tell!

3.40 Here, then, is Paul before the refined Athenians, before the *graeculos* [little Greeks], the cultured and tolerant men who admit every doctrine, study them all, and stone, scourge or imprison no one for professing this doctrine or that. Here he is, where freedom of conscience is respected and every opinion is

heard and listened to. And he raises his voice there, in the midst of the Areopagus, and speaks to them as befitted the cultured citizens of Athens, and all of them, eager for the latest novelty, listen to him. But when he comes to speak to them of the resurrection of the dead, their patience and their tolerance run out; some mock him, and others tell him, "We will hear you on this again!"—meaning not to hear him. And something similar happened to him in Caesarea with the Roman praetor Felix, also a tolerant and cultured man, who eased the burden of his imprisonment. Felix wanted to hear him, and heard him discourse on justice and continence; but when Paul came to the judgment to come, Felix, terrified (ἔμφοβος γενόμενος), said to him: Go now; I will call you again when it suits me! (Acts 24:22–25). And when Paul was speaking before King Agrippa, Festus the governor, hearing him speak of the resurrection of the dead, exclaimed: "You are mad, Paul; much learning has driven you mad" (Acts 26:24).

3.41 Whatever the truth of Paul's speech on the Areopagus, and even if it never took place, what is certain is that this admirable account shows how far Attic tolerance goes and where the patience of intellectuals ends. They all listen to you calmly, smiling, and at times they encourage you, saying: How curious! or else: How ingenious! or: How suggestive! or: How beautiful! or: What a pity that so much beauty is not true! or: That makes you think! But as soon as you speak to them of resurrection and of life beyond death, their patience runs out and they cut you short, saying: Leave it, you can talk about this another day! And it is of this, my poor Athenians, my intolerant intellectuals, it is of this that I am going to speak to you here.

3.42 And even if this belief were absurd, why is it tolerated less that it be set before them than that many others, more absurd still, should be? Why this evident hostility to such a belief? Is it fear? Is it perhaps regret at not being able to share it?

AGAINST RESIGNATION

Unamuno refuses the sensible counsel to accept death, and dismisses Nietzsche's eternal return.

3.43 And back come the sensible ones, those who will not let themselves be deceived, and they hammer at our ears with the singsong that there is no use in giving oneself up to madness and kicking against the pricks, for what cannot be is impossible. The manly thing, they say, is to resign oneself to fate; since we are not immortal, let us not want to be; let us submit to reason without anguishing over what cannot be helped, darkening and saddening life. That obsession, they add, is a sickness. Sickness, madness, reason... the same old refrain! Well then—no! I do not submit to reason; I rebel against it. I strive to create, by force of faith, my immortalizing God, and to bend the course of the stars with my will; for if we had faith as a grain of mustard seed, we would say to that mountain, Move from there, and it would move, and nothing would be impossible to us (Matthew 17:20).

3.44 There you have that thief of energies, as he clumsily called Christ, who tried to wed nihilism with the struggle for existence, and he talks to you of courage. His heart asked him for the eternal all, while his head taught him nothingness, and in despair and madness, to defend himself against himself, he cursed what he most loved. Unable to be Christ, he blasphemed against Christ. Swollen with himself, he wanted himself unending and dreamed of eternal recurrence, a paltry imitation of immortality; and full of pity for himself, he abominated all pity. And there are those who say his is the philosophy of a strong man! No; it is not. My health and my strength drive me to perpetuate myself.[9] That is a doctrine of weaklings who aspire to be strong, not of the strong who are! Only the weak resign themselves to final death and put some other longing in place of the longing for personal immortality. In the strong, the yearning for per-

9 Nietzsche, who is not named here; eternal recurrence is his doctrine.

petuity overcomes the doubt of attaining it, and their overflow of life pours out into the beyond of death.

THE HUNGER FOR FAME

Art, letters and envy are driven by the wish to survive at least in name.

3.45 Before this terrible mystery of mortality, face to face with the Sphinx, man adopts various attitudes and seeks in various ways to console himself for having been born. At one moment it occurs to him to take it as a game, and he tells himself, with Renan, that this universe is a spectacle God puts on for himself, and that we must serve the intentions of the great Choregus by helping to make the spectacle as brilliant and as varied as possible. And they have made of art a religion and a remedy for metaphysical ill, and they have invented the humbug of art for art's sake.[10]

3.46 And it is not enough for them. Whoever tells you that he writes, paints, sculpts or sings for his own amusement is lying, if he gives the public what he does; he lies if he signs his writing, painting, statue or song. He wants, at the very least, to leave a shadow of his spirit, something that will survive him. If *The Imitation of Christ* is anonymous, it is because its author, seeking the eternity of the soul, did not trouble about that of the name. The man of letters who tells you he despises glory is lying like a scoundrel. Of Dante, who wrote those thirty-three powerful lines (*Purgatorio* XI, 85–117) on the vanity of worldly glory, Boccaccio says that he loved honors and pomp, perhaps more than befitted his illustrious virtue.[11] The most ardent desire of his damned is to be remembered here on earth and spoken of, and it is this that most lights the darkness of his hell. And he himself set out the concept of the Monarchy not only for the benefit of

10 Ernest Renan (1823–1892), French historian of religion. The choregus was the Athenian citizen who paid for and staged a dramatic chorus.

11 *The Imitation of Christ*: fifteenth-century devotional book, usually attributed to Thomas à Kempis.

others but to win the palm of glory (book I, chapter 1). What more? Even of that holy man who was, it seems, the most detached from earthly vanity, the Little Poor Man of Assisi, the Three Companions tell that he said: *adhuc adorabor per totum mundum*—You will see how I shall yet be adored by the whole world! (II Celano, 1, 1). And even of God himself the theologians say that he created the world as a manifestation of his glory.[12]

3.47 When doubts invade us and cloud our faith in the immortality of the soul, the yearning to perpetuate our name and fame, to attain at least a shadow of immortality, gains vigor and painful force. Hence that tremendous struggle to single oneself out, to survive somehow in the memory of others and of those to come—a struggle a thousand times more terrible than the struggle for life. It gives tone, color and character to this society of ours, in which the medieval faith in the immortal soul is fading. Everyone wants to assert himself, if only in appearance.

3.48 Once hunger is satisfied—and it is soon satisfied—vanity springs up, the need (for it is a need) to impose oneself and survive in others. Man will often give up his life for his purse, but he gives up his purse for vanity. For lack of anything better, he prides himself even on his weaknesses and miseries, like the child who, to get himself noticed, struts about with a bandaged finger. And what is vanity but a yearning to survive oneself?

3.49 The same thing happens to the vain man as to the miser: he takes the means for the ends and, forgetting the ends, clings to the means and stops there. Seeming to be something, which leads to being it, ends up becoming our objective. We need others to believe us superior to them in order to believe ourselves so, and to base on this our faith in our own persistence, at least in the persistence of our fame. We are more grateful to have our talent in defending a cause praised than to have the truth or goodness of the cause acknowledged. A furious mania for originality blows through the modern world of minds, and each person places it in something different. We would rather talk

12 Dante's treatise *De Monarchia*. The "Three Companions" are the reputed authors of an early life of St. Francis; Thomas of Celano wrote two others.

nonsense with wit than be right in a pedestrian way. Rousseau said as much in his *Emile*: "Even if the philosophers were in a position to discover the truth, which of them would take an interest in it? Each one knows that his system is no better founded than the others, but he upholds it because it is his. There is not a single one who, on coming to know the true and the false, would not prefer the lie he has found to the truth discovered by another. Where is the philosopher who would not gladly deceive the human race for his own glory? Where is the one who, in the secret of his heart, sets himself any other object than to distinguish himself? Provided he raises himself above the common crowd, provided he outshines his competitors, what more does he ask? The essential thing is to think differently from others. Among believers he is an atheist; among atheists he would be a believer." How much truth there is at the bottom of these sad confessions of that man of painful sincerity! Our hand-to-hand struggle for the survival of our name reaches back into the past, just as it aspires to conquer the future. We fight with the dead, for it is they who overshadow us, the living. We are jealous of the geniuses who have been, whose names, like landmarks of history, span the ages. The heaven of fame is not very large: the more who enter it, the less falls to each of them. The great names of the past rob us of room in it; what they occupy in people's memory they take from those of us who aspire to occupy it. And so we turn against them. Hence the bitterness with which all who seek renown in letters judge those who have already achieved it and enjoy it. If literature grows very rich, the day of sifting will come, and each one fears being left caught in the mesh of the sieve. The young man who is irreverent toward his masters is, in attacking them, defending himself; the iconoclast, or image-breaker, is a stylite who sets himself up as an image, an *icon*. "All comparisons are odious," as the saying goes; and the fact is that we want to be unique. Do not tell Fernández that he is one of the most talented young Spaniards, for while he pretends to thank you for it, the praise annoys him. If you tell him he is the most talented Spaniard... well!... but that is still not

enough for him. One of the world's eminences is more to be grateful for, but he is satisfied only if they think him the first of all places and all ages. The more alone one is, the closer one is to apparent immortality, the immortality of the name, for names diminish one another.

3.50 What does that irritation mean when we believe someone has stolen from us a phrase, or a thought, or an image that we believed ours—when we are plagiarized? Stolen? Is it really ours, once we have given it to the public? We want it only as ours, and we are fonder of the counterfeit coin that keeps our stamp than of the piece of pure gold from which our effigy and our inscription have been worn away. It very commonly happens that it is when a writer's name is no longer spoken that he most influences his people, his spirit spread and infused into the spirits of those who read him; whereas he was quoted when his sayings and thoughts, because they clashed with current ones, needed the guarantee of a name. What was his is now everyone's, and he lives in everyone. But in himself he lives sad and drooping, and believes himself defeated. He no longer hears the applause, nor even the silent beating of the hearts of those who go on reading him. Ask any sincere artist which he prefers: that his work should sink and his memory survive, or that his memory should sink and his work persist. You will see, if he is truly sincere, what he tells you. When man does not work to live and get by, he works to survive. Doing for the sake of the deed itself is play, not work. And play? We shall speak of that later.

3.51 A tremendous passion, this: that our memory should survive, above the oblivion of others if possible. From it springs envy, to which is owed, according to the biblical account, the crime that opened human history: the murder of Abel by his brother Cain. It was not a struggle for bread; it was a struggle to survive in God, in the divine memory. Envy is a thousand times more terrible than hunger, because it is spiritual hunger. If what we call the problem of life, the problem of bread, were solved, the Earth would turn into a hell, because the struggle for survival would break out with greater force.

3.52 To the name we sacrifice not only life but happiness. Life, of course. "Let me die; let my fame live!" exclaims Rodrigo Arias in *Las mocedades del Cid* [The Youthful Deeds of the Cid], as he falls mortally wounded by Don Diego Ordóñez de Lara. One owes oneself to one's name. "Courage, Girolamo, you will be remembered a long time; death is bitter, but fame eternal!" exclaimed Girolamo Olgiati, disciple of Cola Montano and slayer, in league with Lampugnani and Visconti, of Galeazzo Sforza, tyrant of Milan. There are those who long even for the scaffold to win fame, even if it is infamous: *avidus malae famae* [greedy for ill fame], as Tacitus said.[13]

3.53 And this Herostratism—what is it at bottom but a yearning for immortality, if not of substance and body, at least of name and shadow?[14]

3.54 And there are degrees in it. The man who despises the applause of today's crowd is seeking to survive in renewed minorities over generations. "Posterity is a superimposition of minorities," said Gounod. He wants to prolong himself in time rather than in space. The idols of the crowds are soon torn down by the crowds themselves, and their statue crumbles at the foot of the pedestal with no one looking at it. But those who win the hearts of the chosen will receive fervent worship for longer, if only in a chapel, small and secluded, but one that will survive the floods of oblivion.[15] The artist sacrifices the extent of his fame to its duration. He would rather last forever in a little corner than shine for a second in the whole universe; he would rather be an eternal atom, conscious of itself, than a momentary consciousness of the whole universe. He sacrifices infinitude to eternity.

3.55 And again they grind at our ears with that refrain: pride! stinking pride! Pride, to want to leave an indelible name? Pride? It is as when people speak of the thirst for pleasures, and so

13 *Las mocedades del Cid*: play by Guillén de Castro (1618). Olgiati and his fellow conspirators assassinated Galeazzo Maria Sforza in 1476.

14 Herostratus burned the temple of Artemis at Ephesus in 356 BC so that his name would be remembered.

15 Charles Gounod (1818–1893), French composer.

interpret the thirst for riches. No, it is not so much a yearning to procure pleasures as terror of poverty that drives us poor men to seek money, just as it was not the desire for glory but terror of hell that drove men in the Middle Ages to the cloister, with its acedia. Nor is this pride; it is terror of nothingness. We tend to be everything, because we see in it the only remedy against being reduced to nothing. We want to save our memory, at least our memory. How long will it last? At most, as long as the human race lasts. And what if we were to save our memory in God?

3.56 All this that I confess is wretchedness, I know it well; but from the depths of this wretchedness new life springs, and only by draining the dregs of spiritual suffering can one come to taste the honey at the bottom of the cup of life. Anguish leads us to consolation.

3.57 Many quench this thirst for eternal life, the simple above all, at the spring of religious faith; but not everyone is granted to drink from it. The institution whose primary end is to protect this faith in the personal immortality of the soul is Catholicism. But Catholicism has tried to rationalize this faith by making religion into theology, seeking to give the vital belief a philosophy as its basis—and a thirteenth-century philosophy at that. Let us look at it, and see its consequences.

IV. The Essence of Catholicism

La esencia del catolicismo
Paul, Athanasius and the resurrection of the flesh:
Christianity as a religion of immortality.

4.1 Let us come now to the Christian, Catholic, Pauline or Athanasian solution of our intimate vital problem, the hunger for immortality.

4.2 Christianity sprang from the confluence of two great spiritual currents, one Judaic and the other Hellenic, which had already influenced each other before, and Rome finished giving it a practical stamp and social permanence.

4.3 It has been asserted of primitive Christianity, perhaps hastily, that it was non-eschatological: that faith in another life after death does not clearly appear in it, but only faith in an imminent end of the world and the establishment of the kingdom of God, in what is called *chiliasm*. And were these not, at bottom, one and the same thing? Faith in the immortality of the soul, whose nature was perhaps not very precisely defined, may be said to be a kind of *unspoken understanding*, a tacit assumption, throughout the whole Gospel. What prevents many who read the Gospel today from seeing it is their own state of mind, the opposite of that of the Christians among whom the Gospel arose.[1] No doubt all that about the second coming of Christ—with great power, surrounded by majesty and amid clouds, to judge the dead and the living, to open the kingdom of heaven to some and cast the others into Gehenna, where there shall be

1 Chiliasm: the expectation of Christ's thousand-year reign on earth (from Greek *chilioi*, a thousand).

weeping and gnashing of teeth—can be understood chiliastically. Christ is even made to say in the Gospel (Mark 9:1) that there were some with him who would not taste death before they had seen the kingdom of God; that is, that it would come within his generation. And in the same chapter, verse 10, it is said of James, Peter and John, who went up with Jesus to the mount of the Transfiguration and heard him speak of rising from the dead: "and they kept that saying to themselves, reasoning with one another what the rising from the dead should mean." In any case, the Gospel was composed when this belief, the basis and raison d'être of Christianity, was taking shape. See Matthew 22:29–32; Mark 12:24–27; Luke 16:22–31; 20:34–37; John 5:24–29; 6:40, 54, 58; 8:51; 11:25, 56; 14:2, 19. And above all, that passage of Matthew 27:52 which says that when Christ rose, "many bodies of the saints which slept arose."

4.4 And this was not a natural resurrection, no. Christian faith was born of the faith that Jesus did not remain dead, but that God raised him, and that this resurrection was a fact; but this did not imply a mere immortality of the soul in the philosophical manner (see Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, Prolegomena, 5, 4). For the first Fathers of the Church themselves, the immortality of the soul was not something natural. To demonstrate it, as Nemesius says, the teaching of the Divine Scriptures was enough; and according to Lactantius it was a gift of God—and as such, gratuitous. But more on this later.[2]

4.5 Christianity sprang, as we were saying, from a confluence of the two great spiritual processes, the Judaic and the Hellenic, each of which had arrived on its own, if not at a precise definition of another life, then at a precise longing for it. Among the Jews, faith in another life was neither general nor clear; but they were led to it by faith in a personal and living God, the forming of whom is their whole spiritual history.

4.6 Yahweh, the Jewish God, began as one god among many others, the god of the people of Israel, revealed amid the roar of

the storm on Mount Sinai. But he was so jealous that he demanded that worship be rendered to him alone, and it was through monolatry that the Jews arrived at monotheism. He was worshiped as a living force, not as a metaphysical entity, and he was the god of battles. But this God, of social and warlike origin, to whose genesis we shall return, became more intimate and personal in the prophets; and in becoming more intimate and personal, he became more individual, and therefore more universal. It is Yahweh who does not love Israel because it is his son, but takes it for his son because he loves it (Hosea 11:1). And faith in the personal God, in the Father of men, carries with it faith that the individual man will be made eternal, a faith already dawning in Pharisaism, even before Christ.

4.7 Hellenic culture, for its part, ended by discovering death, and to discover death is to discover the hunger for immortality. This longing does not appear in the Homeric poems, which are not something initial but something final: not the starting point of a civilization but its end. They mark the passage from the old religion of Nature, the religion of Zeus, to the more spiritual religion of Apollo, the religion of redemption. But underneath there always persisted the popular and inward religion of the Eleusinian mysteries, the cult of souls and of ancestors.[3] "Insofar as one can speak of a Delphic theology, one must count among its most important elements the belief in the continuation of the life of souls after death, in its popular forms, and in the cult of the souls of the dead," writes Rohde[4]. There was the Titanic and the Dionysian, and according to Orphic doctrine man had to free himself from the bonds of the body, in which the soul was held like a prisoner in a jail. (See Rohde, *Psyche*, Die Orphiker, 4.)

2 Adolf von Harnack (1851–1930), German Protestant historian of dogma; his *History of Dogma* appeared 1886–1890. Nemesius of Emesa and Lactantius were early Christian writers.

3 The Eleusinian mysteries were secret initiation rites in honor of Demeter and Persephone, held at Eleusis near Athens.

4 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. Erwin Rohde, *Psyche.* "Seelencult und Unsterblichkeitsglaube der Griechen." Tübingen, 1907. To this day it is the principal work on the Greeks' belief in the immortality of the soul.

Nietzsche's notion of eternal return is an Orphic idea. But the idea of the immortality of the soul was not a philosophical principle.[5] Empedocles tried to unite a hylozoistic system with spiritualism, and his attempt proved that a philosophical natural science cannot of itself lead to corroborating the axiom of the perpetuity of the individual soul. Only theological speculation could lend it support. The first Greek philosophers affirmed immortality by contradiction. They left natural philosophy and entered theology, laying down a Dionysian and Orphic dogma, not an Apollonian one. But "an immortality of the human soul as such, by virtue of its own nature and condition as an imperishable divine force in the mortal body, was never an object of popular Hellenic faith." (Rohde, op. cit.)[6]

4.8 Recall Plato's *Phaedo* and the Neoplatonic lucubrations. There one already sees the yearning for personal immortality, a yearning which, not fully satisfied by reason, produced Hellenic pessimism. For, as Pfleiderer very rightly observes (*Religionsphilosophie auf geschichtlicher Grundlage* [Philosophy of Religion on a Historical Basis], 3, Berlin 1896), "no people came into the world as serene and sunny as the Greeks in the youthful days of their historical existence... but no people so completely changed its notion of the value of life.[7] The Greek world that ends in the religious speculations of Neopythagoreanism and Neoplatonism regarded this world, which had once seemed to it so joyful and luminous, as a dwelling of darkness and errors, and earthly existence as a period of trial that could never be got through too quickly." Nirvana is a Hellenic notion.

5 Erwin Rohde (1845–1898), German classical scholar and friend of Nietzsche.
6 Empedocles (5th century BC), Sicilian Greek philosopher. Hylozoism is the doctrine that all matter is alive.
7 Otto Pfleiderer (1839–1908), German Protestant theologian.

PAUL AND THE RESURRECTION

The discovery of death led, through Paul, to faith in Christ's resurrection as Christianity's core.

4.9 Thus Jews and Greeks, each by their own path, arrived at the true discovery of death. It is this discovery that brings peoples, as it brings individual men, into spiritual puberty, the puberty of the tragic sense of life, and that is when humanity begets the living God. It is the discovery of death that reveals God to us. And the death of the perfect man, of Christ, was the supreme revelation of death: the death of the man who ought not to have died, and died.

4.10 This discovery, the discovery of immortality, prepared by the Jewish and Hellenic religious processes, was what was specifically Christian. And it was carried out above all by Paul of Tarsus, that Hellenized Jewish Pharisee. Paul had not known Jesus personally, and that is why he discovered him as the Christ. "It may be said that the Apostle's theology is, in general, the first Christian theology. For him it was a necessity; in a way it took the place of the personal knowledge of Jesus that he lacked," says Weizsäcker (*Das apostolische Zeitalter der christlichen Kirche* [The Apostolic Age of the Christian Church], Freiburg im Breisgau 1892). He did not know Jesus, but he felt him reborn in himself, and could say, "I do not live in myself, but in Christ." And he preached the cross, which was a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks (1 Cor. 1:23). For the converted Apostle the central dogma was the resurrection of Christ. What mattered to him was that Christ had become man and had died and risen again, not what he did in his lifetime: not his moral and teaching work, but his religious work, the work that makes eternal. And it was he who wrote those immortal words: "If it is preached that Christ rose from the dead, how can some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not risen either; and if Christ has not risen, our preaching is vain and

your faith is vain… Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable." (1 Cor. 15:12–19.)

4.11 And from this it may be affirmed that whoever does not believe in this bodily resurrection of Christ may be a lover of Christ, but not specifically a Christian. True, a Justin Martyr could say that "all who live according to reason are Christians, even if they are held to be atheists, like Socrates and Heraclitus and others such among the Greeks." But is this martyr a martyr, that is, a witness, of Christianity? No.[8]

4.12 And the whole of Christology took shape around the dogma of the resurrection and immortality of Christ, a dogma born of Paul's inward experience and the guarantee of the resurrection and immortality of every believer. The God-man, the incarnate Word, came to be so that man, in his own way, might become God, that is, immortal. And the Christian God, the Father of Christ, a necessarily anthropomorphic God, is the one who, as the Catechism of Christian Doctrine that they made us learn by heart at school says, created the world for man: for each man. And the aim of the redemption was to save us from death rather than from sin, or from sin insofar as it implies death, despite the appearances produced by an ethical deflection of the properly religious dogma. And Christ died, or rather rose again, for *me*, for each one of us. And a certain solidarity was established between God and his creature. Malebranche said that the first man fell *so that* Christ might redeem us, rather than that Christ redeemed us *because* the first man had fallen.[9]

ATHANASIUS AT NICAEA

Athanasius defended a deifying Christ against the Arians, accepting contradiction for the sake of life.

4.13 After Paul the years and the Christian generations rolled on, working around that central dogma and its consequences so as

8 Justin Martyr (c. AD 100–165), Christian apologist executed in Rome. The Greek *martys* means "witness."

to secure faith in the immortality of the individual soul. Then came the Council of Nicaea, and in it that formidable Athanasius, whose very name is an emblem, the embodiment of popular faith. Athanasius was a man of little learning but of great faith, and above all of popular faith, filled with the hunger for immortality. And he opposed Arianism, which, like Unitarian and Socinian Protestantism, threatened the basis of that faith, even without knowing it or wanting to.[10] For the Arians, Christ was above all a teacher, a teacher of morals, the most perfect of men, and therefore the guarantee that the rest of us can attain the highest perfection. But Athanasius felt that Christ cannot make us gods unless he has first become God. If his divinity had been by participation, he could not have given us a share in it. "Therefore it was not that, being man, he afterwards became God," he said, "but that, being God, he afterwards became man, the better to deify us (θεοποιήσῃ)" (Orat. I, 30). It was not the Logos of the philosophers, the cosmological Logos, that Athanasius knew and worshiped[11]. And so he caused nature and revelation to be separated. The Athanasian or Nicene Christ, who is the Catholic Christ, is not the cosmological Christ, nor, strictly speaking, even the ethical one. He is the Christ who makes eternal, who deifies: the religious Christ. Harnack says of this Christ, the Christ of Nicene or Catholic Christology, that he is at bottom docetic, that is, merely apparent, because the process of man's divinization in Christ was carried out in the interest of eschatology. But which is the real Christ? Is it perhaps that so-called historical Christ of rationalist exegesis, who dissolves for us either into a myth or into a social atom?[12]

4.14 This same Harnack, a Protestant rationalist, tells us that Arianism or Unitarianism would have been the death of Chris-

9 Nicolas Malebranche (1638–1715), French priest and Cartesian philosopher.

10 Athanasius (c. AD 296–373), bishop of Alexandria, whose name means "immortal" in Greek. The Council of Nicaea (AD 325) condemned Arius, who taught that the Son was a created being.

11 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. For all this see, among others, Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte II, Theil I, Buch VII,* ch. I.

12 Docetism held that Christ only seemed to have a human body.

tianity, reducing it to cosmology and morality. He adds that it served only as a bridge to bring the learned to Catholicism, that is, from reason to faith. To this same learned historian of dogma it seems the sign of a perverse state of affairs that the man Athanasius, who saved Christianity as a religion of living communion with God, should have erased Jesus of Nazareth, the historical Jesus. This is the Jesus whom neither Paul nor Athanasius knew personally, nor has Harnack himself. Among the Protestants, this historical Jesus suffers under the scalpel of criticism, while the Catholic Christ lives on: the truly historical Christ, the one who lives through the centuries guaranteeing faith in personal immortality and personal salvation.

4.15 And Athanasius had the supreme courage of faith, the courage to affirm things that contradict each other. "The perfect contradiction contained in the ὁμοούσιος [of one substance] brought in its train a whole army of contradictions, and the more so the further thought advanced," says Harnack. Yes, so it was, and so it had to be. "Dogmatics took leave forever of clear thinking and tenable concepts, and grew accustomed to the contra-rational," he adds. The truth is that it drew closer to life, which is contra-rational and opposed to clear thinking. Judgments of value are not only never rationalizable; they are anti-rational.

4.16 At Nicaea, then, as later at the Vatican, the idiots won—taking the word in its proper, primitive and etymological sense—the simple-hearted, the rough and headstrong bishops. They represented the genuine human spirit, the spirit of the people, which does not want to die, whatever reason may say, and which seeks a guarantee for its desire, as material a guarantee as possible.[13]

13 The Greek *idiōtēs* meant a private person, a layman. The Vatican here is the First Vatican Council (1869–1870), which defined papal infallibility.

4.17 *Quid ad aeternitatem?* [What is this to eternity?] Here is the cardinal question. And the Creed ends with *resurrectionem mortuorum et vitam venturi saeculi*, the resurrection of the dead and the life to come. In the cemetery of Mallona, now disused, in my native town of Bilbao, there is a quatrain engraved that says: Though we have been turned to dust,

in you, Lord, our hope confides
that we shall return to life clothed
in the flesh and skin that covered us. Or, as the Catechism says, with the same bodies and souls that they had. So much so that it is orthodox Catholic doctrine that the happiness of the blessed is not wholly perfect until they recover their bodies.

They complain in heaven, and "that complaint arises in them," says our Fray Pedro Malón de Chaide, of the Order of Saint Augustine, a Spaniard and a Basque[14], "from their not being whole in heaven, for only the soul is there. And although they can feel no sorrow, since they see God, in whom they rejoice ineffably, still it seems that they are not wholly content. They will be so when they are clothed in their own bodies."[15]

THE BREAD OF IMMORTALITY

The Eucharist is the heart of Catholic piety, while Protestantism turns to justification and ethics.

4.18 And to this central dogma of resurrection in Christ and through Christ there corresponds a sacrament that is central too, the axis of popular Catholic piety: the sacrament of the Eucharist. In it is administered the body of Christ, which is the bread of immortality.

4.19 It is the genuinely realist sacrament, *dinglich* as one would say in German, which it is no great violence to translate as

14 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. *Libro de la conversión de la Magdalena,* part IV, ch. IX.
15 Pedro Malón de Chaide (c. 1530–1589), Augustinian friar and mystical writer from Navarre.

"material." It is the sacrament most genuinely *ex opere operato* [effective by the act performed], and among Protestants it has been replaced by the idealist sacrament of the word. At bottom it is a matter of eating and drinking God, the Eternalizer, of feeding on him. I say this with all possible respect, but without wishing to sacrifice the expressiveness of the phrase. Is it any wonder, then, that Saint Teresa tells us of the time she was at the Convent of the Incarnation, in the second year of her being prioress, in the octave of Saint Martin? She was taking communion, and Father Fray John of the Cross divided the Host to give part to another sister. She thought it was not for lack of hosts but because he wanted to mortify her, "because I had told him that I greatly liked it when the hosts were large—not that I did not understand that it made no difference to the Lord's being whole, however very small the little piece might be." Here reason goes one way, feeling another. And what do the thousand and one difficulties that arise from reflecting rationally on the mystery of this sacrament matter to this feeling? What is a divine body? The body, as the body of Christ—was it divine? What is an immortal and immortalizing body? What is a substance separated from its accidents? What is the substance of the body? Today we have refined our ideas a great deal on this matter of materiality and substantiality. But there are even Fathers of the Church for whom the immateriality of God himself was not a thing as defined and clear as it is for us. And this sacrament of the Eucharist is the immortalizing sacrament par excellence, and therefore the axis of popular Catholic piety. And, if one may say so, the most specifically religious one.

4.20 For what is specifically religious in Catholicism is immortalization, and not justification in the Protestant manner. Justification is rather ethical. And it is in Kant that Protestantism drew its penultimate conclusions, however much its orthodox may dislike it: religion depends on morality, and not morality on religion, as in Catholicism.

4.21 Among Catholics the preoccupation with sin has never been so anguished, or at least has never had so great a show of

anguish. The sacrament of confession helps here. And perhaps it is that the primitive Jewish and pagan conception of sin persists at bottom more here than among the Protestants: sin as something material, infectious and hereditary, which is cured by baptism and absolution. In Adam all his descendants sinned, almost materially, and his sin was transmitted as a material illness is transmitted. Renan, whose upbringing was Catholic, was right, then, to turn on the Protestant Amiel, who accused him of not giving sin its due importance.[16] Protestantism, on the other hand, is absorbed in this business of justification, taken in a sense more ethical than anything else, though with religious appearances. It ends by neutralizing and all but erasing the eschatological. It abandons the Nicene symbolism and falls into confessional anarchy, into pure religious individualism and a vague aesthetic, ethical or cultural religiosity. What we might call "beyondness," *Jenseitigkeit*, is gradually erased behind "hereness," *Diesseitigkeit*. And this despite Kant himself, who tried to save it, but by ruining it. Earthly vocation and passive trust in God give Lutheranism its religious flatness. It came close to foundering in the age of the Enlightenment, the *Aufklärung*, and pietism, by instilling into it some Catholic religious sap, barely managed to galvanize it a little. And so what Oliveira Martins said in his splendid *Historia da civilisação iberica* [History of Iberian Civilization], book 4, chap. III, turns out to be very exact: that "Catholicism produced heroes, and Protestantism sensible societies—happy, rich, free as regards their institutions and their outward economy, but incapable of any grand action, because religion began by tearing to pieces in the heart of man what makes him capable of daring and of noble sacrifices." Take any Dogmatics you like among those produced by the latest Protestant dissolution, that of the Ritschlian Kaftan, for example, and see what eschatology is reduced to there.[17] And his master himself, Albrecht Ritschl, tells us: "The problem of the

16 Henri-Frédéric Amiel (1821–1881), Swiss Protestant diarist.
17 Joaquim Pedro de Oliveira Martins (1845–1894), Portuguese historian. Julius Kaftan (1848–1926), German Protestant theologian of Ritschl's school.

necessity of justification or the remission of sins can be derived only from the concept of eternal life as the direct end-relation of that divine action. But if this concept is to be applied only to the state of life beyond the grave, its content lies outside all experience, and it cannot ground any knowledge of a scientific character. Hopes and longings of the strongest subjective certainty are not, therefore, any clearer, and they contain in themselves no guarantee of the completeness of what is hoped for and longed for.[18] Clarity and completeness of the ideal representation are, however, the conditions for comprehension, that is, for knowledge of the necessary connection of the thing within itself and with its given presuppositions. So the evangelical confession that fundamental justification by faith carries with it the certainty of eternal life is theologically inapplicable, so long as that end-relation is not shown to be possible in present experience" (*Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung* [Justification and Reconciliation], III, chap. VII, 52). It is all very rational, but...

4.22 In the first edition of Melanchthon's *Loci communes*, that of 1521, the first Lutheran theological work, the author omits the Trinitarian and Christological speculations, the dogmatic basis of eschatology. And there is Dr. Hermann, professor at Marburg, the author of the book on the Christian's communion with God (*Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott*). The first chapter of that book deals with the opposition between mysticism and the Christian religion, and in Harnack's view it is the most perfect Lutheran handbook. Elsewhere[19], referring to this Christological or Athanasian speculation, Hermann tells us that "the effective knowledge of God and of Christ in which faith lives is something entirely different.[20] Nothing should find a place in Christian doctrine that cannot help a man to recognize his sins, obtain the grace of God and serve him in truth. Until then (that is, until

18 Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889), influential German Protestant theologian.

19 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. In his exposition of Protestant dogmatics in the volume *Systematische christliche Religion,* Berlin, 1909, of the series *Die Kultur der Gegenwart,* published by P. Hinneberg.

20 Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560), Luther's collaborator. Wilhelm Herrmann (1846–1922), Protestant theologian at Marburg.

Luther) much had passed in the Church as *doctrina sacra* [sacred doctrine] that can in no way help to give a man a free heart and a quiet conscience." For my part, I cannot conceive of the freedom of a heart or the quiet of a conscience that is not sure of its lasting on after death. "The desire for the salvation of the soul," Hermann continues, "was bound in the end to lead men to know and understand the effective doctrine of salvation." And in his book on the Christian's communion with God, this eminent doctor of Lutheranism does nothing but talk to us of trust in God, of peace of conscience and of an assurance of salvation. Yet that assurance is not, precisely and strictly, the certainty of everlasting life, but rather the certainty of the remission of sins.

4.23 And in a Protestant theologian, Ernst Troeltsch, I have read that the highest thing Protestantism has produced in the conceptual order lies in the art of music, where Bach gave it its most powerful artistic expression. That is what Protestantism dissolves into—heavenly music! And we can say, on the other hand, that the highest Catholic artistic expression, Spanish at least, lies in the most material, tangible and permanent of the arts—for sounds are carried away by the air—in sculpture and painting: in the Christ of Velázquez, in that Christ who is forever dying, without ever finishing dying, to give us life![21]

4.24 And it is not that Catholicism abandons the ethical—no! There is no modern religion that can sidestep it. But this religion of ours is, at bottom and in large part, a compromise between eschatology and morality, with the former put at the service of the latter, though its doctors protest against this. What else is that horror of the eternal pains of hell, which is so ill reconciled with the Pauline apocatastasis? Let us hold to the words that the *Theologia deutsch*, the mystical handbook Luther read, puts into God's mouth: "If I am to repay your wickedness, I must do it with good, for I neither am nor have anything else."[22] And Christ said,

21 *Música celestial* ("heavenly music") is also a Spanish idiom for fine-sounding empty words. Velázquez's *Christ Crucified* (c. 1632) hangs in the Prado.

22 Apocatastasis: the restoration of all things, when God will be "all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). The *Theologia Deutsch* is an anonymous 14th-century German mystical treatise that Luther published in 1516.

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing," and there is no man who knows what he is doing. But for the benefit of social order it has been necessary to turn religion into a police force, and hence hell. Eastern or Greek Christianity is predominantly eschatological, Protestantism predominantly ethical, and Catholicism a compromise between the two, though with the former predominating. The most genuine Catholic morality, monastic asceticism, is a morality of eschatology, directed to the salvation of the individual soul more than to the maintenance of society. And in the cult of virginity, might there not perhaps be a certain obscure idea that perpetuating oneself in others hinders one's own perpetuation? Ascetic morality is a negative morality. And, strictly speaking, what matters is not to die, whether one sins or not. Nor should we take too literally those lines of our famous sonnet, I am not moved, my God, to love you / by the heaven you have promised me, and what follows. They are rather a lyrical and somewhat rhetorical effusion.[23]

THE CHURCH DEFENDS LIFE

The Church opposes heresy, Galileo, Darwin and modernism because it defends the longing for immortality.

4.25 The true sin, perhaps the sin against the Holy Spirit that has no remission, is the sin of heresy, the sin of thinking for oneself. It has been heard here in our Spain that to be a liberal, that is, a heretic, is worse than to be a murderer, a thief or an adulterer. The gravest sin is not to obey the Church, whose infallibility defends us from reason.

4.26 And why should the infallibility of a man, of the Pope, cause scandal? What difference does it make whether the infallible thing is a book, the Bible, or a society of men, the Church, or a single man? Does that change the rational difficulty in its

23 The anonymous 16th-century Spanish sonnet "No me mueve, mi Dios, para quererte," attributed at various times to Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross and others.

essence? And since the infallibility of a book or of a society is no more rational than that of a single man, this supreme scandal for rationalism had to be laid down.

4.27 It is the vital asserting itself. In order to assert itself it creates a whole dogmatic construction, making use of the rational, its enemy, and the Church defends that construction against rationalism, against Protestantism and against modernism. It defends life. It stood in Galileo's way, and it did right, for his discovery, at first and until it could be fitted into the economy of human knowledge, tended to shatter the anthropocentric belief that the universe was created for man. It opposed Darwin, and it did right, for Darwinism tends to shatter our belief that man is an exceptional animal, created expressly to be made eternal. And finally Pius IX, the first pontiff declared infallible, declared himself irreconcilable with so-called modern civilization. And he did right.

4.28 Loisy, the former Catholic abbé, said: "I say simply that the Church and theology have not favored the scientific movement, but have rather hindered it, as far as lay with them, on certain decisive occasions. I say, above all, that Catholic teaching has neither associated itself with that movement nor adapted itself to it. Theology has behaved, and behaves still, as if it possessed in itself a science of nature and a science of history, together with the general philosophy of these things that results from their scientific knowledge. One would say that the domain of theology and the domain of science, distinct in principle and even by definition of the Vatican Council, must not be distinct in practice.[24] Everything happens more or less as if theology had nothing to learn from modern science, natural or historical, and were in a position, and within its rights, to exercise by itself a direct and absolute supervision over the whole work of the human mind." (*Autour d'un petit livre* [About a Little Book], pages 211–212.)

24 Alfred Loisy (1857–1940), French priest and biblical scholar, leader of Catholic modernism, excommunicated in 1908.

4.29 And so it has to be, and so it is, in the Church's struggle with modernism, of which Loisy was doctor and leader.

4.30 The recent struggle against Kantian and fideist modernism is a struggle for life. Can life, life that seeks assurance of survival, possibly tolerate a Loisy, a Catholic priest, affirming that the resurrection of the Savior is not a fact of the historical order, demonstrable and demonstrated by the testimony of History alone? Read, on the other hand, E. Le Roy's exposition of the central dogma, the resurrection of Jesus, in his excellent work *Dogme et Critique* [Dogma and Criticism], and tell me whether anything solid remains on which to rest our hope.[25] Do they not see that it is not so much a question of the immortal life of Christ, reduced perhaps to a life in the Christian collective consciousness, as of a guarantee of our own personal resurrection, in soul and in body too? This new psychological apologetics appeals to the moral miracle, and we, like the Jews, want signs: something we can grasp with all the powers of the soul and all the senses of the body. And with our hands and feet and mouth, if possible.

4.31 But alas, we do not get it! Reason attacks, and faith, which does not feel secure without reason, has to make terms with it. And from this come the tragic contradictions and the lacerations of consciousness. We need assurance, certainty, signs, and so people turn to the *motiva credibilitatis*, the motives of credibility, in order to ground the *rationale obsequium* [reasonable service]. And although faith precedes reason, *fides praecedit rationem*, according to Saint Augustine, this same doctor and bishop wanted to go through faith to understanding, *per fidem ad intellectum*, and to believe in order to understand, *credo ut intelligam*. How far this is from that superb expression of Tertullian: *et sepultus resurrexit, certum est quia impossibile est!* "and buried, he rose again; it is certain because it is impossible"; and from his sublime *credo quia absurdum* [I believe because it is absurd], the scandal of rationalists! How far from Pascal's *il faut s'abêtir*

25 Édouard Le Roy (1870–1954), French Catholic philosopher associated with modernism.

[one must make oneself stupid], and from that "human reason loves the absurd" of our Donoso Cortés, who must have learned it from the great Joseph de Maistre![26]

FAITH SEEKS REASON'S SUPPORT

Unsure of itself, faith built scholastic theology and became a system of contradictions.

4.32 And as the first foundation stone, men sought the authority of tradition and the revelation of the word of God, and went as far as unanimous consent. *Quod apud multos unum invenitur non est erratum, sed traditum* [What is found to be one and the same among many is not error but tradition], said Tertullian. And Lamennais added, centuries later, that "certainty, the principle of life and of intelligence... is, if I may use the expression, a social product"[27]. But here, as in so many other things, the supreme formula was given by that great Catholic of popular and vital Catholicism, Count Joseph de Maistre, when he wrote: "I do not believe it possible to point to a single universally useful opinion that is not true"[28]. This is the Catholic sure bet: to deduce the truth of a principle from its supreme goodness or usefulness. And what is more useful, more sovereignly useful, than that our soul should never die on us? "Since everything is uncertain, one must either believe everyone or no one," said Lactantius. But that formidable mystic and ascetic, the Dominican Blessed Henry Suso, asked the eternal Wisdom for a single word on what love was. When it answered, "All creatures proclaim that I am love," Suso, the servant, replied: "Ah, Lord, that is not enough for a longing soul." Faith does not feel secure with

26 Tertullian (c. AD 160–c. 220), Christian writer of Carthage; *credo quia absurdum* is a traditional paraphrase of his *On the Flesh of Christ* 5. Juan Donoso Cortés (1809–1853), Spanish Catholic traditionalist; Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821), Savoyard counter-revolutionary writer.

27 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. *Essai sur l'indifférence en matière de religion,* part III, chap. II.

28 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. *Les soirées de Saint-Pétersbourg,* tenth dialogue.

the consent of others, nor with tradition, nor under authority. It seeks the support of its enemy, reason.[29]

4.33 And so scholastic theology was forged, and out of it came its handmaid, the *ancilla theologiae*, scholastic philosophy too—and this handmaid turned out to answer back. Scholasticism was a magnificent cathedral, with every problem of architectural mechanics solved over the centuries, but a cathedral of adobe. Little by little it led to what they call natural theology, which is nothing but Christianity drained of its potency. Men sought to support the dogmas rationally as far as possible, to show at least that, though supra-rational, they were not contra-rational. And the dogmas have been given a philosophical foundation of thirteenth-century Aristotelian-Neoplatonic-Stoic philosophy, for such is Thomism, recommended by Leo XIII. And it is no longer a matter of getting the dogma accepted, but its medieval and Thomist philosophical interpretation. It is not enough to believe that in receiving the consecrated host one receives the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. One must accept all that business of transubstantiation, and of substance separated from accidents, breaking with the whole modern rational conception of substantiality.

4.34 But that is what implicit faith is for, the collier's faith, the faith of those who, like Saint Teresa (*Vida*, chapter XXV, 2), do not wish to avail themselves of theology. "Do not ask me that, for I am ignorant; Holy Mother Church has doctors who will know how to answer you," as we were made to learn in the catechism. For that, among other things, is why the priesthood was instituted: so that the teaching Church might be the depositary of theological secrets—a deposit rather than a river, *reservoir instead of river*, as Brooks said. "The work of Nicaea," says Harnack (*Dogmengeschichte* II, 1, chap. VII 3), "was a triumph of the priesthood over the faith of the Christian people. The doctrine of the Logos had already become unintelligible to those who

29 Henry Suso (c. 1295–1366), German Dominican mystic who called himself the "Servant of Eternal Wisdom."

were not theologians.[30] With the setting up of the Niceno-Cappadocian formula as the fundamental confession of the Church, it became completely impossible for Catholic laymen to acquire an inward knowledge of the Christian faith according to the norm of the Church's doctrine. And the idea took ever deeper root that Christianity was the revelation of the unintelligible." And so, in truth, it is.

4.35 And why was this? Because faith, that is, life, no longer felt sure of itself. Neither traditionalism nor the theological positivism of Duns Scotus was enough for it; it wanted to rationalize itself. And it sought to lay its foundation not against reason, which is where it lies, but upon reason, that is, in reason itself. Scotus's position, nominalist or positivist or voluntarist, held that law and truth depend less on essence than on the free and inscrutable will of God. By stressing the supreme irrationality of religion, it put religion in danger among most believers endowed with adult reason who were not colliers. Hence the triumph of Thomist theological rationalism. And now it is no longer enough to believe in the existence of God. An anathema falls on anyone who, even believing in it, does not believe that this existence of his can be demonstrated by reasons, or that until now no one has irrefutably demonstrated it by them. Though here perhaps one may say with Pohle: "If eternal salvation depended on the axioms of mathematics, one would have to reckon with the most odious human sophistry having already turned against their universal validity with the same force with which it now turns against God, the soul and Christ"[31].

4.36 The truth is that Catholicism oscillates between mysticism and the rationalism that it combats (see Weizsäcker, op. cit.). Mysticism is inward experience of the living God in Christ, an incommunicable experience, whose danger, moreover, is that of absorbing one's own personality in God, which does not save

30 The "collier's faith" is proverbial, after a charcoal-burner who, asked what he believed, answered: what the Church believes. Phillips Brooks (1835–1893), American Episcopal preacher.

31 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. Joseph Pohle, "Christlich Katholische Dogmatik," in *Systematische christliche Religion,* Berlin, 1909, of the series *Die Kultur der Gegenwart.*

our vital longing. Catholicism oscillates between religionized science and scientificized religion. Apocalyptic enthusiasm changed little by little into Neoplatonic mysticism, from which theology made it shrink back. People feared the excesses of fantasy, which supplanted faith by creating gnostic extravagances. But a certain pact had to be signed with gnosticism, and another with rationalism; neither fantasy nor reason would let itself be wholly vanquished. And so Catholic dogmatics became a system of contradictions, more or less well reconciled. The Trinity was a sort of pact between monotheism and polytheism. And humanity and divinity made a pact in Christ, and so did nature and grace, grace and free will, free will and divine foreknowledge, and so on. And perhaps it is that, as Hermann says (*loco citato*), "as soon as a religious thought is developed to its logical consequences, it comes into conflict with others that belong equally to the life of religion." That is what gives Catholicism its profound vital dialectic. But at what cost?

4.37 At the cost, it must be said, of oppressing the mental needs of believers who have the use of adult reason. They are required to believe either everything or nothing: to accept the entire totality of dogmatics, or else lose all merit if they reject the smallest part of it. And so we get what the great Unitarian preacher Channing said[32]: that in France and Spain we have multitudes who have passed from rejecting popery to absolute atheism, because "the fact is that false and absurd doctrines, when exposed, have a natural tendency to beget skepticism in those who received them without reflection, and none are readier to believe too little than those who began by believing to excess (*believing too much*)." Here indeed lies the terrible danger: in believing too much. But no! The terrible danger lies elsewhere—in wanting to believe with reason and not with life.[33]

4.38 The Catholic solution of our problem, our one vital problem, the problem of the immortality and eternal salvation of the

32 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. "Objections to unitarian Christianity considered," 1816, in *The complete works of William Ellery Channing,* D. D., London, 1884.
33 William Ellery Channing (1780–1842), American Unitarian preacher.

individual soul, satisfies the will, and therefore life. But in trying to rationalize it through dogmatic theology, it does not satisfy reason. And reason has its demands, as imperious as those of life. It is no use trying to force oneself to recognize as supra-rational what clearly appears to us as contra-rational, nor is it any use for one who is not a collier to try to make himself one. Infallibility, a notion of Hellenic origin, is at bottom a rationalist category.

4.39 Let us now look, then, at the rationalist or scientific solution of our problem—or, better, its dissolution.

V. The Rational Dissolution

La disolución racional
Reason examines the soul's immortality and dissolves it, and with it every rational consolation.

5.1 The great master of rationalist phenomenalism, David Hume, begins his essay "On the Immortality of the Soul" with these decisive words: "It seems difficult to prove the immortality of the soul by the mere light of reason. The arguments in its favor are commonly derived from metaphysical, moral or physical topics. But in reality it is the Gospel, and the Gospel alone, that has brought life and immortality to light." This amounts to denying the rationality of the belief that the soul of each one of us is immortal.

5.2 Kant, who took Hume as the starting point for his critique, tried to establish the rationality of this longing and of the belief it implies. Such is the true origin, the inward origin, of his critique of practical reason, of his categorical imperative and of his God. But in spite of all this, Hume's skeptical affirmation still stands, and there is no way whatever of proving the immortality of the soul rationally. There are, on the other hand, ways of proving its mortality rationally.

5.3 It would be not merely superfluous but even ridiculous for us to set out at length here how far individual human consciousness depends on the organization of the body. We need not show how it comes to birth little by little as the brain receives impressions from outside, how it is temporarily interrupted during sleep, fainting fits and other accidents, and how everything leads us to conjecture rationally that death brings with it the

loss of consciousness. And just as before we were born we were not, and have no personal memory of that time, so after we die we shall not be. This is the rational.

5.4 What we call the soul is nothing more than a term designating individual consciousness in its integrity and its persistence. That it changes, and that just as it integrates so it disintegrates, is evident. For Aristotle it was the substantial form of the body, the entelechy, but not a substance. And more than one modern thinker has called it an epiphenomenon, an absurd term. It is enough to call it a phenomenon.

5.5 Rationalism, and by this I mean the doctrine that holds to nothing but reason, to objective truth, is necessarily materialist. And let the idealists not be scandalized.

5.6 Everything must be made clear, and the truth is that what we call materialism means for us nothing other than the doctrine that denies the immortality of the individual soul, the persistence of personal consciousness after death.

5.7 In another sense it may be said that, since we know no more about what matter is than about what spirit is, and since this matter business is for us nothing more than an idea, materialism is idealism. In fact, and for our problem—the most vital one, the only truly vital one—it comes to the same thing to say that everything is matter, or that everything is idea, or everything force, or whatever you like. Every monistic system will always appear to us materialist. Only dualist systems save the immortality of the soul: those that teach that human consciousness is something substantially distinct and different from all other phenomenal manifestations. And reason is naturally monist. For it is the work of reason to understand and explain the universe, and to understand and explain it there is no need whatever for the soul as an imperishable substance. To explain and understand the life of the psyche, for psychology, the hypothesis of the soul is not required. What was once called rational psychology, as opposed to so-called empirical psychology, is not psychology but metaphysics, and very murky meta-

physics. Nor is it rational: it is profoundly irrational, or rather contra-rational.

5.8 The supposedly rational doctrine of the substantiality of the soul and of its spirituality, with all the apparatus that goes with it, was born simply of men's feeling that they needed to ground in reason their irresistible longing for immortality and the belief that follows from it. All the sophistries that set out to prove that the soul is a simple and incorruptible substance come from that source. More still: the very concept of substance, as scholasticism laid it down and defined it—a concept that does not stand up to criticism—is a theological concept designed to support faith in the immortality of the soul.

5.9 W. James, in the third of the lectures he devoted to pragmatism at the Lowell Institute in Boston in December 1906 and January 1907[1]—which is the weakest thing in the whole work of the distinguished American thinker, something excessively weak—says this: "Scholasticism has taken the notion of substance from common sense and made it technical and articulate. Few things would seem to have fewer pragmatic consequences for us than substances, cut off as we are from all contact with them. But there is one case in which scholasticism has proved the importance of the substance-idea by treating it pragmatically. I mean certain disputes concerning the mystery of the Eucharist. Here substance would appear to have great pragmatic value. Since the accidents of the wafer do not change in the consecration, and yet it has become the body of Christ, the change can only be in the substance. The substance of the bread must have withdrawn, the divine substance miraculously taking its place without the immediate sensible properties being altered. But even though these are not altered, a tremendous difference has taken place: nothing less than that we who receive the sacrament now feed on the very substance of divinity. The notion of substance thus breaks into life with terrible effect if you admit that substances can be separated from their accidents and

1 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. *Pragmatism, a new name for some old ways of thinking. Popular lectures on philosophy by William James,* 1907.

exchange these latter. And this is the only pragmatic application of the idea of substance that I know of; and it is obvious that it can only be treated seriously by those who believe in the *real presence* on independent grounds."

5.10 Now, let us leave aside the question whether in sound theology—and I do not say in sound reason, for all this falls outside it—the substance of the body—the body, not the soul—of Christ can be confused with the very substance of divinity, that is, with God himself. Even so, it seems impossible that so ardent a longer for the immortality of the soul, a man like W. James, whose whole philosophy aims at nothing but establishing that belief rationally, should have failed to notice that the pragmatic application of the concept of substance to the doctrine of eucharistic transubstantiation is nothing but a consequence of its earlier application to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. As I set out in the previous chapter, the sacrament of the Eucharist is nothing but the reflection of the belief in immortality; for the believer it is the mystical, experimental proof that the soul is immortal and will enjoy God eternally. And the concept of substance was born, first and above all, from the concept of the substantiality of the soul, and this was affirmed in order to support faith in the soul's persistence after its separation from the body. Such is its first pragmatic application, and with it its origin. And afterwards we transferred that concept to things outside us. It is because I feel myself to be a substance—that is, permanent amid my changes—that I attribute substantiality to the agents outside me that remain permanent amid their changes. In the same way the concept of force, as distinct from motion, is born of my sensation of personal effort when I set something in motion.

THE PROOFS OF THE SOUL

Aquinas and Balmes argue that the soul is simple and substantial, but only by begging the question.

5.11 Read carefully, in the first part of the *Summa theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas, the first six articles of question LXXV, where he asks whether the human soul is a body, whether it is something subsistent, whether the soul of brute animals is so too, whether man is a soul, whether the soul is composed of matter and form, and whether it is incorruptible. Then say whether all of that is not subtly designed to support the belief that this incorruptible substantiality allows the soul to receive immortality from God—for clearly, since God created it when he infused it into the body, according to St. Thomas, he could annihilate it when he separated it from the body. And since these proofs have been criticized a hundred times over, there is no point repeating the criticism here.

5.12 What unprejudiced reason can conclude that our soul is a substance from the fact that the consciousness of our identity—and this within very narrow and variable limits—persists through the changes of our body? One might as well speak of the substantial soul of a ship that leaves port, loses one plank today, which is replaced by another of the same shape and size, then loses another piece, and so on, one by one, all of them; and the same ship comes back, with the same shape, the same seagoing qualities, and everyone recognizes it as the same. What unprejudiced reason can conclude that the soul is simple from the fact that we have to judge and unify thoughts? Thought is not one but manifold, and for reason the soul is nothing more than the succession of states of consciousness coordinated with one another.

5.13 In books of spiritualist psychology, when they deal with the existence of the soul as a simple substance separable from the body, it is usual to employ some formula of this kind: There is in me a principle that thinks, wills and feels... Which involves begging the question. For it is not an immediate truth—far from

it—that there is such a principle in me; the immediate truth is that I think, will and feel. And I, the I that thinks, wills and feels, am immediately my living body with the states of consciousness it bears. It is my living body that thinks, wills and feels. How? Somehow.

5.14 And then they go on to try to establish the substantiality of the soul by hypostatizing the states of consciousness, and they begin by saying that this substance must be simple—that is, by opposing thought to extension, in the manner of Cartesian dualism. And since our Balmes has been one of the spiritualists who have given the most concise and clear form to the argument for the simplicity of the soul, I shall take it from him just as he sets it out in chapter II of the Psychology in his *Curso de Filosofía Elemental* [Course of Elementary Philosophy]. "The human soul is simple," he says, and adds: "That is simple which lacks parts, and the soul has none. Suppose there are in it the parts A, B, C; I ask: where does thought reside?[2] If only in A, then B and C are superfluous; and consequently the simple subject A will be the soul. If thought resides in A, B and C, then thought turns out to be divided into parts, which is absurd. What would a perception, a comparison, a judgment, a piece of reasoning be, distributed among three subjects?" A more obvious begging of the question is impossible. He begins by taking it as evident that the whole, as a whole, cannot judge. Balmes goes on: "The unity of consciousness is opposed to the division of the soul: when we think, there is a subject that knows everything it thinks, and this is impossible if we attribute parts to it. Of the thought that is in A, B and C will know nothing, and vice versa; hence there will not be *one* consciousness of the whole thought; each part will have its own particular consciousness, and within us there will be as many thinking beings as there are parts." The begging of the question continues: it is assumed, just like that, without any proof, that a whole as a whole cannot perceive as a unity. Then Balmes goes on to ask whether these parts A, B, C are simple or

2 Jaime Balmes (1810–1848), Catalan priest and philosopher, widely read in Spain as a defender of Catholic philosophy.

compound, and repeats the argument until he arrives at the conclusion that the thinking subject has to be a part that is not a whole, that is, simple. The argument rests, as can be seen, on the unity of apperception and of judgment. And then he tries to refute the hypothesis that appeals to a communication of the parts with one another.

5.15 Balmes, and with him the *a priori* spiritualists who try to rationalize faith in the immortality of the soul, leave aside the only rational explanation: that apperception and judgment are a resultant, that it is the component perceptions or ideas themselves that come into agreement. They begin by supposing something outside and distinct from the states of consciousness, something that is not the living body that bears them—something that is not I, but is in me.

5.16 The soul is simple, others say, because it turns back upon itself in its entirety. No: the state of consciousness A, in which I think of my previous state of consciousness B, is not that state itself. Or if I think of my soul, I think of an idea distinct from the act in which I think of it. To think that one is thinking, and nothing more, is not thinking.

5.17 The soul is the principle of life, they say. Yes; and the category of force or energy has also been devised as the principle of motion. But these are concepts, not phenomena, not external realities. Does the principle of motion move? And only what moves has external reality. Does the principle of life live? Hume was right to write: "I never come across this idea of myself; I only observe myself desiring or acting or feeling something." The idea of something individual—of this inkwell in front of me, of that horse standing at the door of the house, of these two and not of any other individuals of their class—is the fact, the phenomenon itself. The idea of myself is me. All the efforts to make consciousness a substance, making it independent of extension —remember that Descartes opposed thought to extension—are nothing but sophistical tricks to establish the rationality of the faith that the soul is immortal. They try to give the value of objective reality to what does not have it, to that whose reality

lies only in thought. And the immortality we crave is a phenomenal immortality; it is a continuation of this life.

5.18 For scientific psychology—the only rational kind—the unity of consciousness is nothing but a phenomenal unity. No one can say that it is a substantial unity. More still, no one can say that it is a substance. For the notion of substance is a non-phenomenal category. It is the noumenon and belongs, strictly speaking, to the unknowable. That is, depending on how it is applied. But in its transcendent application it is something really unknowable and, strictly speaking, irrational. It is the very concept of substance that an unprejudiced reason reduces to a use far removed from that pragmatic application of it to which James referred.

5.19 Nor is this application saved by taking it idealistically, according to the Berkeleian principle that to be is to be perceived, *esse est percipi.* To say that everything is idea, or that everything is spirit, is the same as saying that everything is matter or that everything is force. For if, everything being idea or spirit, this diamond is idea or spirit just as my consciousness is, it is not clear why the diamond should not persist eternally, if my consciousness, by being idea or spirit, persists forever.

NO WAY OUT THROUGH IDEALISM

Berkeley, psychical research, pantheism and agnosticism all fail to save personal immortality.

5.20 George Berkeley, Anglican bishop of Cloyne and brother in spirit of another Anglican bishop, Joseph Butler, wanted like him to save faith in the immortality of the soul. From the very first words of the Preface to his *A treatise concerning the Principles of human Knowledge,* he tells us that this treatise of his seems to him useful, especially for those tainted with skepticism or who need a demonstration of the existence and immateriality of God and of the natural immortality of the soul. In chapter CXL he establishes that we have an idea, or rather a notion, of spirit, knowing other spirits by means of our own; from which, he

flatly asserts in the following paragraph, the natural immortality of the soul follows. And here he falls into a series of confusions based on the ambiguity he gives to the term "notion." And it is after having established the immortality of the soul almost *per saltum* [at a leap]—because the soul is not passive, as bodies are—that he goes on in chapter CXLVII to tell us that the existence of God is more evident than that of man. And to think that, in spite of this, there are people who doubt it!

5.21 The question was complicated because consciousness was made a property of the soul, and the soul was something more than consciousness: a substantial form of the body, the source of all its organic functions. The soul not only thinks, feels and wills, but moves the body and gives rise to its vital functions; in the human soul the vegetative, animal and rational functions are united. Such is the doctrine. But the soul, once separated from the body, can no longer have vegetative and animal functions.

5.22 For reason, in short, a tangle of genuine confusions.

5.23 From the Renaissance onward, with the restoration of purely rational thought emancipated from all theology, the doctrine of the mortality of the soul was reestablished with Alexander of Aphrodisias, Pietro Pomponazzi and others. And strictly speaking, little or nothing can be added to what Pomponazzi wrote in his *Tractatus de inmortalitate animae.* That is reason, and there is no use turning it over and over.

5.24 There has been no lack, however, of people who have tried to support faith in the immortality of the soul empirically, and there is the work of Frederic W. H. Myers, *Human personality and its survival of bodily death.* No one has approached the two thick volumes of this work with greater yearning than I. In them the man who was the soul of the *Society for Psychical Research* summed up the formidable mass of data on every kind of presentiment, apparitions of the dead, phenomena of sleep, telepathy, hypnotism, sensory automatism, ecstasy and

everything that makes up the spiritist arsenal.[3] I began reading it not only without the prejudice that men of science harbor against such investigations, but even favorably disposed, as one who goes looking for confirmation of his most intimate longings; but for that very reason the disappointment was all the greater. For all the critical apparatus, none of it differs in any way from medieval miracle-mongering. At bottom there is an error of method, of logic.

5.25 And if belief in the immortality of the soul has been unable to find rational empirical verification, neither does pantheism satisfy it. To say that everything is God, and that when we die we return to God—or rather, continue in him—is worth nothing to our longing. For if that is so, before we were born we were in God, and if at death we return to where we were before being born, then the human soul, individual consciousness, is perishable. And since we know very well that God, the personal and conscious God of Christian monotheism, is nothing but the producer and, above all, the guarantor of our immortality, it is said—and very rightly said—that pantheism is nothing but atheism in disguise. And I think it is not even disguised. And those who called Spinoza an atheist were right; his pantheism is the most logical, the most rational. Nor is the longing for immortality saved—rather it is dissolved and sunk—by agnosticism, the doctrine of the unknowable, which, whenever it has tried to keep religious feelings safe, has always proceeded with the most refined hypocrisy. The whole First Part of Spencer's *First Principles*, and above all its chapter V, entitled "Reconciliation"—between reason and faith, or religion and science, that is—is a model at once of philosophical superficiality and of religious insincerity, of the most refined British *cant*. The unknowable, if it is anything more than what is merely unknown up to now, is nothing but a purely negative concept, a limiting concept. And no feeling can be built on that.

5.26 The science of religion, on the other hand—of religion as an individual and social psychic phenomenon, without going

into the transcendent objective validity of religious affirmations —is a science that, in explaining the origin of the faith that the soul is something that can live separated from the body, has destroyed the rationality of this belief. However much the religious man may repeat with Schleiermacher, "science cannot teach you anything; let it learn from you," inwardly he thinks otherwise.

REASON, THE ENEMY OF LIFE

Intelligence seeks what is dead and fixed; everything vital is irrational, everything rational anti-vital.

5.27 From whatever side the matter is looked at, it always turns out that reason sets itself against this longing of ours for personal immortality, and contradicts it. And the fact is that, strictly speaking, reason is the enemy of life.

5.28 Intelligence is a terrible thing. It tends toward death, as memory tends toward stability. The living, what is absolutely unstable, what is absolutely individual, is, strictly speaking, unintelligible. Logic tends to reduce everything to entities and genera, so that each representation has one single, identical content in whatever place, time or relation it may occur to us. And there is nothing that is the same in two successive moments of its being. My idea of God is different each time I conceive it. Identity, which is death, is what the intellect aspires to. The mind seeks what is dead, for what is living escapes it; it wants to freeze the fleeting stream into blocks of ice, it wants to fix it. To analyze a body, you have to diminish or destroy it. To understand something, you have to kill it, stiffen it in the mind. Science is a cemetery of dead ideas, even if life comes out of them. Worms, too, feed on corpses. My own thoughts, tumultuous and agitated in the depths of my mind, torn from their root in the heart, poured out onto this paper and fixed on it in unalterable forms, are already corpses of thoughts. How, then, is reason to open itself to the revelation of life? It is a tragic combat, it is the

3 Frederic W. H. Myers (1843–1901), English poet and founder of the Society for Psychical Research; his book appeared posthumously in 1903.

root of tragedy: the combat of life with reason. And truth? Is it lived or understood?

5.29 One need only read Plato's terrible *Parmenides* and reach its tragic conclusion that "the one exists and does not exist, and it and all the others exist and do not exist, appear and do not appear, in relation to themselves and to one another." Everything vital is irrational, and everything rational is anti-vital, because reason is essentially skeptical.

5.30 The rational, in fact, is nothing but the relational; reason confines itself to relating irrational elements. Mathematics is the only perfect science insofar as it adds, subtracts, multiplies and divides numbers, but not real, solid things—insofar as it is the most formal of the sciences. Who can extract the cube root of this ash tree?

5.31 And yet we need logic, this terrible power, to transmit thoughts and perceptions, and even to think and perceive, for we think with words, we perceive with forms. To think is to talk to oneself, and speech is social, and thought and logic are social. But do they not perhaps have a content, an individual matter, that cannot be transmitted or translated? And is not their strength right here?

5.32 The truth is that man, a prisoner of logic, without which he cannot think, has always wanted to put it at the service of his longings, and above all of the fundamental longing. People always wanted to keep logic—especially in the Middle Ages—at the service of theology and jurisprudence, both of which started from what authority had established. Only very late did logic set itself the problem of knowledge, the problem of its own validity, the examination of its metalogical foundations.

5.33 "Western theology," writes Stanley, "is essentially logical in form and is based on philosophy. The Latin theologian suc-

ceeded the Roman lawyer; the Eastern theologian, the Greek sophist."[45]

5.34 And all the supposedly rational or logical lucubrations in support of our hunger for immortality are nothing but advocacy and sophistry.

THEOLOGY AS ADVOCACY

Rational theology argues from dogma like a lawyer, while true science is skeptical and investigative.

5.35 What is proper to and characteristic of advocacy, in fact, is to put logic at the service of a thesis that has to be defended, whereas strictly scientific method starts from the facts, from the data that reality offers us, in order to reach a conclusion or not reach one. The important thing is to pose the problem well, and hence progress quite often consists in undoing what has been done. Advocacy always presupposes a begging of the question, and all its arguments are *ad probandum* [aimed at proving a set conclusion]. And supposedly rational theology is nothing but advocacy.

5.36 Theology starts from dogma, and dogma, δόγμα, in its original and most direct sense, means decree—something like the Latin *placitum*, what has seemed to the legislative authority that it ought to be law. Theology starts from this juridical concept. For the theologian, as for the lawyer, dogma, the law, is something given, a starting point that is not discussed except as to its application and its most correct sense. And hence the theological or lawyerly spirit is dogmatic in its principle, while the strictly scientific, purely rational spirit is skeptical, σκεπτικός, that is, investigative. And I add "in its principle," because the other sense of the term skepticism, the one it most commonly has today—that of a system of doubt, mistrust and uncertainty—

4 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Lectures on the history of the Eastern Church.*

5 Arthur Penrhyn Stanley (1815–1881), Anglican churchman and historian, dean of Westminster.

was born of the theological or lawyerly use of reason, of the abuse of dogmatism. The attempt to apply the law of authority, the *placitum*, the dogma, to different and sometimes opposing practical needs is what has engendered the skepticism of doubt. It is advocacy, or what amounts to the same thing, theology, that teaches us to mistrust reason. True science does not: investigative science, skeptical in the original and direct sense of the term, which does not head toward a solution already foreseen and does nothing but test a hypothesis.

5.37 Take the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas, the classic monument of Catholic theology—that is, of Catholic advocacy—and open it anywhere. First the thesis: *utrum...*, whether such a thing is so or otherwise; next the objections: *ad primum sic proceditur* [thus we proceed to the first point]; then the replies to the objections: *sed contra est...* [but on the contrary...] or *respondeo dicendum...* [I answer that it must be said...]. Pure advocacy. And at the bottom of a great many of its arguments, perhaps most of them, you will find a logical fallacy that can be expressed *more scholastico* [in scholastic fashion] in this syllogism: I cannot understand this fact except by giving it this explanation; but I must understand it; therefore this must be its explanation. Or else I am left without understanding it. True science teaches, above all, to doubt and to not know; advocacy neither doubts nor believes that it does not know. It needs a solution.

5.38 This state of mind, in which it is assumed, more or less consciously, that we must know a solution, is accompanied by that business of the dire consequences. Pick up any apologetic book—that is, any book of lawyerly theology—and you will see how often you come across headings that read: "Dire Consequences of This Doctrine." And the dire consequences of a doctrine will prove, at most, that the doctrine is dire, but not that it is false, for it remains to be proved that what is true is what suits us best. The identification of truth and the good is nothing but a pious wish. A. Vinet, in his *Etudes sur Blaise Pascal*, says: "Of the two needs that ceaselessly work upon human nature, the need for happiness is not only the most universally

felt and the most constantly experienced, but also the most imperious. And this need is not only a matter of the senses; it is intellectual. Not only for the *soul* but also for the *spirit*[6], happiness is a need. Happiness forms part of truth." This last proposition, *le bonheur fait partie de la vérité* [happiness is part of truth], is a profoundly lawyerly proposition, but not a scientific one, nor one of pure reason.[7] It would be better to say that truth forms part of happiness, in a Tertullianesque sense, that of *credo quia absurdum* [I believe because it is absurd], which strictly speaking means *credo quia consolans*, I believe because it is something that consoles me.

REASON DOES NOT CONSOLE

Lucretius and the anti-theological rationalists find no consolation for the end of consciousness.

5.39 No: for reason, truth is what can be shown to be, to exist, whether it consoles us or not. And reason is certainly not a consoling faculty. That terrible Latin poet Lucretius, beneath whose apparent serenity and Epicurean ataraxia so much despair lies hidden, said that piety consists in being able to contemplate everything with a serene soul, *pacata posse mente omnia tueri.* And it was this same Lucretius who wrote that religion can lead us into so many evils: *tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.* And the fact is that religion, and above all, later, the Christian religion, was, as the Apostle says, a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the intellectuals.[8] Tacitus called the Christian religion, the religion of the immortality of the soul, a pernicious superstition, *exitialis superstitio*, asserting that it involved a hatred of the human race, *odium generis humani.*

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6 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. Here I translate the French *esprit* by "espíritu" [spirit], though it might perhaps be better to translate it "inteligencia" [intelligence]. Likewise our word "felicidad" [happiness] does not correspond entirely to the French *bonheur* (perhaps "dicha" would be better), nor "necesidad" [need] to *besoin*.

7 Alexandre Vinet (1797–1847), Swiss Protestant theologian and literary critic.

8 St. Paul, 1 Corinthians 1:23, where the Apostle writes "foolishness to the Greeks"; "the intellectuals" is Unamuno's pointed substitution.

5.40 Speaking of the age of these men, the most genuinely rationalist age, Flaubert wrote these pregnant words to Madame Roger de Genettes: "You are right; one must speak of Lucretius with respect; I see no one comparable to him except Byron, and Byron has neither his gravity nor the sincerity of his sadness. The melancholy of the ancients seems to me deeper than that of the moderns, who all more or less take for granted an immortality beyond the *black hole*. But for the ancients this black hole was infinity itself; their dreams take shape and pass against a background of unchanging ebony. The gods no longer existing, and Christ not yet existing, there was, from Cicero to Marcus Aurelius, a unique moment in which man stood alone. Nowhere do I find such grandeur; but what makes Lucretius intolerable is his physics, which he presents as positive. If he is weak, it is from not having doubted enough; he wanted to explain—to conclude!"[9]

5.41 Yes, Lucretius wanted to conclude, to solve, and, what is worse, he wanted to find consolation in reason. For there is also an anti-theological advocacy and an *odium anti-theologicum* [anti-theological hatred].

5.42 Many, very many men of science, the majority of those who call themselves rationalists, suffer from it.

5.43 The rationalist behaves rationally—that is, he is playing his proper part—so long as he confines himself to denying that reason satisfies our vital hunger for immortality. But soon, seized by rage at not being able to believe, he falls into the irritation of the *odium anti-theologicum*, and says with the Pharisees: "These common people who do not know the law are accursed." There is much truth in those words of Soloviev: "I foresee the approach of times when Christians will gather again in the catacombs because the faith is persecuted—perhaps in a less brutal

9 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. Gustave Flaubert, *Correspondance*. Troisième serie (1854-1869). Paris, MDCCCCX.

way than in Nero's time, but with a rigor no less refined, by lies, mockery and every kind of hypocrisy."[10]

5.44 The anti-theological hatred, the scientistic—I do not say scientific—rage against faith in another life, is evident. Take not the most serene scientific investigators, those who know how to doubt, but the fanatics of rationalism, and see with what coarse brutality they speak of faith. Vogt thought it probable that the apostles showed marked simian characteristics in the structure of their skulls; of the crudities of Haeckel, that supremely uncomprehending man, there is no need to speak; nor of those of Büchner; even Virchow is not free of them. And others do it more subtly.[11] There are people who seem not to stop at not believing that there is another life—or rather, at believing that there is none—but who are annoyed and pained that others believe in it, or even that they want there to be one. And this position is contemptible, just as worthy of respect is that of the man who, determined to believe that there is another life because he needs it, cannot manage to believe it. But of this most noble, and deepest, and most human, and most fruitful state of mind, despair, we shall speak later on.

5.45 And the rationalists who do not fall into anti-theological rage insist on convincing man that there are reasons for living and consolation for having been born, even though a time must come, after some tens, hundreds or millions of centuries, when all human consciousness will have disappeared. And these reasons for living and acting, this thing some call humanism, are the marvel of the affective and emotional hollowness of rationalism and of its stupendous hypocrisy, bent on sacrificing sincerity to veracity and on not confessing that reason is an unconsoling and dissolving power.

5.46 Must I repeat once more what I have already said about all that business of forging culture, of progressing, of bringing

10 The Pharisees' words are from John 7:49. Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900), Russian religious philosopher and poet.

11 Carl Vogt, Ernst Haeckel, Ludwig Büchner and Rudolf Virchow: nineteenth-century German scientists, the first three noted champions of materialism.

about the good, truth and beauty, of bringing justice to the earth, of making life better for those who come after us, of serving I know not what destiny, without troubling ourselves about the ultimate end of each one of us? Must I speak to you again of the supreme emptiness of culture, of science, of art, of the good, of truth, of beauty, of justice... of all these beautiful conceptions, if in the end, in four days or in four million centuries—which for the purpose comes to the same thing—there is to be no human consciousness to receive culture, science, art, the good, truth, beauty, justice and all the rest of it?

SPINOZA'S BLESSEDNESS

Epicurean, Stoic and Spinozan comforts all end by dissolving the individual self.

5.47 Many and very varied are the rationalist inventions—more or less rational—with which, since the days of the Epicureans and Stoics, people have tried to find consolation in rational truth and to convince human beings that there are motives for acting and incentives for living, even if human consciousness is destined to disappear one day—though those who attempted it were not themselves convinced.

5.48 The Epicurean position, whose extreme and crudest form is "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," or the Horatian *carpe diem*, which could be translated "live for the day," is at bottom no different from the Stoic position with its "do what your moral conscience dictates, and come what may afterwards." Both positions have a common basis, and pleasure for its own sake is the same as duty for its own sake.

5.49 The most logical and consistent of atheists—I mean of those who deny that individual consciousness persists into an indefinite future—and at the same time the most pious of them, Spinoza, devoted the fifth and last part of his *Ethics* to elucidating the way that leads to freedom and to fixing the concept of happiness. The concept! The concept and not the feeling! For Spinoza, who was a terrible intellectualist, happiness, *beatitudo*

[blessedness], is a concept, and the love of God an intellectual love. In proposition 21 of this fifth part he establishes that "the mind can imagine nothing, nor remember past things, except while the body endures"—which amounts to denying the immortality of the soul, for a soul that, separated from the body in which it lived, no longer remembers its past is neither immortal nor a soul. He then proceeds to tell us in proposition 23 that "the human mind cannot be absolutely destroyed with the body, but something of it remains which *is eternal*," and this eternity of the mind is a certain mode of thought. But do not let yourselves be deceived: there is no such eternity of the individual mind. Everything is *sub aeternitatis specie* [under the aspect of eternity], that is, a pure deception. Nothing sadder, nothing more desolating, nothing more anti-vital than this happiness, this Spinozan *beatitudo*, which consists in the intellectual love of God, which is nothing but God's own love, the love with which God loves himself (prop. 36). Our happiness, that is, our freedom, consists in the constant and eternal love of God for men. So says the scholium to this proposition 36. And all this to conclude, in the final proposition of the whole *Ethics*, its crowning point, with the notion that happiness is not the reward of virtue but virtue itself. What everyone says! Or, put plainly: we come from God and to God we return. Translated into the language of life and feeling, into concrete language, this means that my personal consciousness sprang from nothingness, from my unconsciousness, and to nothingness it will return.

5.50 And that most sorrowful and desolating voice of Spinoza is the very voice of reason. And the freedom he speaks of is a terrible freedom. And against Spinoza and his doctrine of happiness there is only one unanswerable argument: the argument *ad hominem.* Was he happy, Baruch Spinoza, while, to silence his inner unhappiness, he discoursed on happiness itself? Was he free?

5.51 In the scholium to proposition 41 of this same last and most tragic part of that formidable tragedy, his *Ethics*, the poor despairing Jew of Amsterdam speaks to us of the common per-

suasion of the multitude about eternal life. Let us hear him: "They seem to believe that piety and religion and everything that relates to strength of mind are burdens to be laid down after death, and they hope to receive the reward of their servitude, not of piety and religion. And not only by this hope, but also, and chiefly, by the fear of being punished with terrible torments after death, they are moved to live according to the precepts of the divine law, as far as their weakness and their impotent spirit allow. And if it were not for this hope and this fear—if they believed, on the contrary, that souls die with bodies, and that nothing remained for them but to live on as wretches under the burden *of piety*—they would return to their natural bent, preferring to arrange everything to suit their taste and to surrender themselves to fortune rather than to themselves. Which seems no less absurd than if someone, because he did not believe he could nourish his body with good food forever, should prefer to glut himself with deadly poisons; or, because he sees that the soul is not eternal and immortal, should prefer to be without a soul (*amens*) and to live without reason; all of which is so absurd that it hardly deserves to be refuted (*quae adeo absurda sunt, ut vix recenseri mereantur*)."[12]

5.52 When it is said of something that it does not even deserve refutation, you may be sure of this: either it is a signal piece of foolishness, in which case one need not even say that much about it, or it is something tremendous, the very key to the problem. And so it is in this case. For yes, poor Portuguese Jew exiled from Holland, yes: if someone becomes convinced, without a trace of doubt, without the slightest chink of saving uncertainty, that his soul is not immortal, and then prefers to be without a soul, *amens*, or irrational, or without reason, and prefers not to have been born, there is nothing, absolutely nothing, absurd in that. He, the poor intellectualist Jew who defined intellectual love and happiness—was he happy? For this, and nothing else, is the problem. "What does it profit you to know

12 Latin *amens* means literally "mindless, out of one's mind"; Unamuno renders it "sin alma," "without a soul."

how to define compunction, if you do not feel it?" says Thomas à Kempis. And what does it profit you to set about defining happiness if you do not thereby manage to be happy? Here that terrible tale by Diderot fits. A eunuch wanted to be better able to choose slave women for the harem of the sultan, his master, and so he wanted to take lessons in aesthetics from a man of Marseilles.[13] At the first lesson, which was physiological, brutally and carnally physiological, the eunuch exclaimed ruefully: "It is plain that I shall never know aesthetics!" And so it is. Eunuchs will never know aesthetics as applied to the selection of beautiful women. Nor will pure rationalists ever know ethics, or ever succeed in defining happiness, which is a thing that is lived and felt, not a thing that is reasoned out and defined.

NIETZSCHE'S ETERNAL RETURN

Nietzsche's recurrence is a tragicomic imitation of immortality that consoles no one.

5.53 And there we have another rationalist. This one was not resigned and sad like Spinoza but rebellious, and he hypocritically feigned cheerfulness when he was no less in despair than the other. There you have Nietzsche, who *mathematically* (!!!) invented that imitation of the immortality of the soul called the eternal return, which is the most tremendous tragicomedy or comitragedy. Since the number of atoms or first irreducible elements is finite, in the eternal universe a combination like the present one must at some point occur again, and therefore what is happening now must be repeated an eternal number of times. Of course. And just as I shall live again the life I am living now, I have already lived it infinitely many times, for there is an eternity toward the past, *a parte ante,* as there will be one in the future, *a parte post*. But there is the sad fact that I do not remember any of my previous existences, if it is even possible that I should remember them, for two things that are absolutely and totally identical are only one. Instead of supposing that we live

13 The line is from the first chapter of *The Imitation of Christ*.

in a finite universe, with a finite number of irreducible first component elements, suppose that we live in an infinite universe, without limit in space—a concrete infinity no less inconceivable than concrete eternity in time. Then it will follow that this system of ours, the Milky Way, is repeated infinitely many times in the infinity of space, and that I am living infinitely many lives, all exactly identical. A joke, as you see, but no less comic—that is, no less tragic—than Nietzsche's, the joke of the lion who laughs. And what does the lion laugh at?[14] Out of rage, I believe, because he can never quite be consoled by the notion that he has already been the same lion before and will be it again.

5.54 But the fact is that Spinoza and Nietzsche alike were, yes, rationalists, each in his own way; but they were not spiritual eunuchs. They had heart, feeling and, above all, hunger: a mad hunger for eternity, for immortality. The bodily eunuch does not feel the need to reproduce carnally, in the body, and the spiritual eunuch does not feel the hunger to perpetuate himself either.

5.55 It is true that there are those who assert that reason is enough for them, and who advise us to give up trying to penetrate the impenetrable. But some say they need no faith at all in an eternal personal life to find incentives for living and motives for action, and of these I do not know what to think. A man blind from birth can also assure us that he feels no great desire to enjoy the world of sight, nor much distress at not having enjoyed it, and we must believe him. For there can be no longing for what is wholly unknown, by virtue of the maxim *nihil volitum quin praecognitum*: one can will only what has been known beforehand. But a man may at some time in his life, or in his youth, or for a while, have come to hold faith in the immortality of the soul, and I cannot bring myself to believe that such a man is at peace without it. And in this respect blindness from birth hardly occurs among us, except by some strange aberra-

14 The laughing lion appears at the close of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

tion. For an aberration, and nothing else, is the merely and exclusively rational man.

5.56 More sincere, much more sincere, are those who say: "We must not talk about that, for it is a waste of time and saps the will; let us do our duty here, and then come what may." But this sincerity hides a deeper insincerity. Does saying "We must not talk about that" somehow stop one from thinking about it? That it saps the will?... So what? That it unfits us for human action? So what? It is very easy to tell someone who has a mortal illness, one that condemns him to a short life, and who knows it, not to think about it. *Meglio oprando obliar, senza indagarlo, / Questo enorme mister de l'universo!*

5.57 "Better to forget by working, without inquiring into it, this enormous mystery of the universe," wrote Carducci in his *Maremma Idyll*. It was the same Carducci who, at the end of his ode *On Monte Mario*, told us that the earth, mother of the fleeting soul, is to carry glory and suffering around the sun until, spent beneath the Equator,

at the calls of the fleeing warmth,
its withered offspring have only one woman left and one man,
who, standing upright among fragments of mountains,
in dead forests, livid, with glassy
eyes, will see you over immense ice,
O sun, go down![15][16]

5.58 But is it possible to work at anything serious and lasting while forgetting the enormous mystery of the universe and without inquiring into it? Is it possible to contemplate everything with a serene soul, in the manner of Lucretian piety,

15 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. The translation is mine, and appears in my volume of *Poesías* (Poems).

16 Giosuè Carducci (1835–1907), Italian poet; the poems are "Idillio maremmano" and "Su Monte Mario" (from the *Odi barbare*).

thinking that one day all of this will no longer be reflected in any human consciousness?[17]

5.59 "Are you happy?" Cain asks Lucifer, prince of the intellectuals, in Byron's poem, and Lucifer answers: "We are powerful." Cain rejoins: "Are you happy?" Then the great Intellectual tells him: "No; are you?" And later this same Lucifer says to Adah, Cain's sister and wife: "Choose between Love and Science, for there is no other choice." And in this same stupendous poem Cain says that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a lying tree, because "we know nothing, and its promised science came at the price of death." Lucifer replies: "It may be that death leads to the highest knowledge." That is to say, to nothingness.[18]

5.60 In all these passages where I have put "science," Lord Byron says *Knowledge*: what the French call *science* and the Germans *Wissenschaft*. Against it many set *wisdom*, the French *sagesse* and the German *Weisheit*. "Knowledge comes, but wisdom tarries, and brings a burdened breast, full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of its rest." *Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast, / Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest*, says another lord, Tennyson, in his *Locksley Hall*. And what is this wisdom, which we must go and seek chiefly in the poets, leaving science behind? It is all very well to say, with Matthew Arnold in his preface to the poems of Wordsworth, that poetry is reality and philosophy illusion. But reason is always reason, and reality is reality: what can be proved to exist outside us, whether it consoles us or drives us to despair.

THE BANKRUPTCY OF SCIENCE

Reason cannot prove immortality, and in the end it dissolves itself in skepticism.

5.61 I do not know why so many people were scandalized, or pretended to be, when Brunetière once again proclaimed the bank-

17 Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things* 5.1198–1203: true piety is the ability to look on all things with a mind at peace.

ruptcy of science. For science as a substitute for religion, and reason as a substitute for faith, have always failed. Science may satisfy our growing logical or mental needs, our longing to know and to learn the truth, and in fact it does satisfy them in growing measure. But science does not satisfy our affective and volitional needs, our hunger for immortality; far from satisfying it, it contradicts it. Rational truth and life stand opposed. And is there any truth other than rational truth?[19]

5.62 It must be taken as settled, then, that reason, human reason, within its limits, does not prove rationally that the soul is immortal, or that human consciousness is to be indestructible through the course of time to come. Rather, it proves, within its limits, I repeat, that individual consciousness cannot persist after the death of the bodily organism on which it depends. And those limits, within which I say human reason proves this, are the limits of rationality, of what we know verifiably. Outside them lies the irrational, and it makes no difference whether we call it the supra-rational, the infra-rational or the contra-rational. Outside them lies Tertullian's absurd, the impossible of *certum est, quia impossibile est* [it is certain because it is impossible]. And this absurd can rest on nothing but the most absolute uncertainty.

5.63 Rational dissolution ends by dissolving reason itself, in the most absolute skepticism, in the phenomenalism of Hume or the absolute contingentism of Stuart Mill, the most consistent and logical of the positivists. The supreme triumph of reason, which is an analytical faculty, that is, a destructive and dissolving one, is to call its own validity into doubt. When there is an ulcer in the stomach, the stomach ends by digesting itself. And reason ends by destroying the immediate and absolute validity of the concept of truth and of the concept of necessity. Both concepts are relative; there is neither absolute truth nor absolute necessity. We call a concept true when it agrees with the general

18 Byron's verse drama *Cain: A Mystery* (1821).

19 Ferdinand Brunetière (1849–1906), French critic, who spoke of the "bankruptcy of science" in an 1895 article.

system of all our concepts, and a perception true when it does not contradict the system of our perceptions; truth is coherence. And as for the whole system, the totality, since nothing outside it is known to us, one cannot say whether it is true or not. We can imagine that the universe, in itself, outside us, is quite other than it appears to us, though this is a supposition devoid of any rational sense. And as for necessity, is there any absolute necessity? Nothing is necessary except what is, and insofar as it is. For in another, more transcendent sense, what absolute, logical necessity is there, independent of the fact that the universe exists, for there to be a universe, or anything at all?

5.64 Absolute relativism, which is neither more nor less than skepticism in the most modern sense of the term, is the supreme triumph of reasoning reason.

5.65 Feeling does not manage to make consolation into truth, nor does reason manage to make truth into consolation. But the latter, reason, working upon truth itself, upon the very concept of reality, manages to sink itself in a profound skepticism. And in this abyss rational skepticism meets the despair of feeling, and it is from this meeting that there emerges a basis—a terrible basis!—for consolation. Let us see.

VI. In the Depths of the Abyss

En el fondo del abismo
Skepticism and despair embrace; uncertainty becomes the ground of a new, struggling life.

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[6] *Parce unicae spes totius orbis.* [Spare the one hope of the whole world.] / Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* (*Against Marcion*), 5.

6.1 So the vital longing for human immortality finds no rational confirmation, and neither does reason give us any incentive or consolation for living, or any true purpose for life. But see: at the bottom of the abyss the despair of feeling and will and rational skepticism meet face to face, and they embrace like brothers. And it is from this embrace, a tragic embrace, that is, one loving from the very depths, that a wellspring of life will flow, of a life serious and terrible. Skepticism, uncertainty, the last position that reason reaches by exercising its analysis upon itself, upon its own validity, is the foundation on which the despair of the vital feeling must found its hope.

6.2 Disillusioned, we had to abandon the position of those who want to make consolation into rational and logical truth, claiming to prove its rationality, or at least its non-irrationality. And we also had to abandon the position of those who wanted to make rational truth into consolation and a motive for living. Neither of these two positions satisfied us. The one is at odds with our reason, the other with our feeling. Peace between these two powers is impossible, and we must live by their war. And we must make this, war itself, the condition of our spiritual life.

6.3 Nor is there room here for that repugnant and vulgar expedient which politicians, more or less parliamentary ones,

have invented, and which they call a formula of concord, one from which neither victors nor vanquished emerge. There is no place here for cozy compromises. Perhaps a degenerate and cowardly reason might go so far as to propose such a formula of settlement, for strictly speaking reason lives on formulas. But life, which cannot be put into formulas—life, which lives and wants to live forever—does not accept formulas. Its only formula is: all or nothing. Feeling does not compromise with half-measures.

6.4 *Initium sapientiae timor Domini* [The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom], it was said, perhaps meaning *timor mortis* [fear of death], or perhaps *timor vitae* [fear of life], which is the same thing. It always turns out that the beginning of wisdom is a fear.[1]

A DOUBT OF PASSION

Unamuno's doubt is not Descartes' method but a lived conflict between reason and life.

6.5 And this saving skepticism I am now going to speak to you about—can it be said to be doubt? It is doubt, yes, but it is much more than doubt. Doubt is often a very cold thing, hardly life-giving at all, and above all a somewhat artificial thing, especially since Descartes reduced it to the role of a method. The conflict between reason and life is something more than a doubt. For doubt easily comes down to being a comic element.

6.6 Descartes' methodical doubt is a comic doubt, a purely theoretical, provisional doubt, that is, the doubt of a man who acts as if he doubted without doubting. And because it was a stove-room doubt, the man who concluded that he existed from the fact that he thought did not approve of "those turbulent (*brouillons*) and restless temperaments who, called neither by their birth nor by their fortune to the management of public affairs, never cease to devise in their minds some new reform." And he

1 Psalm 111:10; compare Proverbs 9:10.

was pained that there might be anything of this in his writing.[2] No; he, Descartes, set out only "to reform his own thoughts and to build upon a foundation wholly his own." And he resolved to accept as true nothing that he did not evidently know to be so, and to destroy all prejudices and received ideas in order to build his intellectual dwelling anew. But "since it is not enough, before beginning to rebuild the house one lives in, to pull it down and to provide materials and architects, or to train oneself in architecture..., but one must also have provided oneself with another in which one can be comfortably lodged while the work goes on," he framed for himself a provisional morality, *une morale de provision*. Its first law was to obey the customs of his country and to hold constantly to the religion in which God had granted him the grace of being instructed from his childhood, governing himself in everything by the most moderate opinions. So, yes: a provisional religion, and even a provisional God. And he chose the most moderate opinions because they were "the most convenient for practice." But it is better not to go on.

6.7 This Cartesian doubt, methodical or theoretical, this storeroom philosophical doubt, is not doubt; it is not the skepticism, it is not the uncertainty I am speaking to you of here—no! This other doubt is a doubt of passion. It is the eternal conflict between reason and feeling, science and life, logic and biotics. For science destroys the concept of personality, reducing it to a complex in continual momentary flux. That is, it destroys the very affective basis of the life of the spirit, and the spirit, refusing to surrender, turns against reason.

6.8 And this doubt cannot avail itself of any provisional morality. It must found its morality, as we shall see, on the conflict itself, a morality of battle, and it must found religion upon itself. And it dwells in a house that is continually falling down and must continually be rebuilt. Continually the will—I mean the will never to die, the refusal to be resigned to death—builds the dwelling of life, and continually reason is battering it down with gales and downpours.

2 Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (1637), part 2.

6.9 There is more still: in the concrete vital problem that concerns us, reason takes no position at all. Strictly speaking, it does something even worse than deny the immortality of the soul, which would be a solution: it fails to recognize the problem as vital desire presents it to us. In the rational and logical sense of the term problem, there is no such problem. This matter of the immortality of the soul, of the persistence of individual consciousness, is not rational; it falls outside reason. As a problem, and apart from whatever solution is given to it, it is irrational. Rationally, even posing it makes no sense. The immortality of the soul is as inconceivable as, strictly speaking, its absolute mortality is. To explain the world and existence to ourselves—and such is the work of reason—we need not suppose either that our soul is mortal or that it is immortal. The mere posing of the supposed problem, then, is an irrationality.

6.10 Let us hear brother Kierkegaard, who tells us: "It is precisely with respect to the problem of existence that the risk of abstraction shows itself. It resolves the difficulty by sidestepping it, and then boasts of having explained everything. It explains immortality in general, and does so splendidly, by identifying it with eternity—with eternity, which is essentially the medium of thought. But whether each singularly existing man is immortal, which is precisely the difficulty, abstraction does not trouble itself about; it does not interest it. Yet the difficulty of existence is the interest of the one who exists; to one who exists, existing is of infinite interest. Abstract thought serves my immortality only by killing me as a singularly existing individual, and thus making me immortal, more or less in the manner of that Doctor in Holberg who with his medicine took the patient's life, but also took away his fever. Consider an abstract thinker who will not clarify and confess the relation between his abstract thought and the fact that he is existing: however excellent and distinguished he may be, he makes a comic impression on us, because he runs the risk of ceasing to be a man.[3] A real man, composed of infinitude and finitude, has

3 Ludvig Holberg (1684–1754), Danish-Norwegian comic playwright.

his reality precisely in holding the two together, and is infinitely interested in existing. Such an abstract thinker, by contrast, is a double being, a fantastical being who lives in the pure being of abstraction, and at times the sad figure of a professor who lays that abstract essence aside as he lays aside his walking stick. When one reads the life of such a thinker—whose writings may be excellent—one trembles at the thought of what it is to be a man. And when one reads in his writings that thinking and being are one and the same, one thinks, thinking of his life, that this being which is identical with thinking is not exactly being a man." (*Afsluttende uvidenskabelig Efterskrift* [Concluding Unscientific Postscript], ch. 3.)

6.11 What intense passion—that is, what truth—there is in this bitter invective against Hegel, the prototype of the rationalist, who takes away our fever by taking away our life, and who promises us an abstract immortality instead of a concrete one, as if the hunger for it that consumes us were abstract and not concrete!

6.12 It may be said, yes, that once the dog is dead the rabies is over, and that after I die this hunger not to die will no longer torment me, and that the fear of death, or rather of nothingness, is an irrational fear. But... Yes, but... *E pur si muove!* [And yet it moves!] And it will go on moving. Why, it is the source of all movement![4]

6.13 But I do not think brother Kierkegaard is entirely right, because the abstract thinker himself, the thinker of abstractions, thinks *in order to* exist, in order not to cease existing, or *perhaps* he thinks in order to forget that he will have to cease existing. Such is the root of the passion of abstract thought. And perhaps Hegel was as infinitely interested as Kierkegaard in his own concrete and singular existence, though he hid it to keep up the professional decorum of a philosopher of the State. The demands of the post.

4 Words traditionally attributed to Galileo after he was forced to recant the motion of the earth.

ENEMIES WHO NEED EACH OTHER

Faith and reason cannot stand alone; they associate only by struggling with each other.

6.14 Faith in immortality is irrational. And yet faith, life and reason need one another. This vital longing is not properly a problem. It cannot take on logical status, it cannot be formulated in propositions open to rational debate; but it presses itself upon us, as hunger does. Nor can a wolf that flings itself on its prey to devour it, or on the she-wolf to impregnate her, pose its impulse to itself rationally, as a logical problem. Reason and faith are two enemies that cannot sustain themselves without each other. The irrational demands to be rationalized, and reason can operate only on the irrational. They have to lean on each other and join together. But join together in struggle, since struggle is a mode of association.

6.15 In the world of living things, the struggle for existence, *the struggle for life*, establishes an association, and a very close one, not only among those who unite to fight another but among those who fight one another. And is there, perhaps, any closer association than the one formed between the animal that eats another and the one it eats, between the devourer and the devoured? And if this is plainly seen in the struggle of individuals among themselves, it is seen more plainly still in the struggle of peoples. War has always been the most complete factor of progress, even more than trade. It is through war that victors and vanquished learn to know one another and, as a consequence, to love one another.

6.16 Christianity—the folly of the cross, the irrational faith that Christ had risen in order to raise us—was saved by rationalist Hellenic culture, and that culture by Christianity. Without the latter, without Christianity, the Renaissance would have been impossible; without the Gospel, without Saint Paul, the peoples who had passed through the Middle Ages would have understood neither Plato nor Aristotle. A purely rationalist tradition is

as impossible as a purely religious one. It is often debated whether the Reformation was born as the daughter of the Renaissance or in protest against it, and one may say both, for the child is always born in protest against the father. It is also said that it was the Greek classics brought back to life that turned men like Erasmus back to Saint Paul and to early Christianity, the most irrational kind. But one may retort that it was Saint Paul, that it was the Christian irrationality underpinning their Catholic theology, that turned them back to the classics. "Christianity is what it has become," it is said, "only through its alliance with antiquity, whereas among the Copts and Ethiopians it is nothing but buffoonery. Islam developed under the influence of Persian and Greek culture, and under the influence of the Turks it has turned into destructive unculture."[5] We emerged from the Middle Ages, and from their faith, as ardent as it was at bottom despairing, and not without inner and deep uncertainties; and we entered the age of rationalism, which was not without its uncertainties either. Faith in reason is exposed to the same rational untenability as any other faith. And one may say with Robert Browning that "all we have gained by our unbelief is a life of doubt diversified by faith, instead of one of faith diversified by doubt."

> *All we have gained then by our unbelief*
> *Is a life of doubt diversified by faith,*
> *For one of faith diversified by doubt.* (*Bishop Blougram's Apology*.)

6.17 The fact is, as I say, that faith, life, cannot sustain itself except upon a reason that makes it transmissible—and above all transmissible from me to myself, that is, reflective and conscious. And reason in turn cannot sustain itself except upon faith, upon life, if only faith in reason, faith that reason serves for something more than knowing, that it serves for living. And

5 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. See Troeltsch, in *Systematische christliche Religion*, in the series *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*.

yet faith is neither transmissible nor rational, and reason is not vital.

6.18 Will and intelligence need each other. The old aphorism *nihil volitum quin praecognitum*, nothing is willed that has not first been known, can be turned around to say *nihil cognitum quin praevolitum*, nothing is known that has not first been willed, and this is not as paradoxical as it seems at first sight. "The very knowledge of the spirit as such," writes Vinet in his study of Cousin's book on Pascal's *Pensées*, "needs the heart. Without the desire to see, one does not see; in a great materialization of life and thought, one does not believe in the things of the spirit." We shall see that to believe is, in the first instance, to want to believe.[6]

6.19 Will and intelligence seek opposite things: the former, to absorb the world into us, to make it our own; the latter, that we be absorbed into the world. Opposite? Are they not rather one and the same thing? No, they are not, though they may seem so. Intelligence is monist or pantheist; will is monotheist or egotist. Intelligence needs nothing outside itself on which to exercise itself; it merges with the ideas themselves, whereas will needs matter. To know something is to make myself into what I know; but for me to make use of it, to dominate it, it must remain distinct from me.

6.20 Philosophy and religion are enemies of each other, and because they are enemies they need each other. There is no religion without some philosophical basis, nor any philosophy without religious roots; each lives on its opposite. The history of philosophy is, strictly speaking, a history of religion. And the attacks directed at religion from a supposedly scientific or philosophical point of view are nothing but attacks from another, opposing, religious point of view. "The collision that occurs between natural science and the Christian religion is in reality only a collision between the instinct of natural religion, fused into the scientific observation of nature, and the value of the Christian conception of the universe, which assures the spirit its

6 Victor Cousin (1792–1867), French philosopher.

preeminence over the whole natural world," says Ritschl (*Rechtfertigung und Versoehnung* [Justification and Reconciliation], III, ch. 4, § 28). Now, that instinct is the very instinct of rationality. And Kant's critical idealism is religious in origin; it was to save religion that Kant crossed the limits of reason after having in a certain way dissolved it in skepticism. The system of antitheses, contradictions and antinomies on which Hegel built his absolute idealism has its root and seed in Kant himself, and that root is an irrational root.

6.21 We shall see further on, when we deal with faith, how faith is in its essence nothing but a matter of will, not of reason; how to believe is to want to believe, and to believe in God is, before all and above all, to want there to be a God. And so to believe in the immortality of the soul is to want the soul to be immortal, but to want it with such force that this wanting tramples reason and runs right over it. But not without reprisal.

6.22 The instinct to know and the instinct to live, or rather to survive, come into conflict. Dr. E. Mach, in his work on "The Analysis of Sensations and the Relation of the Physical to the Psychical" (*Die Analyse der Empfindungen und das Verhältniss des Physischen zum Psychischen*), tells us in a note (I. L., § 12) that the investigator too, the scholar, *der Forscher*, fights in the battle for existence; that the paths of science too lead to the mouth; and that the pure instinct to know, *der reine Erkenntnisstrieb*, is still only an ideal under our present social conditions. And so it will always be. *Primum vivere, deinde philosophari* [First live, then philosophize], or perhaps better, *primum supervivere* or *superesse* [first survive].[7]

6.23 Any position of lasting agreement and harmony between reason and life, between philosophy and religion, becomes impossible. And the tragic history of human thought is nothing but the history of a struggle between reason and life. Reason is bent on rationalizing life, making it resign itself to the inevitable, to mortality; and life is bent on vitalizing reason, forcing it

7 Ernst Mach (1838–1916), Austrian physicist and philosopher of science.

to serve as a support for its vital longings. And this is the history of philosophy, inseparable from the history of religion.

6.24 The feeling of the world, of objective reality, is necessarily subjective, human, anthropomorphic. And vitalism will always rise up against rationalism; the will will always stand up against reason. Hence the rhythm of the history of philosophy: the succession of periods in which life prevails, producing spiritualist forms, and others in which reason prevails, producing materialist forms, even though both kinds of forms of belief are disguised under other names. Neither reason nor life ever admits defeat. But we shall return to this in the next chapter.

SAVING UNCERTAINTY

Life clings to reason's skepticism, and from that embrace comes an uncertainty that consoles.

6.25 The vital consequence of rationalism would be suicide. Kierkegaard puts it very well: "Suicide is the existence-consequence[8] of pure thought... We do not praise suicide, but we do praise passion. The thinker, on the other hand, is a curious animal who is very intelligent at certain times of the day but otherwise has nothing in common with man." (*Afsluttende uvidenskabelig Efterskrift*, ch. 3, § 1.)

6.26 Since the thinker, in spite of everything, does not cease to be a man, he puts reason at the service of life, whether he knows it or not. Life deceives reason, and reason deceives life. Scholastic-Aristotelian philosophy, at the service of life, forged a theological-evolutionist system of metaphysics, apparently rational, to serve as a support for our vital longing. That philosophy, the basis of orthodox Christian supernaturalism, whether Catholic or Protestant, was at bottom nothing but a ruse of life to force reason to support it. But reason supported it so thoroughly that it ended by pulverizing it.

8 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. I leave his original expression *Existents-Consequents* thus, almost untranslated. He means the existential or practical consequence, not the consequence in pure reason or logic.

6.27 I have read that the ex-Carmelite Hyacinthe Loyson said he could present himself before God with a quiet mind, for he was at peace with his conscience and with his reason. With what conscience? The religious one? Then I do not understand it. The fact is that no one can serve two masters, least of all when these two masters, though they may sign truces and armistices and compromises, are enemies because their interests are opposed.[9]

6.28 To all this, some will no doubt say that life ought to submit to reason. We shall answer that no one ought to do what he cannot do, and life cannot submit to reason. "It ought, therefore it can," some Kantian will reply. And we shall counter-reply: "It cannot, therefore it ought not." And it cannot, because the end of life is to live, not to understand.

6.29 Nor have there been lacking those who have spoken of the religious duty of resigning oneself to mortality. This is the very height of aberration and insincerity. And against this matter of sincerity someone will come and set truthfulness. So be it; but the two can very well be reconciled. Truthfulness, respect for what I believe to be rational, for what we logically call truth, moves me to affirm one thing in this case: that the immortality of the individual soul is a logical contradiction, something not only irrational but contra-rational. But sincerity leads me to affirm also that I do not resign myself to this other affirmation, and that I protest against its validity. What I feel is a truth, at least as much a truth as what I see, touch, hear and have demonstrated to me—I believe even more of a truth—and sincerity obliges me not to hide my feelings.

6.30 And life, defending itself, looks for reason's weak spot and finds it in skepticism; it grabs hold of it and tries to save itself by clinging to that handhold. It needs the weakness of its adversary.

6.31 Nothing is certain; everything is up in the air. And Lamennais, swelling with passion, exclaims (*Essai sur l'indifférence en matière de religion* [Essay on Indifference in Matters of Religion],

9 Charles Loyson, "Père Hyacinthe" (1827–1912), French Carmelite preacher who broke with Rome in 1869.

IIIe partie, chap. 67): "What! Shall we sink, all hope lost and blindly, into the silent depths of a universal skepticism? Shall we doubt whether we think, whether we feel, whether we are? Nature does not allow it; she obliges us to believe even when our reason is not convinced. Absolute certainty and absolute doubt are equally forbidden to us. We float in a vague middle between these two extremes, as between being and nothingness, for complete skepticism would be the extinction of intelligence and the total death of man.[10] But it is not given to him to annihilate himself. There is something in him that invincibly resists destruction, some vital faith that cannot be named, indomitable even by his own will. Whether he wants to or not, he must believe, because he must act, because he must preserve himself. If he listened to nothing but his reason, it would teach him to doubt everything, itself included, and would reduce him to a state of absolute inaction; he would perish even before he had been able to prove to himself that he exists."

6.32 It is not, strictly speaking, that reason leads us to absolute skepticism—no! Reason does not lead me, and cannot lead me, to doubt that I exist. Where reason leads me is to vital skepticism; better still, to vital negation: not merely to doubt, but to deny that my consciousness survives my death. Vital skepticism comes from the clash between reason and desire. And from this clash, from this embrace between despair and skepticism, is born holy, sweet, saving uncertainty, our supreme consolation.

6.33 Suppose we had absolute, complete certainty that death is a complete, definitive and irrevocable annihilation of personal consciousness, a certainty like our certainty that the three angles of a triangle equal two right angles. Or suppose we had absolute, complete certainty that our personal consciousness continues beyond death in these or those conditions, bringing into it above all the strange and adventitious addition of eternal reward or punishment. Either certainty would make life equally impossible for us. Take the man who believes himself convinced that with death his personal consciousness, his memory, ends

10 Félicité de Lamennais (1782–1854), French priest and writer.

forever. In a hiding place, the most secret recess of the spirit, perhaps without his even knowing it, there remains a shadow, a vague shadow, a shadow of a shadow of uncertainty. And while he tells himself, "Come, let us live this passing life, for there is no other!", the silence of that hiding place tells him: "Who knows!..." Perhaps he believes he does not hear it, but he hears it. And in a fold, too, of the soul of the believer who keeps the firmest faith in the future life, there is a muffled voice, a voice of uncertainty, that whispers in his spiritual ear: "Who knows!..." These voices are perhaps like the buzzing of a mosquito when the gale roars among the trees of the forest. We do not notice that buzzing, and yet, together with the roar of the storm, it reaches our ear. How, otherwise, could we live without that uncertainty?

6.34 The "What if there is?" and the "What if there is not?" are the foundations of our inner life. There may perhaps be a rationalist who has never wavered in his conviction that the soul is mortal, and a vitalist who has never wavered in his faith in immortality. But that will mean at most that, just as there are monsters, there are also people who are stupid in affection or feeling, however much intelligence they have, and people who are stupid in intellect, however great their virtue. But in the normal run of things I cannot believe those who assure me that never, not in the most fleeting blink of an eye, not in the hours of greatest solitude and tribulation, has this murmur of uncertainty surfaced in their consciousness. I do not understand the men who tell me that the prospect of what lies beyond death has never tormented them, and that their own annihilation does not trouble them. And for my part I do not want to make peace between my heart and my head, between my faith and my reason; I want them, rather, to fight each other.

"HELP MY UNBELIEF!"

Faith rests on uncertainty, like the possessed boy's father and Sancho's faith in Don Quixote.

6.35 In chapter IX of the Gospel according to Mark we are told how a man brought his son to Jesus. The boy was possessed by a mute spirit which tore him wherever it seized him, making him foam at the mouth, gnash his teeth and waste away, and so the father wanted to present him to Jesus to be cured. And the Master, impatient with those men who wanted nothing but miracles and signs, exclaimed: "O faithless generation! How long shall I be with you? How long must I bear with you? Bring him to me!" (v. 19). And they brought him. The Master saw him rolling on the ground and asked his father how long this had been going on. The father answered that it had been since his son was a child, and Jesus said to him: "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes" (v.[11] 23). And then the father of the epileptic, or possessed, boy answered with these pregnant and eternal words: "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" Πιστεύω, κύριε, βοήθει τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ μου (v. 23).

6.36 Lord, I believe; come to the aid of my unbelief! This may seem a contradiction, for if he believes, if he trusts, how can he ask the Lord to come to the aid of his lack of trust? And yet it is this very contradiction that gives its whole, deepest human value to that cry from the depths of the possessed boy's father. His faith is a faith founded on uncertainty. Because he believes—that is, because he wants to believe, because he needs his son to be cured—he asks the Lord to come to the help of his unbelief, of his doubt that such a cure can be brought about. Such is human faith. Such was the heroic faith that Sancho Panza had in his master, the Knight Don Quixote of La Mancha, as I believe I have shown in my *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho* (*The Life of Don Quixote and Sancho*): a faith founded on uncertainty, on doubt. And the fact is that Sancho Panza was a man, a whole and true man, and

11 Mark 9:14–29; the father's cry is in verse 24.

he was not stupid, for only if he had been stupid would he have believed, without a shadow of doubt, in his master's madness. His master, for his part, did not believe in it that way either, for he too, mad as he was, was not stupid. He was, at bottom, a man in despair, as I believe I have shown in that work of mine mentioned above. And because he was a heroic man in despair, the hero of inward and resigned despair, he is the eternal model of every man whose soul is a battlefield between reason and the immortal desire. Our Lord Don Quixote is the exemplar of the vitalist whose faith rests on uncertainty, and Sancho is the exemplar of the rationalist who doubts his reason.

6.37 Tormented by agonizing doubts, August Hermann Francke decided to call upon God—a God in whom he no longer believed, or rather in whom he believed he did not believe—to have pity on him, on poor Francke the Pietist, if indeed he existed[12]. And it was an analogous state of mind that inspired me to write the sonnet entitled "The Atheist's Prayer," which appears in my *Rosario de sonetos líricos* (*Rosary of Lyric Sonnets*) and ends thus: I suffer at your expense,
non-existent God, for if you existed
I too would truly exist.[13]

6.38 Yes: if the God who guarantees our personal immortality existed, then we would truly exist. And if not, not!

6.39 That terrible secret, that hidden will of God which finds expression in predestination, that idea which dictated to Luther his *servum arbitrium* [enslaved will] and gives Calvinism its tragic sense, that doubt about one's own salvation—at bottom it is nothing but uncertainty, which, allied with despair, forms the basis of faith. Faith, some say, is not thinking about it: surrendering oneself trustingly into the arms of God, the secrets of whose providence are inscrutable. Yes, but unbelief is also not

12 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. A. Albrecht Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus,* II, 1 Abt. Bonn 1884, p. 251.

13 August Hermann Francke (1663–1727), German Pietist theologian and founder of the Halle orphanage and schools.

thinking about it. That absurd faith, that faith without a shadow of uncertainty, that faith of stupid colliers, joins hands with absurd unbelief, with unbelief without a shadow of uncertainty, the unbelief of intellectuals afflicted with affective stupidity, so as not to think about it.

6.40 And what but uncertainty, doubt, the voice of reason, was the abyss, the terrible *gouffre* before which Pascal trembled? And it was this that led him to formulate his terrible sentence: *Il faut s'abêtir*—one must make oneself stupid!

6.41 All of Jansenism, the Catholic adaptation of Calvinism, bears this same stamp. That Port-Royal which owed its existence to a Basque, the Abbé de Saint-Cyran—a Basque like Íñigo de Loyola, and like the one who writes these lines—always carries at its bottom a sediment of religious despair, of the suicide of reason. Íñigo, too, killed reason: he killed it in obedience.[14]

6.42 Out of despair one affirms, out of despair one denies, and out of despair one abstains from affirming and denying. Look at most of our atheists and you will see that they are atheists out of rage, rage at not being able to believe that there is a God. They are God's personal enemies. They have substantivized and personalized Nothingness, and their no-God is an Anti-God.

6.43 And we need say nothing of that abject and ignoble phrase, "if there were no God, it would be necessary to invent him." This is the expression of the filthy skepticism of conservatives, of those who regard religion as an instrument of government and whose interest it is that there be a hell in the other life for those who oppose their worldly interests here. That repugnant Sadducee's phrase is worthy of the unbelieving flatterer of the powerful to whom it is attributed.[15]

6.44 No, that is not the deep vital meaning. It is not a matter of a transcendent police force, nor of securing order—some order! —on earth with threats of punishment and the lure of reward,

14 Saint-Cyran (Jean Duvergier de Hauranne, 1581–1643) was spiritual director of the convent of Port-Royal and a founder of Jansenism. Íñigo is the baptismal name of Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, whose rule makes obedience central.
15 The line is Voltaire's ("Si Dieu n'existait pas, il faudrait l'inventer," 1770). The Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead.

eternal ones, after death. All this is very base, that is to say, nothing more than politics, or, if you like, ethics. It is a matter of living.

6.45 And the strongest ground of uncertainty, what most shakes our vital desire, what most lends force to the dissolving work of reason, is when we set ourselves to consider what a life of the soul after death might be. For even if, by a mighty effort of faith, we overcome reason, which tells and teaches us that the soul is nothing but a function of the organized body, there still remains the task of imagining what an immortal and eternal life of the soul could be. In this imagining, contradictions and absurdities multiply, and one arrives, perhaps, at Kierkegaard's conclusion: that if the mortality of the soul is terrible, its immortality is no less terrible.

6.46 But once the first difficulty is overcome, the only true one; once the obstacle of reason is overcome and faith is won—faith, however painful and wrapped in uncertainty, that our personal consciousness will persist after death—what difficulty, what obstacle is there to our imagining that persistence to the measure of our desire? Yes, we can imagine it as an eternal rejuvenation, as an eternal growing of ourselves, a going toward God, toward the Universal Consciousness, without ever reaching him; we can imagine it... Who can put fetters on the imagination once it has broken the chain of the rational?

6.47 I know I am being heavy, tiresome, perhaps tedious; but all of it is necessary. And I must repeat once more that it is not a matter of a transcendent police force, nor of making God a great Judge or Civil Guard; that is, it is not a matter of heaven and hell to prop up our poor worldly morality, nor is it a matter of anything selfish and personal. It is not I; it is the whole human race that is at stake; it is the ultimate purpose of all our culture. I am one; but all are I's.

6.48 Do you remember the end of that "Song of the Wild Cock" which the despairing Leopardi—the victim of reason, who never managed to come to believe—wrote in prose? "A time will come," he says, "when this Universe and Nature herself will have been

extinguished. And just as of the greatest human kingdoms and empires, and of their marvelous deeds, which in another age were most famous, there remains today neither sign nor any fame, so likewise of the whole world, and of the infinite vicissitudes and calamities of created things, not a single trace will remain; but a naked silence and a most profound stillness will fill the immense space.[16] Thus this admirable and fearful mystery of universal existence, before it has been declared or made understood, will be extinguished and lost." This is what they now call, as a scientific and very rationalist term, *entropy*. Very pretty, isn't it? Spencer invented that business of the primitive homogeneous, from which no one knows how any heterogeneity could ever have sprung. Well then, this *entropy* is a kind of ultimate homogeneous, a state of perfect equilibrium. For a soul yearning for life, it is the closest thing to nothingness there can be.[17]

LET US MYTHOLOGIZE

Having reached the depths, Unamuno turns to fantasies grounded in feeling rather than reason.

6.49 I have brought the reader who has had the patience to read me this far through a series of painful reflections, always trying to give reason its due and to give feeling its due as well. I have not wanted to keep silent about what others keep silent about; I have wanted to lay bare not my own soul but the human soul, whatever it may be, and whether or not it is destined to disappear. And we have reached the bottom of the abyss, the irreconcilable conflict between reason and the vital feeling. And having got here, I have told you that we must accept the conflict as such and live by it. Now it remains for me to show you how, as I feel and even as I think, this despair can be the basis of a vigorous

16 Giacomo Leopardi's "Cantico del gallo silvestre," one of his prose *Operette morali* (1824–32).

17 Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), English philosopher who described evolution as a passage from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous.

life, of effective action, of an ethics, an aesthetics, a religion and even a logic. But in what follows there will be as much fantasy as reasoning; that is to say, much more.

6.50 I do not want to deceive anyone, or to pass off as philosophy what is perhaps nothing but poetry or phantasmagoria—mythology, in any case. The divine Plato, after discussing the immortality of the soul in his dialogue *Phaedo*—an ideal immortality, that is, a lying one—launched into setting out the myths about the other life, saying that one must also mythologize. Let us, then, mythologize.

6.51 Anyone who is looking for reasons—what we strictly call reasons: scientific arguments, technically logical considerations—may give up following me. In what remains of these reflections on the tragic sense, I am going to fish for the reader's attention with a bare hook, without bait; whoever wants to bite, let him bite, but I deceive no one. Only at the end do I mean to gather everything together and maintain that this religious despair I was speaking of, which is nothing but the tragic sense of life itself, is, more or less veiled, the very ground of the consciousness of the cultured individuals and peoples of today—that is, of those individuals and those peoples who suffer neither from intellectual stupidity nor from stupidity of feeling.

6.52 And that sense is the source of heroic deeds.

6.53 If in what follows you come across arbitrary apothegms, abrupt transitions, breaks in continuity, veritable somersaults of thought, do not say you were deceived. We are going to enter—if you are willing to come with me—a field of contradictions between feeling and reasoning, and we shall have to make use of both.

6.54 What follows has come to me not from reason but from life, although in order to pass it on to you I have, in a certain way, to rationalize it. Most of it cannot be reduced to a theory or a logical system; but, like Walt Whitman, the enormous Yankee poet, I charge you not to found any school or theory on me. / *I charge that there be no theory or school founded out of me.* (Myself and Mine.)

6.55 Nor are the fantasies that follow mine—no! They belong also to other men, not exactly other thinkers, who have gone before me in this vale of tears and have brought their life out into the open and given it expression. Their life, I say, and not their thought, except insofar as it was the thought of life: thought on an irrational basis.

6.56 Does this mean that everything we are about to see—the efforts of the irrational to express itself—lacks all rationality, all objective value? No. The absolutely, irrevocably irrational is inexpressible, is incommunicable. But the contra-rational is not. Perhaps there is no way to rationalize the irrational; but there is a way to rationalize the contra-rational, and that is by trying to set it forth. Since only the rational is intelligible, truly intelligible, and since the absurd, lacking sense as it does, is condemned to be incommunicable, you will see that whenever one manages to express something that seems irrational or absurd and to make it understood, it always resolves itself into something rational, even if it is only the negation of what is asserted.

6.57 The maddest dreams of fantasy have some ground of reason, and who knows whether everything a man can imagine has not happened, does not happen or will not happen at some time, in one world or another? The possible combinations are perhaps infinite. It only remains to know whether everything imaginable is possible.

6.58 It may also be said, and justly, that much of what I am going to set out is a repetition of ideas set out a hundred times before and refuted another hundred; but when an idea comes back again, it is because, strictly speaking, it was never truly refuted. I do not claim novelty for most of these fantasies, just as I do not claim either—of course!—that voices casting the same complaints to the wind have not sounded before mine. But the fact that the same eternal complaint can return, coming from another mouth, only means that the suffering persists.

6.59 And it is well to repeat once more the same eternal lamentations, those that were already old in the time of Job and Ecclesiastes—even if one repeats them in the same words—so that the

progressives may see that this is something that never dies. Whoever makes his own the vanity of vanities of Ecclesiastes, or the complaints of Job, and repeats them, even word for word, performs a work of warning. We must keep repeating the *memento mori* [remember that you must die].

6.60 What for? you will say. If only so that some people will be irritated and see that this has not died, that as long as there are human beings it cannot die; so that they may be convinced that all the past centuries survive today, in the twentieth century, and all of them alive. When even a supposed error comes back, it is, believe me, because it has not ceased to be partly true—just as when someone reappears, it is because he did not wholly die.

6.61 Yes, I know that others before me have felt what I feel and express; that many others feel it today, though they keep it to themselves. Why do I not keep it to myself too? Well, because most of those who feel it do keep silent about it; but even while keeping silent, they obey in silence that voice from the depths. And I do not keep silent about it because for many it is what must not be said, the unspeakable—*infandum*—and I believe it is necessary to say again and again what must not be said. That it leads nowhere? Even if it led only to irritating the progressives, those who believe that truth is consolation, it would lead to no small thing. To irritating them, and to their saying: What a pity about the man! If only he put his intelligence to better use!... To which someone may perhaps add that I do not know what I am saying; and I shall answer that perhaps he is right—and being right is so little!—but that I feel what I say and know what I feel, and that is enough for me. And that it is better to be short of reason than to have reason to spare.[18]

UNCERTAINTY AS A BASIS FOR ACTION

The struggle between reason and faith can itself found action and morality.

6.62 And whoever goes on reading me will also see how hope can rise out of this abyss of despair, and how this critical position can be a source of action and of human work, deeply human, and of solidarity and even of progress. The reader who goes on reading me will see its pragmatic justification. And he will see how, in order to act, and to act effectively and morally, neither of the two opposing certainties is needed—neither that of faith nor that of reason—and still less (this in no case) is there any need to evade the problem of the immortality of the soul or to deform it idealistically, that is, hypocritically. The reader will see how this uncertainty, and the suffering it brings, and the fruitless struggle to escape from it, can be and is a basis for action and a foundation of morality.

6.63 And since the sense of uncertainty, the inner struggle between reason and faith, and the passionate longing for eternal life are thus a basis for action and a foundation of morality, that feeling would, by the pragmatist's standard, be justified. But let it be on record that I do not look for this practical consequence in order to justify it; I point to it because I find it through inner experience. I neither want nor ought to seek any justification for this state of inner struggle and uncertainty and longing; it is a fact, and that is enough. And if someone who finds himself in it, at the bottom of the abyss, does not find right there motives and incentives for action and for life, and therefore commits suicide, bodily or spiritually—either by killing himself or by renouncing all work of human solidarity—it will not be I who censure him. And quite apart from the fact that the bad consequences of a doctrine, that is, what we call bad, prove only, I repeat, that the doctrine is bad for our desires, not that it is false, consequences depend even more on the one who draws them than on the doc-

18 The play is on tener razón, "to be right," literally "to have reason."

trine. The same principle serves one man to act and another to refrain from acting; serves this one to act in one direction, and that one to act in the opposite direction. And the truth is that our doctrines are usually nothing but the *a posteriori* justification of our conduct, or the way we try to explain it to ourselves.

6.64 Man, in fact, cannot resign himself to not knowing the motives of his own conduct. Someone who has been hypnotized and given the suggestion of this or that act afterwards invents reasons to justify it and make it logical in his own eyes and in those of others, not knowing, in reality, the true cause of his act. Just so every other man—who is hypnotized too, for life is a dream—looks for reasons for his conduct. And if chess pieces had consciousness, they would very likely attribute free will to their movements, that is, a purposive rationality. And so it turns out that every philosophical theory serves to explain and justify an ethics, a doctrine of conduct, which in reality springs from its author's inner moral feeling. But of the true reason or cause of this feeling, the very man who harbors it perhaps has no clear consciousness.

6.65 Consequently, I believe I may suppose this. My reason, which is in a certain way part of the reason of my brothers in humanity, in time and in space, teaches me this absolute skepticism as regards the longing for unending life; and so it is my sense of life, which is the essence of life itself—my vitality, my unbridled appetite for living and my repugnance at dying, this refusal of mine to resign myself to death—that suggests to me the doctrines with which I try to counteract the work of reason. Do these doctrines have an objective value? someone will ask me; and I shall answer that I do not understand what this objective value of a doctrine is supposed to be. I will not say that it is the more or less poetic or unphilosophical doctrines I am going to set out that make me live; but I dare say that it is my longing to live, and to live forever, that inspires those doctrines in me. And if with them I manage to strengthen and sustain that same longing in someone else, where it is perhaps flagging, I shall have done human work, and above all I shall have lived. In a

word: with reason, without reason or against it, I just don't feel like dying. And when at last I die, if I die wholly, it will not be I who have died—that is, I shall not have let myself die—but human destiny that will have killed me. Unless I come to lose my head—or, better still than my head, my heart—I do not resign from life; I shall be dismissed from it.

6.66 Nor is anything gained by trotting out the ambiguous words pessimism and optimism, which often tell us the opposite of what the person using them meant to tell us. To label a doctrine pessimistic is not to condemn its validity, nor are the so-called optimists more effective in action. I believe, on the contrary, that many of the greatest heroes, perhaps the very greatest, have been men in despair, and that it was out of despair that they accomplished their deeds. And that, apart from this, and accepting these labels of optimism and pessimism, ambiguous though they are, there is room for a certain transcendent pessimism that begets a temporal and earthly optimism—this is something I propose to develop in the rest of this treatise.

6.67 Very different, I know well, is the position of our progressives, those of the *central current of contemporary European thought*; but I cannot bring myself to believe that these people do not deliberately close their eyes to the great problem, and that they do not live, at bottom, on a lie, trying to stifle the tragic sense of life.

6.68 These considerations are a kind of practical summary of the critique developed in the first six chapters of this treatise: a way of setting down the practical position to which that critique can lead someone who does not want to renounce life, and does not want to renounce reason either, and must live and act between these two opposing millstones that grind our soul. And with these considerations made, the reader who follows me from here on knows that I am going to lead him into a field of fantasies—fantasies not devoid of reason, for without reason nothing subsists, but founded on feeling. And as for their truth—

the true truth, what is independently of us, outside our logic and our cardiac—as for that, who knows?[19]

19 Unamuno coins cardíaca, a "logic of the heart," as a counterpart to lógica.

VII. Love, Suffering, Compassion and Personality

Amor, dolor, compasión y personalidad
Love as compassion; how we personalize the universe and come to feel a God.

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7 *Cain.* Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn
To anticipate my immortality.
Lucifer. Thou didst before I came upon thee.
Cain. How?
Lucifer. By suffering.
(Lord Byron: *Cain,* act II, scene 1.)

7.1 Love, my readers and brothers, is the most tragic thing there is in the world and in life. Love is the child of illusion and the parent of disillusion; love is consolation in desolation; it is the only medicine against death, being, as it is, death's sister. Fratelli, a un tempo stesso, Amore e Morte / Ingenerò la sorte [Fate begot Love and Death as brothers, at one and the same time], as Leopardi sang.[1]

7.2 Love seeks furiously, through the beloved, something that lies beyond the beloved; and since it does not find it, it despairs.

LOVE AND DEATH

Sexual love perpetuates us by a partial dying; spiritual love is born of shared suffering.

7.3 Whenever we speak of love, sexual love comes to mind: the love between man and woman to perpetuate the human race on earth. And this is what makes it impossible to reduce love either to the purely intellective or to the purely volitional while leaving out its sentimental, or if you like its sensitive, side. For love, at bottom, is neither idea nor volition; it is rather desire, feeling; it is something carnal even in the spirit. Thanks to love we feel all that is flesh in the spirit.

7.4 Sexual love is the generative type of all other love. In love and through it we seek to perpetuate ourselves, and we perpetuate ourselves on earth only on condition of dying, of giving our life over to others. The humblest little animals, the lowest living things, multiply by dividing, by splitting, by ceasing to be the one they were before.

7.5 But when the vitality of the being that multiplies thus by dividing is at last exhausted, the species must from time to time renew the wellspring of life through unions of two declining individuals, through what is called conjugation in protozoa. They unite in order to divide again with more vigor. And every act of begetting is a ceasing to be, wholly or partly, what one was; a splitting; a partial death. To live is to give oneself, to perpetuate oneself, and to perpetuate oneself and give oneself is to die. Perhaps the supreme delight of begetting is nothing but a foretaste of death, the tearing apart of one's own vital essence. We unite with another, but it is in order to split; that most intimate embrace is nothing but a most intimate tearing apart. At bottom, the delight of sexual love, the spasm of generation, is a sensation of resurrection, of rising again in another, because only in others can we rise again so as to perpetuate ourselves.

7.6 There is, no doubt, something tragically destructive at the bottom of love as it presents itself to us in its primitive animal form, in the invincible instinct that drives a male and a female to fuse their innermost beings in a furious embrace. The same thing that fuses their bodies separates their souls, in a certain respect; in embracing, they hate each other as much as they love each other, and above all they struggle, they struggle for a third, still without life. Love is a struggle, and there are animal species in which the male mistreats the female as he unites with her, and others in which the female devours the male once he has fertilized her.

7.7 Love has been called a mutual egoism. And in fact each of the lovers seeks to possess the other; and seeking through the other his own perpetuation, without thinking of it or intending it at the time, he consequently seeks his own pleasure. Each of the lovers is for the other an instrument of pleasure immediately, and of perpetuation mediately. And so they are tyrants and slaves; each of them at once tyrant and slave of the other.

7.8 Is it at all strange, then, that the deepest religious sense has condemned carnal love and exalted virginity? Avarice is the source of all sins, said the Apostle. And this is because avarice takes wealth, which is only a means, as an end; and the heart of sin is just this: taking means as ends, ignoring or despising the end. And carnal love, which takes as its end pleasure, which is only a means, and not perpetuation, which is the end—what is it but avarice? And it is possible that there are those who keep their virginity in order to perpetuate themselves the better. And to perpetuate something more human than the flesh.[2]

7.9 For what lovers perpetuate on earth is the flesh of suffering, is suffering, is death. Love is the brother, the son and at the same time the father of death, which is its sister, its mother and its daughter. And so there is in the depth of love a depth of eternal despair, from which hope and consolation spring. For from this carnal and primitive love I have been speaking of, this

1 The opening lines of Leopardi's poem "Amore e Morte" (Love and Death).
2 1 Timothy 6:10: "the love of money is the root of all evil."

love of the whole body with its senses, which is the animal origin of human society—from this falling in love springs spiritual and sorrowful love.

7.10 This other form of love, this spiritual love, is born of suffering, is born of the death of carnal love; it is born too of the compassionate feeling of protection that parents experience before their helpless children. Lovers do not come to love each other with self-surrender, with a true fusion of their souls and not merely of their bodies, until the mighty pestle of suffering has crushed their hearts, grinding them together in one and the same mortar of sorrow. Sensual love fused their bodies but separated their souls; it kept them strangers to each other. But from that love they had a fruit of flesh, a child. And this child, begotten in death, perhaps fell ill and died. And it came to pass that over the fruit of their carnal fusion and their spiritual separation or mutual estrangement—their bodies separated and cold with grief, but their souls fused in grief—the lovers, the parents, gave each other an embrace of despair; and then, from the death of the child of the flesh, true spiritual love was born. Or else, with the bond of flesh that united them broken, they breathed a sigh of release. For human beings love one another with spiritual love only when they have suffered one and the same suffering together, when for some time they have plowed the stony ground yoked to the same yoke of a common suffering. Then they came to know one another and to feel one another, and to feel with one another in their common misery; they felt compassion for one another, and they loved one another. For to love is to feel compassion; and if bodies are united by pleasure, souls are united by sorrow.[3]

7.11 All of which is felt still more clearly and strongly when there springs up, takes root and grows one of those tragic loves that must struggle against the adamantine laws of Destiny: one of those loves that are born at the wrong time or in the wrong way, before or after the moment, or outside the norm, in which

3 Compadecer, "to feel compassion for," is literally "to suffer with" (Latin compati); Unamuno builds his whole account of love on this sense.

the world, which is custom, would have welcomed them. The more walls Destiny and the world and its law set between the lovers, the more strongly they feel driven toward each other. The happiness of loving each other turns bitter for them, and the pain of not being able to love each other openly and freely grows; and they feel compassion for each other from the roots of their hearts, and this shared compassion, which is their common misery and their common happiness, gives their love both fire and fuel. And they suffer their joy, enjoying their suffering. And they place their love outside the world, and the strength of this poor love suffering under the yoke of Destiny makes them intuit another world, in which there is no law but the freedom of love, another world in which there are no barriers because there is no flesh. For nothing fills us more with hope and faith in another world than the impossibility of a love of ours truly bearing fruit in this world of flesh and appearances.

7.12 And maternal love—what is it but compassion for the weak, for the helpless, for the poor defenseless child who needs its mother's milk and lap? And in woman all love is maternal.

TO LOVE IS TO FEEL COMPASSION

Compassion spreads from oneself to other people and to all things, personalizing them.

7.13 To love in spirit is to feel compassion, and whoever feels more compassion loves more. Men burning with ardent charity toward their neighbors are so because they reached the bottom of their own misery, of their own seemingness, of their own nothingness; and then, turning their eyes, thus opened, toward their fellows, they saw that they too were miserable, mere seemings, doomed to annihilation, and they felt compassion for them and loved them.

7.14 Man yearns to be loved, or, what comes to the same thing, yearns to be the object of compassion. Man wants his sorrows and his sufferings to be felt and shared. There is more than a ruse for getting alms in the way beggars at the roadside show

the passer-by their sore or their gangrenous stump. Alms are not so much help in bearing the hardships of life as compassion. The beggar is not grateful for the alms of someone who gives them with his face turned away, so as not to see him and to get him out of the way; rather, he is more grateful for compassion without help than for help without compassion, although in another respect he may prefer the latter. If you doubt it, see with what pleasure he tells his troubles to someone who is moved by hearing them. He wants to be indulged—to be loved.

7.15 Woman's love above all, I was saying, is always compassionate at bottom; it is maternal. A woman yields to her lover because she feels him suffering with desire. Isabella felt compassion for Lorenzo, Juliet for Romeo, Francesca for Paolo. The woman seems to say: "Come, poor dear, and don't suffer so on my account!" And that is why her love is more loving and purer than man's, and braver and longer-lasting.[4]

7.16 Compassion, then, is the essence of spiritual human love, of love that is conscious of being love, of love that is not purely animal—of the love, in short, of a rational person. Love feels compassion, and feels more compassion the more it loves.

7.17 Inverting the *nihil volitum quin praecognitum* [nothing is willed that is not first known], I told you that *nihil cognitum quin praevolitum*: that nothing is known that has not in one way or another first been willed. And one may even add that nothing can be known well that is not loved, that is not the object of compassion.

7.18 As love grows, this burning yearning for the further beyond and the further within goes on extending to everything it sees; it comes to feel compassion for everything. As you go into yourself and delve deeper into yourself, you discover your own inanity: that you are not all that you are not, that you are not what you would like to be, that you are, in short, nothing but a mere nothing. And on touching your own nothingness, on failing to feel your permanent ground, on failing to reach your own

4 Isabella and Lorenzo come from Boccaccio's *Decameron* (IV, 5), retold by Keats; Francesca and Paolo from Dante's *Inferno*, canto V.

infinitude, still less your own eternity, you feel compassion for yourself with all your heart, and you are kindled with a sorrowful love for yourself. That love kills what is called self-love, which is nothing but a kind of sensual delight in yourself, something like the flesh of your soul enjoying itself.

7.19 Spiritual love of oneself, the compassion one comes to feel for oneself, may perhaps be called egotism; but it is the most opposite thing there is to ordinary egoism. For from this love or compassion for yourself, from this intense despair—because just as before you were born you were not, so after you die you will not be—you pass on to feeling compassion for, that is, to loving, all your fellows and brothers in seemingness: wretched shadows filing past from their nothingness to their nothingness, sparks of consciousness that shine for a moment in the infinite and eternal darkness. And from other men, your fellows, passing through those most like you, those you live with, you go on to feel compassion for all that lives, and even for what perhaps does not live but exists. That distant star shining up there in the night will go out one day and turn to dust, and it will cease to shine and to exist. And like it, the whole starry sky. Poor sky!

7.20 And if it is painful to have to cease to be one day, it would perhaps be more painful to go on being forever oneself, and nothing more than oneself, without being able to be another at the same time, without being able to be everything else at the same time, without being able to be everything.

7.21 If you look at the universe as closely and as inwardly as you can look at it, which is within yourself; if you feel, and not merely contemplate, all things in your consciousness, where every one of them has left its painful mark, you will reach the very depths of tedium—not of life only, but of something more: the tedium of existence, the well of vanity of vanities. And that is how you will come to feel compassion for everything, to universal love.

7.22 In order to love everything, to feel compassion for everything, human and extra-human, living and non-living, you

must feel everything within yourself, you must personalize everything. For love personalizes everything it loves, everything it feels compassion for. We feel compassion for—that is, we love—only what is like us, and insofar as it is like us, and all the more the more it resembles us. And so our compassion grows, and with it our love for things, as we discover the likenesses they have with us. Or rather, it is love itself, which by its nature tends to grow, that reveals these likenesses to us. If I come to feel compassion for and to love the poor star that will vanish from the sky one day, it is because love, compassion, makes me feel in it a consciousness, more or less dim, that makes it suffer at being nothing more than a star, and at having to cease to be one some day. For all consciousness is consciousness of death and of suffering.

7.23 Consciousness, *conscientia*, is shared knowledge; it is a feeling-with, *con-sentimiento*; and to feel with, *con-sentir*, is to suffer with, *com-padecer*.[5]

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE UNIVERSE

Love personalizes the All and discovers God, and suffering is the path to consciousness.

7.24 Love personalizes whatever it loves. One can fall in love with an idea only by personalizing it. And when love is so great and so living, so strong and overflowing, that it loves everything, then it personalizes everything and discovers that the total All, the Universe, is also a Person, with a Consciousness—a Consciousness which in its turn suffers, feels compassion and loves, that is, which is consciousness. And this Consciousness of the Universe, which love discovers by personalizing whatever it loves, is what we call God. And so the soul feels compassion for God and feels God's compassion for itself; it loves him and feels itself loved by him, sheltering its misery in the bosom of the

5 Unamuno plays on Latin con-scientia (knowing-with) and on Spanish consentir ("to consent," literally "to feel with") and compadecer ("to feel compassion," literally "to suffer with").

eternal and infinite misery, which, in becoming eternal and infinite, is supreme happiness itself.

7.25 God, then, is the personalization of the All, the eternal and infinite Consciousness of the Universe. It is a Consciousness held captive by matter and struggling to free itself from it. We personalize the All in order to save ourselves from nothingness, and the only truly mysterious mystery is the mystery of suffering.

7.26 Suffering is the path of consciousness, and it is through suffering that living beings come to be conscious of themselves. For to be conscious of oneself, to have personality, is to know and feel oneself distinct from other beings. One comes to feel this distinction only through collision, through suffering, greater or lesser, through the sensation of one's own limit. Consciousness of oneself is nothing but consciousness of one's own limitation. I feel myself when I feel that I am not the others; to know and feel how far I extend is to know where I cease to be, the point beyond which I am not.

7.27 And how is one to know that one exists without suffering, a little or a lot? How is one to turn back upon oneself, to attain reflective consciousness, except through suffering? When we enjoy, we forget ourselves, forget that we exist; we pass over into another, into what is not ours, and become alien-ated. And only in suffering do we withdraw into ourselves, return to ourselves, become ourselves. *Nessun maggior dolore*
che ricordarsi del tempo felice
nella miseria [There is no greater sorrow than to remember the happy time in misery], Dante has Francesca da Rimini say (*Inferno*, V, 121–123). But if there is no greater sorrow than to remember the happy time in misfortune, there is, on the other hand, no pleasure in remembering misfortune in the time of prosperity.[6]

6 Unamuno plays on *en-ajenarse* (to be alienated, literally "to go into what is another's") and *ensimismarse* (to withdraw into oneself, literally "to go into one's self").

7.28 "The bitterest sorrow among men is to aspire to much and be able to do nothing (πολλὰ φρονέοντα μηδενὸς κρατέειν)," as, according to Herodotus (Book IX, ch. 16), a Persian said to a Theban at a banquet. And so it is. We can embrace everything, or almost everything, with knowledge and desire; nothing, or almost nothing, with the will. And happiness is not contemplation—no!—if that contemplation means impotence. And out of this collision between our knowing and our power, compassion springs.

7.29 We feel compassion for what is like ourselves, and the more and the better we feel its likeness to us, the more compassion we feel for it. And if we may say that this likeness provokes our compassion, it can also be maintained that our store of compassion, ready to pour itself out over everything, is what makes us discover the likeness of things to ourselves, the common bond that unites us with them in suffering.

7.30 Our own struggle to gain, preserve and increase our own consciousness makes us discover, in the strivings and movements and revolutions of all things, a struggle to gain, preserve or increase consciousness, toward which everything tends. Beneath the acts of my nearest fellows, other men, I feel—or rather feel-with—a state of consciousness like mine beneath my own acts. When I hear my brother cry out in pain, my own pain awakens and cries out in the depths of my consciousness. And in the same way I feel the pain of animals, and that of a tree when a branch is torn from it, above all when my imagination is lively—imagination, which is the faculty of intuition, of inner vision.

7.31 Descending from ourselves, from our own human consciousness—the only thing we feel from within, the thing in which feeling oneself is one with being oneself—we suppose that all living things have some consciousness, more or less obscure, and so do the very rocks, which also live. And the evolution of organic beings is nothing but a struggle for fullness of consciousness through suffering, a constant aspiration to be others

without ceasing to be what they are, to break their limits by limiting themselves.

7.32 And this process of personalization or subjectivization of everything external, phenomenal or objective, constitutes the very vital process of philosophy in the struggle of life against reason and of reason against life. We pointed this out in our previous chapter, and here we must confirm it by developing it further.

THOUGHT IS MYTH-MAKING

Vico, Comte and Avenarius show that our thinking remains anthropomorphic and mythopoeic.

7.33 Giambattista Vico, with his profound aesthetic insight into the soul of antiquity, saw that man's spontaneous philosophy was to make himself the rule of the universe, guided by an *istinto d'animazione* [instinct of animation]. Language, necessarily anthropomorphic, mythopoeic, engenders thought. "Poetic wisdom, which was the first wisdom of the gentiles," he tells us in his *Scienza Nuova* [*New Science*], "must have begun with a metaphysics not reasoned and abstract, like that of the learned of today, but felt and imagined, as that of the first men must have been... This was their own poetry, which was a faculty born with them, for they were naturally furnished with such senses and such imaginations. It was born of ignorance of causes, which was for them the mother of wonder at everything, for, being ignorant of everything, they marveled intensely.[7] Such poetry began in them as divine, because at the same time they imagined the causes of the things they felt and marveled at to be gods... In this way the first men of the gentile nations, like children of the nascent human race, created things out of their ideas... From this nature of human things there remained the eternal property, explained in noble words by Tacitus when he

7 Giambattista Vico (1668–1744), Neapolitan philosopher of history; his *Scienza Nuova* (1725–1744) traces the course of nations from a poetic age of gods to an age of reason.

said, not idly, that men in terror *fingunt simul creduntque* [invent and at the same time believe]."

7.34 And then Vico goes on to show us the age of reason, no longer that of imagination: this age of ours, in which our mind is too far withdrawn from the senses, even among the common people, "with so many abstractions as the languages are full of." In this age it is "naturally denied us to form the vast image of such a lady as is called sympathetic Nature; for while the mouth calls her so, there is nothing of the sort in the mind, because the mind is in falsehood, in nothingness." "Now," Vico adds, "it is naturally denied us to enter into the vast imagination of those first men." But is this true? Do we not go on living off the creations of their imagination, embodied forever in language—the language with which we think, or rather, which thinks in us?

7.35 In vain did Comte declare that human thought had already left the theological age and was leaving the metaphysical to enter the positive; the three ages coexist and, even while opposing one another, lean on one another. Brand-new positivism is nothing but metaphysics as soon as it stops denying and affirms something, as soon as it becomes really positive. And metaphysics is always, at bottom, theology; and theology is born of imagination placed at the service of life, which wants to be immortal.

7.36 Our feeling of the world, on which our understanding of it is founded, is necessarily anthropomorphic and mythopoeic. When rationalism dawned with Thales of Miletus, this philosopher left behind Oceanus and Tethys, gods and parents of gods, to set up water as the principle of things; but this water was a god in disguise. Beneath nature, φύσις, and the world, κόσμος, mythic, anthropomorphic creations were throbbing. Language itself carried them within it. Socrates, as Xenophon tells us (*Memorabilia* I, 1, 6–9), distinguished among phenomena those within the reach of human study and those others that the gods have reserved for themselves, and he execrated Anaxagoras's wish to explain everything rationally. Hippocrates, his contemporary, held all diseases to be divine; and Plato

believed that the sun and the stars are animate gods, with their souls (*Philebus* c. 16; *Laws* X), and allowed astronomical inquiry only so long as no blasphemy was uttered against those gods. And Aristotle, in his *Physics*, tells us that Zeus rains not so that the wheat may grow, but out of necessity, ἐξ ἀνάγκης. They tried to mechanize or rationalize God, but God rebelled against them.

7.37 And the concept of God, forever reborn because it springs from the eternal sense of God in man—what is it but the eternal protest of life against reason, the never-conquered instinct of personalization? And what is the very notion of substance but the objectification of what is most subjective, which is the will, or consciousness? For consciousness, even before it knows itself as reason, feels itself, touches itself—or rather is itself—as will, and as will not to die. Hence that rhythm in the history of thought of which we were speaking. Positivism brought us an age of rationalism, that is, of materialism, mechanism or mortalism; and now, behold, vitalism, spiritualism, returns. What have the efforts of pragmatism been but efforts to restore faith in the human purpose of the universe? What are the efforts of a Bergson, for example, above all in his work on creative evolution, but struggles to restore the personal God and eternal consciousness? The fact is that life does not surrender.

7.38 And it is no use trying to suppress this mythopoeic or anthropomorphic process and to rationalize our thought, as if one thought only in order to think and to know, and not in order to live. Language itself, with which we think, prevents us. Language, the substance of thought, is a system of metaphors with a mythic and anthropomorphic basis. To construct a purely rational philosophy, one would have to do it with algebraic formulas, or create a language for it—an inhuman language, that is, one unfit for the needs of life. That is what Dr. Richard Avenarius, professor of philosophy at Zurich, attempted in his "Critique of Pure Experience" (*Kritik der reinen Erfahrung*), so as to

avoid preconceptions.[8] And this vigorous effort of Avenarius, the leader of the empiriocriticists, ends, strictly speaking, in pure skepticism. He himself tells us so at the end of the preface to the aforementioned work: "The childish confidence that it is given to us to find the truth disappeared long ago; as we advance, we become aware of its difficulties, and with that of the limit of our powers. And the end?... If only we may come to see clearly into ourselves!"

7.39 To see clearly!... to see clearly! Only a pure thinker would see clearly—one who used algebra instead of language and could free himself from his own humanity, that is, an insubstantial being, merely objective: a non-being, in short. Whether reason likes it or not, we must think with life; and whether life likes it or not, we must rationalize thought.

7.40 This animation, this personification, is embedded in our very knowing. "Who rains? Who thunders?" old Strepsiades asks Socrates in Aristophanes' *The Clouds*, and the philosopher answers him: "Not Zeus, but the clouds." And Strepsiades: "But who but Zeus makes them move?" To which Socrates: "Nothing of the kind; it is the ethereal vortex." "The Vortex?" Strepsiades adds. "I didn't know that... So it is not Zeus, but the Vortex, that now rules in his place." And the poor old man goes on personifying and animating the Vortex, which now reigns like a king not without consciousness of his royalty. And all of us, when we pass from some Zeus or other to some vortex or other—from God to matter, for example—do the same. And this is because philosophy does not work on the objective reality we have before our senses, but on the complex of ideas, images, notions, perceptions, etc., embodied in language and handed down to us with it by our ancestors. What we call the world, the objective world, is a social tradition. It is given to us ready-made.

8 Richard Avenarius (1843–1896), German philosopher who taught at Zurich, founder of empiriocriticism, a strict theory of knowledge based on pure experience.

A UNIVERSE OF CONSCIOUSNESSES

With Berkeley and Schopenhauer, Unamuno imagines the universe as a society of consciousness, perhaps God's body.

7.41 Man does not resign himself to being alone in the Universe as a consciousness, nor to being one more objective phenomenon. He wants to save his vital or passional subjectivity by making the whole Universe living, personal, animate. That is why, and that is what for, he has discovered God and substance—God and substance, which keep returning in his thought, disguised in one way or another. Because we are conscious, we feel ourselves exist, which is something very different from knowing ourselves to be existing; and we want to feel the existence of everything else, want each of the other individual things to be an I as well.

7.42 The most consistent idealism, though the most incongruous and wavering, is that of Berkeley, who denied the existence of matter, of something inert, extended and passive that might be the cause of our sensations and the substratum of external phenomena. At bottom it is nothing but an absolute spiritualism or dynamism: the supposition that every sensation comes to us, as from its cause, from another spirit, that is, from another consciousness. And in a certain way his doctrine joins hands with those of Schopenhauer and Hartmann. The doctrine of the Will of the first of these two, and that of the Unconscious of the other, are already potentially present in the Berkeleyan doctrine that to be is to be perceived.[9] To which we must add: and to make another perceive the one who is. And so the old adage *operari sequitur esse*, action follows being, must be modified by saying that to be is to act, and that only what acts exists—what is active—and only insofar as it acts.

7.43 And as for Schopenhauer, there is no need to take pains to show how the will that he posits as the essence of things proceeds from consciousness. It is enough to read his book on the

9 Eduard von Hartmann (1842–1906), German philosopher, author of *Philosophy of the Unconscious* (1869).

will in Nature to see how he attributed a certain spirit, and even a certain personality, to plants themselves. And this doctrine of his led him logically to pessimism, because what is most proper and most intimate to the will is to suffer. The will is a force that feels itself, that is, that suffers. And that enjoys, someone will add. But the point is that there can be no capacity for enjoyment without the capacity for suffering, and the faculty of enjoyment is the same as that of pain. He who does not suffer does not enjoy either, just as he who does not feel cold does not feel heat.

7.44 And it is very logical, too, that Schopenhauer, who drew pessimism from the voluntarist doctrine, the doctrine of the personalization of everything, should draw from both that the foundation of morality is compassion. Only his lack of social and historical sense—his not feeling humanity as a person too, though a collective one—his egoism, in short, prevented him from feeling God, prevented him from individualizing and personalizing the total and collective Will: the Will of the Universe.

7.45 One understands, on the other hand, his aversion to purely empirical evolutionist or transformist doctrines, as he came to see them set out by Lamarck and Darwin. Judging Darwin's theory only from a long extract in the *Times*, he called it "shallow empiricism" (*platter Empirismus*) in one of his letters to Adam Ludwig von Doss (of 1 March 1860). For a voluntarist like Schopenhauer, indeed, a theory as sound and cautiously empirical and rational as Darwin's left out of account the inner spring, the essential motive of evolution. For what, in fact, is the hidden force, the ultimate agent, by which organisms perpetuate themselves and strive to persist and propagate? Selection, adaptation, heredity are only external conditions. This inner, essential force has been called will, because we suppose it to be in other beings what we feel in ourselves as the feeling of will, the impulse to be everything, to be the others too without ceasing to be what we are. And this force, one may say, is the divine in us; it is God himself, who acts in us because he suffers in us.

7.46 And this force, this aspiration to consciousness, sympathy makes us discover in everything. It moves and stirs the tiniest

living beings; it moves and stirs, perhaps, the very cells of our own bodily organism, which is a more or less unitary federation of living things; it moves the very corpuscles of our blood. Our life is made up of lives, our vital aspiration of aspirations, perhaps in the limbo of the subconscious. It is no more absurd a dream than so many dreams that pass for valid theories to believe that our cells, our corpuscles, have something like a consciousness, or a rudimentary basis of one—cellular, corpuscular. Or that they may come to have one. And once we have set out on the road of fantasy, we may fancy that these cells communicated with one another, and that one of them expressed its belief that they formed part of a higher organism endowed with a collective personal consciousness. This fantasy has arisen more than once in the history of human feeling, when someone, philosopher or poet, has supposed that we men are something like the corpuscles in the blood of a Supreme Being, who has his own collective personal consciousness, the consciousness of the universe.

7.47 Perhaps the immense Milky Way that we contemplate in the sky on clear nights, that enormous ring of which our planetary system is but a molecule, is in its turn a cell of the universe, of the Body of God. All the cells of our body conspire and concur by their activity to maintain and kindle our consciousness, our soul. And if the consciousnesses or souls of all of them entered wholly into ours, into the one they compose—if I were conscious of everything that happens in my bodily organism—I would feel the universe pass through me, and perhaps the painful sense of my limits would be erased. And if all the consciousnesses of all beings concur wholly in the universal consciousness, then that consciousness—that is, God—is everything.

7.48 Within us, obscure consciousnesses, elementary souls, are born and die at every instant, and this birth and death of theirs constitutes our life. And when they die abruptly, in a collision, they cause our pain. So in the bosom of God consciousnesses are born and die—die?—and their births and deaths constitute his life.

7.49 If there is a Universal and Supreme Consciousness, I am an idea in it; and can any idea be wholly extinguished in it? After I have died, God will go on remembering me; and to be remembered by God, to have my consciousness sustained by the Supreme Consciousness—is that *not*, perhaps, being?

7.50 And if someone were to say that God has made the universe, one can retort that our soul, too, has made our body as much as it has been made by it. If indeed there is a soul.

7.51 Compassion, love, reveals to us the whole universe struggling to gain, preserve and increase its consciousness, to become more and more conscious, feeling the pain of the discords that arise within it. When it does, compassion reveals to us the likeness of the whole universe to ourselves—that it is human—and makes us discover in it our Father, of whose flesh we are flesh; love makes us personalize the whole of which we form part.

7.52 At bottom, it comes to the same thing to say that God is eternally producing things as to say that things are eternally producing God. And belief in a personal and spiritual God rests on belief in our own personality and spirituality. Because we feel ourselves to be consciousness, we feel God to be consciousness, that is, a person; and because we long for our consciousness to be able to live and be independently of the body, we believe that the divine person lives and is independently of the universe, which is his state of consciousness *ad extra* [directed outward].

7.53 Of course the logicians will come and put before us all the evident rational difficulties that arise from this; but we have already said that, although it comes in rational forms, the content of all this is not, strictly speaking, rational. Every rational conception of God is in itself contradictory. Faith in God is born of love for God—we believe that he exists because we want him to exist—and it is perhaps born also of God's love for us. Reason does not prove to us that God exists, but neither does it prove that he cannot exist.

7.54 But more on this later—more on faith in God being the personalization of the universe.

7.55 And recalling what we said elsewhere in this work, we can say that material things, insofar as they are known, spring into knowledge out of hunger; and out of hunger springs the perceptible or material universe into which we gather them. Ideal things spring from love, and from love springs God, into whom we gather those ideal things as into the Consciousness of the Universe. It is social consciousness, the child of love, of the instinct of perpetuation, that leads us to socialize everything, to see society in everything, and that shows us, in the end, how truly the whole of Nature is an infinite Society. And as for me, I have felt that Nature is society hundreds of times, walking in a wood and having a feeling of solidarity with the holm oaks, which in some obscure way were aware of my presence.

7.56 Imagination, which is the social sense, animates the inanimate, anthropomorphizes everything; it humanizes everything, and even makes it human. And man's task is to supernaturalize Nature, that is, to divinize it by humanizing it, to make it human—in short, to help it become conscious. Reason, for its part, mechanizes or materializes.

7.57 The individual—who is in a certain sense a society—and society—which is also an individual—are found united and fertilizing each other, inseparable, so that we cannot say where the one begins and the other ends; they are rather aspects of a single essence. In the same way spirit—the social element, which makes us conscious by relating us to others—and matter, the individual and individuating element, are found as one. Reason, intelligence and imagination are found as one, fertilizing one another. And the Universe and God are found as one.

WHAT IS TRUTH?

We live in God as in air, and we have created God to save consciousness from nothingness.

7.58 Is all this true? And what is truth?—I shall ask in my turn, as Pilate asked. But not so as to wash my hands in turn without waiting for an answer.

7.59 Does truth lie in reason, or above reason, or beneath reason, or outside it in some way or other? Is only the rational true? May there not be a reality unattainable by reason by its very nature, and perhaps, by its very nature, opposed to it? And how are we to know that reality if it is only through reason that we know?

7.60 Our desire to live, our need for life, would like that to be true which makes us preserve and perpetuate ourselves, which sustains man and society. It would like the liquid that quenches our thirst when we drink it to be true water, because it quenches it; and whatever takes away our hunger to be true bread, because it takes it away.

7.61 The senses are at the service of the instinct of preservation, and whatever satisfies this need of ours to preserve ourselves, even without passing through the senses, is a kind of intimate penetration of reality into us. Is the process of assimilating food perhaps less real than the process of knowing the thing that nourishes us? It will be said that eating a loaf of bread is not the same as seeing it, touching it or tasting it; that in the one way it enters our body, but not for that reason our consciousness. Is this true? Does the bread that I have made my flesh and blood not enter my consciousness more than the other bread, of which, seeing and touching it, I say: "This is mine"? And am I to deny objective reality to that bread, thus turned into my flesh and blood and made mine, when I merely touch it?

7.62 There are those who live on air without knowing it. And so perhaps we live on God and in God—in God, the spirit and con-

sciousness of society and of the whole Universe, insofar as the Universe too is a society.

7.63 God is felt only insofar as he is lived; and man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of his mouth (Matt. 4:4; Deut. 8:3).

7.64 And this personalization of the whole, of the Universe, to which love, compassion, leads us, is that of a person that embraces and encloses within itself the other persons that compose it.

7.65 It is the only way of giving the Universe purpose: by giving it consciousness. For where there is no consciousness there is no purpose either, since purpose presupposes an intention. And faith in God rests, as we shall see, on nothing but the vital need to give existence a purpose, to make it answer to an intention. Not in order to understand the *why*, but in order to feel and sustain the ultimate *what for*, do we need God—to give meaning to the Universe.

7.66 Nor should it be surprising to hear it said that this consciousness of the Universe is composed and made up of the consciousnesses of the beings that form the Universe, of the consciousnesses of all beings, and is nevertheless a personal consciousness distinct from those that compose it. Only thus can we understand that in God we are, and move, and live. That great visionary Emanuel Swedenborg saw or glimpsed this when, in his book on heaven and hell (*De Coelo et Inferno*, 52), he tells us: "A whole angelic society sometimes appears in the form of a single angel, as the Lord has permitted me to see.[10] When the Lord himself appears among the angels, he does not appear accompanied by a multitude, but as a single being in angelic form. Hence in the Word the Lord is called an angel, and so is a whole society. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael are nothing but angelic societies, so named for the functions they fulfill."

7.67 Is it not perhaps that we live and love—that is, suffer and feel compassion—in that Great Person who envelops us all: all

10 Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), Swedish scientist and mystic; *Heaven and Hell* (1758) describes his visions of the spiritual world.

the persons who suffer and feel compassion, and all the beings who struggle to personalize themselves, to acquire consciousness of their suffering and their limitation? And are we not perhaps ideas of that total Great Consciousness which, by thinking us as existing, gives us existence? Is not our existing a being perceived and felt by God? And further on, this same visionary tells us, in his imaginative way, that each angel, each society of angels, and the whole of heaven seen together, present themselves in human form, and that by virtue of this human form of theirs the Lord governs heaven as a single man.

7.68 "God does not think, he creates; he does not exist, he is eternal," wrote Kierkegaard (*Afslutende uvidenskabelige Efterskrift* [*Concluding Unscientific Postscript*]). But it is perhaps more exact to say with Mazzini, the mystic of the Italian city, that "God is great because he thinks by acting" (*Ai giovani d'Italia* [*To the Young of Italy*]). For in him thinking is creating, and he makes exist whatever he thinks as existing merely by thinking it, and the impossible is what is unthinkable by God. Is it not said in Scripture that God creates by his word, that is, by his thought, and that by this, by his Word, everything that exists was made? And does God forget what he has once thought? Do not all the thoughts that once pass through the Supreme Consciousness perhaps subsist in it? In him, who is eternal, is not all existence made eternal?[11]

7.69 Such is our longing to save consciousness, to give personal and human purpose to the Universe and to existence, that even in a supreme, most painful and heart-rending sacrifice we would bring ourselves to hear it said that if our consciousness vanishes it is in order to go and enrich the infinite and eternal Consciousness, that our souls serve as nourishment for the Universal Soul. Yes, I enrich God, because before I existed he did not think of me as existing; because I am one more—one more, even if among infinite others—who, having really lived and suffered and loved, remains in his bosom. It is the furious long-

11 Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872), Italian patriot and republican, whose political writings have a strongly religious cast.

ing to give purpose to the Universe, to make it conscious and personal, that has led us to believe in God, to want there to be a God, to create God, in a word. To create him, yes! This should not scandalize even the most pious theist. For to believe in God is in a certain way to create him, although he creates us first. It is he who in us continually creates himself.[12]

7.70 We have created God in order to save the Universe from nothingness, for what is not consciousness—and eternal consciousness, conscious of its eternity and eternally conscious—is nothing but appearance. The only thing truly real is what feels, suffers, feels compassion, loves and longs: it is consciousness; the only substantial thing is consciousness. And we need God in order to save consciousness; not in order to think existence, but in order to live it; not in order to know why and how it is, but in order to feel what it is for. Love is an absurdity if there is no God.

7.71 Let us now look at this matter of God: the logical God, or Supreme Reason, and the biotic God, the God of the heart, that is, Supreme Love.

12 Unamuno plays on *creer* (to believe) and *crear* (to create), a single letter apart; in "he creates us first," *El nos cree*, the verb is also the form of "believe."

VIII. From God to God

De Dios a Dios
From the feeling of divinity to the God of reason and back to the living, suffering God.

8.1 I do not think it does violence to the truth to say that religious feeling is a sense of divinity, and that only by doing violence to ordinary human language can one speak of an atheistic religion. Although, clearly, everything will depend on the concept of God that we form. And that concept depends in turn on the concept of divinity.

8.2 It suits us, in fact, to begin with the sense of divinity, before capitalizing the concept of this quality and, by giving it the article, turning it into the Divinity, that is, into God. For man has gone to God by way of the divine, rather than deducing the divine from God.

8.3 Earlier, in the course of these somewhat wandering and at the same time insistent reflections on the tragic sense of life, I recalled Statius's *timor fecit deos* [fear made the gods] in order to correct and limit it. Nor is this the place to trace once more the historical process by which peoples have arrived at the feeling and the concept of a personal God like that of Christianity. And I say peoples and not isolated individuals, because if there is a collective, social feeling and concept, it is that of God, even if the individual later individualizes it. Philosophy can have, and in fact has, an individual origin; theology is necessarily collective.[1]

1 Statius, Roman poet of the 1st century AD: "primus in orbe deos fecit timor" ("it was fear that first made gods in the world"), *Thebaid* III, 661.

8.4 Schleiermacher's doctrine, which places the origin, or rather the essence, of religious feeling in the immediate and simple feeling of dependence, seems to be the most profound and exact explanation. Primitive man, living in society, feels himself dependent on mysterious powers that invisibly surround him. He feels himself in social communion not only with his fellows, other men, but with the whole of Nature, animate and inanimate, which means nothing other than that he personalizes everything. Not only is he conscious of the world, but he imagines that the world too is conscious, as he is. Just as a child talks to his dog or his doll as if they understood him, primitive man believes that his fetish hears him, or that the storm cloud remembers him and pursues him. The fact is that the mind of natural, primitive man has not yet detached itself from Nature, as from a placenta, nor has it marked the boundary between dream and waking, between reality and imagination.

8.5 The divine, then, was not something objective, but the subjectivity of consciousness projected outward, the personalization of the world. The concept of divinity arose from the sense of it, and the sense of divinity is nothing but that same obscure and nascent sense of personality poured out onto what lies outside. Nor, strictly speaking, can one speak of outside and inside, objective and subjective, when no such distinction was felt; and it is from that distinction, as it happens, that the sense and the concept of divinity proceed. The clearer the consciousness of the distinction between the objective and the subjective, the dimmer the sense of divinity in us.

8.6 It has been said, and apparently with complete justification, that Hellenic paganism is pantheistic rather than polytheistic. I do not know that belief in many gods, taking the concept of God as we take it today, has ever existed in a human head. And if by pantheism is meant the doctrine not that everything and each thing is God—a proposition I find unthinkable—but that everything is divine, one can say without much violence that paganism was pantheistic. The gods not only mingled among men but mingled with them; the gods begot children on

mortal women, and mortal men begot demigods on goddesses. And if there are demigods, that is, demi-men, it is only because the divine and the human were faces of one and the same reality. The divinization of everything was nothing but its humanization. To say that the Sun was a god was equivalent to saying that it was a man, a human consciousness more or less magnified and sublimated. And this holds from fetishism to Hellenic paganism.

8.7 What properly distinguished gods from men was that the gods were immortal. A god came to be an immortal man, and to divinize a man, to regard him as a God, was to hold that, strictly speaking, when he died he had not died. Certain heroes were believed to have gone alive to the kingdom of the dead. And this is a most important point for assessing the value of the divine.

8.8 In those republics of gods there was always some supreme god, some true monarch. It was divine monarchy that, by way of monolatry, led peoples to monotheism. Monarchy and monotheism are thus twins. Zeus, Jupiter, was on the way to becoming the sole god, just as Yahweh—who began as one among many gods—became the sole god, first of the people of Israel, then of humanity, and finally of the whole universe.

8.9 Like monarchy, monotheism had a military origin. "It is on the march and in time of war," says Robertson Smith (*The Prophets of Israel*, Lecture I), "that a nomad people feels the urgent need of a central authority; and so it came about that, in the first beginnings of national organization around the sanctuary of the ark, Israel thought of itself as the host of Jehovah. The very name of Israel is martial and means *God fights*, and Jehovah in the Old Testament is *Iahwé Zebahát*, the Jehovah of the armies of Israel. It was on the battlefield that Jehovah's presence was felt most clearly; but among primitive nations the leader in time of war is also the natural judge in time of peace."[2]

8.10 God, the one God, thus arose from the sense of divinity in man as a warrior God, monarchical and social. He revealed him-

2 William Robertson Smith (1846–1894), Scottish Orientalist and biblical scholar; *The Prophets of Israel* appeared in 1882.

self to the people, not to each individual. He was the God of a people, and jealously demanded that worship be paid to him alone. From this monolatry the passage was made to monotheism, largely through the individual action—more philosophical, perhaps, than theological—of the prophets. It was, in fact, the individual activity of the prophets that individualized the divinity. Above all by making it ethical.

THE GOD OF REASON

Philosophy turned the felt God into an idea, a God so purified that he becomes nothing.

8.11 And this God, thus arisen in human consciousness out of the sense of divinity, was then seized upon by reason, that is, by philosophy, which set out to define him, to turn him into an idea. For to define something is to idealize it, and for that one must leave aside its incommensurable or irrational element, its vital core. And the felt God—divinity felt as a single person and consciousness outside us, though enveloping and sustaining us —was turned into the idea of God.

8.12 The logical, rational God, the *ens summum* [highest being], the *primum movens* [prime mover], the Supreme Being of theological philosophy, the God reached by the three famous ways of negation, eminence and causality, *viae negationis, eminentiae, causalitatis*, is nothing but an idea of God, something dead. The traditional and so often debated proofs of his existence are at bottom nothing but a vain attempt to determine his essence; for, as Vinet very rightly observed, existence is drawn from essence, and to say that God exists without saying what God is and how he is amounts to saying nothing.

8.13 And this God, reached by eminence and by negation or removal of finite qualities, ends up being an unthinkable God, a pure idea, a God of whom, by reason of his very ideal excellence, we can say that he is nothing, as Scotus Eriugena already defined him: *Deus propter excellentiam non immerito nihil vocatur* [God, because of his excellence, is not unfittingly called noth-

ing]. Or, in the words of the Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite in his fifth epistle: "The divine darkness is the inaccessible light in which God is said to dwell." The anthropomorphic and felt God, as he is purified of human attributes—finite, relative and temporal as such—evaporates into the God of deism or of pantheism.[3]

THE PROOFS PROVE ONLY AN IDEA

The classical proofs of God reach only the God-Idea, which explains nothing about the Universe.

8.14 The supposed classical proofs of the existence of God all refer to this God-Idea, this logical God, the God reached by removal. Hence, strictly speaking, they prove nothing; that is, they prove nothing more than the existence of that idea of God.

8.15 I was a young man just beginning to be troubled by these eternal problems when, in a certain book whose author I do not care to remember, I read this: "God is a great X on the ultimate barrier of human knowledge; as science advances, the barrier recedes." And I wrote in the margin: "On this side of the barrier, everything is explained without him; on the far side, neither with him nor without him; God, therefore, is superfluous." And with respect to the God-Idea, the God of the proofs, I still hold the same opinion. Laplace is credited with saying that he had not needed the hypothesis of God to construct his system of the origin of the Universe, and that is quite true.[4] The idea of God does nothing to help us better understand the existence, the essence and the purpose of the Universe.

8.16 It is no more conceivable that there should be an infinite, absolute and eternal Supreme Being, whose essence we do not know and who created the Universe, than that the material basis of the Universe itself, its matter, should be eternal and infinite

3 The Pseudo-Dionysius: an anonymous Christian Neoplatonist (c. AD 500) whose writings were long attributed to Dionysius, Paul's Athenian convert (Acts 17:34).
4 "Whose author I do not care to remember" echoes the opening of *Don Quixote* ("whose name I do not care to remember"). Pierre-Simon Laplace (1749–1827), French astronomer, reportedly told Napoleon he had "no need of that hypothesis."

and absolute. We understand the existence of the world not a whit better by telling ourselves that God created it. It is begging the question, or a merely verbal solution to cover up our ignorance. Strictly speaking, we deduce the existence of the Creator from the fact that what is created exists, and the Creator's existence is not thereby rationally justified. From a fact one cannot derive a necessity—or else everything is necessary.

8.17 And if we pass from the Universe's mode of being to what is called its order, which is supposed to require someone who ordered it, we may say that order is simply what there is, and we can conceive of no other. That proof from the order of the Universe implies a passage from the ideal order to the real one. It projects our mind outward, and it supposes that the rational explanation of a thing produces the thing itself. Human art, schooled by Nature, has a conscious making through which it understands the way things are made. We then transfer this artistic and conscious making to the consciousness of an artist, and no one knows from what nature he learned his art.

8.18 The by now classic comparison of the clock and the clockmaker cannot be applied to an absolute, infinite and eternal Being. It is, moreover, another way of explaining nothing. For to say that the world is as it is and not otherwise because God made it so is to say nothing, as long as we do not know for what reason he made it so. And if we know the reason God made it so, then God is superfluous, and the reason is enough. If everything were mathematics, if there were no irrational element, no one would have resorted to this explanation of a Supreme Orderer, which is nothing but the reason of the irrational and one more cover for our ignorance. And let us not even mention that ridiculous notion that you could never get the *Quixote* by throwing printer's type about at random. Something else would come out. For those who had to make do with it, who were formed by it and formed part of it, that something else would become a *Quixote*.

8.19 That by now classic supposed proof comes down, at bottom, to hypostatizing or substantivizing the explanation or

reason of a phenomenon. It amounts to saying that Mechanics makes motion, Biology life, Philology language, Chemistry bodies, simply by capitalizing the science. The science is thereby turned into a power distinct from the phenomena from which we extract it and distinct from our mind, which does the extracting. But a God obtained in this way is nothing but reason hypostatized and projected into infinity. There is no way to feel him as something living and real, nor even to conceive of him except as a mere idea that will die with us.

8.20 The question is asked, moreover, whether any given thing that is imagined but does not exist fails to exist because God does not will it, or whether God does not will it because it does not exist. And with regard to the impossible, the question is whether it cannot be because God so wills, or whether God does not will it because in itself, by its very absurdity, it cannot be. God has to submit to the logical law of contradiction, and according to the theologians he cannot make two and two come to more or less than four. The law of necessity is above him, or is he himself. And in the moral order the question is asked whether lying, or murder, or adultery are evil because he so established it, or whether he so established it because they are evil. If the former, then either God is a capricious and absurd God who lays down one law when he could have laid down another, or he obeys a nature and essence intrinsic to things themselves and independent of him, that is, of his sovereign will. And if so, if he obeys a reason for being that lies in things, this reason would be enough for us if we knew it, without any need for God besides. And if we do not know it, God does not make anything clearer for us either. That reason would stand above God. Nor is it any use to say that this reason is God himself, the supreme reason of things. A reason of that kind, a necessary one, is not something personal. It is will that gives personality. And it is this problem of the relation between God's reason, which is necessarily necessary, and his will, which is necessarily free, that will always make the logical or Aristotelian God a self-contradictory God.

8.21 The scholastic theologians have never managed to disentangle themselves from the difficulties they got into when they tried to reconcile human freedom with divine foreknowledge and with God's knowledge of the contingent and free future. And this is because, strictly speaking, the rational God cannot be applied to the contingent at all, since the notion of contingency is at bottom nothing but the notion of irrationality. The rational God is of necessity necessary in his being and in his acting. In each case he can do only what is best, and there cannot be several things equally best. For among infinite possibilities only one is best suited to his end, just as among the infinite lines that can be drawn from one point to another only one is straight. And the rational God, the God of reason, cannot help following the straight line in each case, the line most conducive to the end he sets himself. That end is necessary, just as the one straight direction leading to it is necessary. And so God's divinity is replaced by his necessity. And in God's necessity his free will perishes, that is, his conscious personality. The God we long for, the God who is to save our soul from nothingness, the immortalizing God, has to be an arbitrary God.

8.22 The truth is that God cannot be God because he thinks, but because he acts, because he creates. He is not a contemplative God but an active one. A Reason-God, a theoretical or contemplative God like this God of theological rationalism, is a God who dissolves in his own contemplation. To this God corresponds, as we shall see, the beatific vision as the supreme expression of eternal happiness. He is, in short, a quietist God, just as reason is quietist by its very essence.

THE ARGUMENT FROM CONSENT

The consent of all peoples points not to a rational God but to the God of the heart.

8.23 There remains the other famous proof, the one from the supposedly unanimous consent of all peoples in believing in a God. But strictly speaking this proof is not rational, and it does not

favor the rational God who explains the Universe. It favors the God of the heart, who makes us live. We could call it rational only if we believed that reason is the more or less unanimous consent of the peoples, universal suffrage, and only if we made a reason out of the *vox populi* [voice of the people] that is said to be the *vox Dei* [voice of God].

8.24 So believed that tragic and ardent Lamennais, the man who said that life and truth are nothing but one and the same thing—would that it were so!—and who declared reason to be one, universal, perpetual and holy (*Essai sur l'indifférence*, Part IV, chap. VIII). And he glossed Lactantius's "we must believe either everyone or no one"—*aut omnibus credendum est aut nemini* —and Heraclitus's saying that every individual opinion is fallible, and Aristotle's that the strongest proof is the consent of all men. Above all he glossed Pliny's saying (*in Paneg. Trajani* LXII) that no one person ever deceived all, nor did all ever deceive one—*nemo omnes, neminem omnes fefellerunt*.—Would that it were so![5] And so one ends up with Cicero's saying (*De natura deorum*, book III, chap. II, 5 and 6) that we must believe our forebears even when they give us no reasons: *maioribus autem nostris, etiam nulla ratione reddita, credere*.

8.25 Yes, let us suppose that this opinion of the ancients is universal and constant, the opinion which tells us that the divine pervades the whole of Nature. Let us suppose it is an ancestral dogma, πάτριος δόξα, as Aristotle says (*Metaphysica*, book VII, chap. VII). That would prove only that there is a motive leading peoples and individuals—whether all, or nearly all, or many—to believe in a God. But are there not, perhaps, illusions and fallacies grounded in human nature itself? Do not all peoples begin by believing that the Sun revolves around them? And is it not natural that we should all tend to believe what satisfies our longing? Shall we say with W. Hermann (see *Christlich systematische Dogmatik*, in the volume *Systematische christliche Religion* of the series *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*, edited by P. Hinneberg) "that if

5 Lamennais's *Essay on Indifference in Matters of Religion* (1817–23) grounded certainty in the common consent of mankind.

there is a God, he has not failed to give us some indication of himself, and he wants to be found by us"?

8.26 A pious wish, no doubt, but not a reason in the strict sense. That holds unless we apply to it the Augustinian saying, which is not a reason either: "since you seek me, you have found me." We would then be believing that it is God who makes us seek him.[6]

8.27 That famous argument from the supposedly unanimous consent of the peoples was the one the ancients, with a sure instinct, used most. Transferred from the collectivity to the individual, it is at bottom nothing but the so-called moral proof, the one Kant used in his *Critique of Practical Reason*, the one drawn from our conscience—or rather from our sense of divinity. It is not a strictly and specifically rational proof but a vital one. It cannot be applied to the logical God, the *ens summum*, the simplest and most abstract Being, the unmoved and impassible prime mover—in short, the Reason-God who neither suffers nor longs. It applies only to the biotic God, the most complex and most concrete Being, the God who undergoes, who suffers and longs in us and with us, the Father of Christ, to whom one cannot go except through the Man, through his Son (see John 14:6), and whose revelation is historical—or, if you like, anecdotal—but not philosophical, not categorical.

8.28 Take the unanimous consent—let us suppose it so!—of the peoples, that is, the universal longing of all human souls that have come to the consciousness of their humanity, a humanity that wants to be the end and meaning of the Universe. This longing is nothing but that very essence of the soul which consists in its striving to persist eternally and to keep the continuity of consciousness unbroken. It leads us to the human, anthropomorphic God, the projection of our consciousness onto the Consciousness of the Universe. It leads to the God who gives human purpose and meaning to the Universe, and who is not the *ens summum*, nor the *primum movens*, nor the creator of the Universe: he is not the Idea-God. He is a living God, subjective—for

6 The saying is Pascal's ("You would not seek me if you had not found me," *Le Mystère de Jésus*), echoing Augustine's *Confessions*.

he is nothing but subjectivity objectified, or personality universalized. He is more than a mere idea, and he is will before he is reason. God is Love, that is, Will. Reason, the Word, derives from him; but he, the Father, is above all Will.

8.29 "There can be no doubt at all," writes Ritschl (*Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, III, chap. V), "that the old theology gave a very imperfect account of the spiritual personality of God when it limited it to the functions of knowing and willing. The religious conception cannot help applying to God the attribute of spiritual feeling as well. But the old theology held to the impression that feeling and affection are marks of a limited and created personality. It therefore transformed the religious conception of God's blessedness, for example,[7] into his eternal knowing of himself, and that of his hatred into the habitual purpose of punishing sin." Yes: that logical God, obtained *via negationis*, was a God who, strictly speaking, neither loved nor hated, because he neither enjoyed nor suffered. He was a God without sorrow or glory, inhuman, and his justice was a rational or mathematical justice, that is, an injustice.

8.30 The attributes of the living God, the Father of Christ, must be deduced from his historical revelation in the Gospel and in the consciousness of each Christian believer. They must not be deduced from metaphysical reasonings, which lead only to the God-Nothing of Scotus Eriugena, to the rational or pantheistic God, to the atheist God—in short, to a depersonalized Divinity.

LOVE BEFORE KNOWLEDGE

The living God is reached by love and suffering, not by reason; to define him is to kill him.

8.31 The truth is that one does not reach the living God, the human God, by the road of reason, but by the road of love and of suffering. Reason, if anything, leads us away from him. It is not possible to know him first and love him afterward. One must

7 Ritschl's major work is *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation* (1870–74).

begin by loving him, by longing for him, by hungering for him, before knowing him. Knowledge of God proceeds from love of God, and it is a knowledge that has little or nothing rational about it. For God is indefinable. To want to define God is to claim to limit him in our mind, and so to kill him. As soon as we try to define him, nothingness rises up before us.

8.32 The idea of God put forward by the so-called rational theodicy is nothing more than a hypothesis, like the idea of the ether, for example.

8.33 The ether is in fact nothing but a supposed entity. It has value only insofar as it explains what we try to explain by it—light, or electricity, or universal gravitation—and only insofar as these facts cannot be explained in some other way. And so the idea of God is likewise a hypothesis. It has value only insofar as it explains for us what we try to explain with it, the existence and essence of the Universe, and only as long as these are not better explained in some other way. And since in reality we explain the Universe neither better nor worse with that idea than without it, the idea of God, the supreme begging of the question, misses its mark.

8.34 But if the ether is only a hypothesis to explain light, air, by contrast, is something immediately felt. Even if it did not explain sound for us, we would always have the direct sensation of it, above all the sensation of its absence, in moments of suffocation, of hunger for air. In the same way God himself, and not merely the idea of God, can become an immediately felt reality. Even though his idea explains for us neither the existence nor the essence of the Universe, we sometimes have the direct feeling of God, above all in moments of spiritual suffocation. And this feeling—mark it well, for on this rests everything tragic about it, and the whole tragic sense of life—is a feeling of hunger for God, of the lack of God. To believe in God is, in the first instance, and as we shall see, to want there to be a God, to be unable to live without him.

8.35 While I wandered through the fields of reason in search of God, I could not find him, because the idea of God did not

deceive me, and I could not take an idea for God. It was then, as I roamed the wastelands of rationalism, that I told myself we should seek no consolation but the truth, meaning reason by that word. Yet I was not consoled. But as I sank into rational skepticism on the one hand and into the despair of feeling on the other, the hunger for God was kindled in me. The suffocation of my spirit made me feel his reality through his absence. And I wanted there to be a God, I wanted God to exist. And God does not exist; rather, he super-exists, and he is sustaining our existence, existing us.

8.36 God, who is Love, the Father of Love, is the son of love in us. There are shallow, external men, slaves of the reason that externalizes us, who think they have said something when they say that God did not make man in his image and likeness at all, but that it is man who makes his gods, or his God, in his own image and likeness. Frivolous as they are, they never notice that if the second is so, as it really is, this is because the first is no less true. God and man do in fact make each other. God makes himself or reveals himself in man, and man makes himself in God. God made himself—*Deus ipse se fecit*, said Lactantius (*Divinarum institutionum* II, 8)—and we may say that he is making himself, both in man and through man. Each of us, in the thrust of his love, in his hunger for divinity, imagines God to his own measure, and God makes himself to that measure for him. If that is so, there is a collective, social, human God, the result of all the human imaginations that imagine him. For God is, and reveals himself, in the collectivity. And God is the richest and most personal of human conceptions.

8.37 The Master of divinity told us to be perfect as our Father who is in heaven is perfect (Matt. 5:48). In the order of feeling and thinking, our perfection consists in striving hard for our imagination to reach the total imagination of the humanity of which we form part, in God.

8.38 The logical doctrine of the opposition between the extension and the comprehension of a concept is well known: as the one grows, the other shrinks. The most extensive and at the

same time least comprehensive concept is that of entity or thing. It embraces everything that exists and has no mark other than being. The most comprehensive and least extensive concept is that of the universe, which applies only to itself and comprises all existing marks. And the logical or rational God, the God obtained by way of negation, the supreme entity, is submerged, as a reality, in nothingness. For pure being and pure nothingness, as Hegel taught, are identical.[8] And the God of the heart, the felt God, the God of the living, is the Universe itself personalized; he is the consciousness of the Universe.

8.39 A universal and personal God, very different from the individual God of rigid metaphysical monotheism.

INDIVIDUALITY AND PERSONALITY

A person is a society within; so the God of faith becomes a Trinity, a family.

8.40 I must point out here once again that I set individuality against personality, although each needs the other. Individuality is, if I may put it this way, the container, and personality the content. Or I might also say, in a certain sense, that my personality is my comprehension: what I comprehend and enclose within me, which is in a certain way the whole Universe. My individuality is my extension. The one is what is infinite in me, and the other what is finite. A hundred jars with thick shells of clay are vigorously individualized, but they may be identical and empty, or at most filled with the same homogeneous liquid. Two bladders of the finest membrane, by contrast, through which active osmosis and exosmosis take place, can be sharply differentiated and filled with very complex liquids. And so a person can stand out sharply from others as an individual, being a kind of spiritual crustacean, and yet be very poor in distinctive content. There is more: the more personality one has, the greater one's inner riches, the more one is a society within one-

8 In Spanish the supreme entity, *el ente sumo*, *se sume* ("sinks") into nothingness, a play on *sumo* and *sume*.

self, the less harshly one is divided from others. In the same way the rigid God of deism, of Aristotelian monotheism, the *ens summum*, is a being in whom individuality, or rather simplicity, stifles personality. Definition kills him, because to define is to set ends, to limit, and what is absolutely indefinable cannot be defined. That God lacks inner riches; he is not a society within himself. And vital revelation remedied this with belief in the Trinity, which makes God a society, even a family within himself, and no longer a mere individual. The God of faith is personal. He is a person because he includes three persons, since personality does not feel itself in isolation. An isolated person ceases to be one. Whom, indeed, would he love? And if he does not love, he is not a person. Nor can a simple being love itself without splitting in two through love.

8.41 It was feeling God as Father that brought faith in the Trinity with it. For a Father God cannot be a bachelor God, that is, a solitary one. A father is always the father of a family. And feeling God as Father has been a perennial prompting to conceive of him not merely anthropomorphically, that is, as a human being —*ánthropos*—but andromorphically, as a male—*aner*. Christian popular imagination does in fact conceive of God the Father as a male. This is because the human being, *homo*, ἄνθρωπος, appears to us only as a man, *vir*, ἀνήρ, or as a woman, *mulier*, γυνή. To which we may add the child, who is neuter. And hence, to satisfy through imagination the emotional need for a God who is a perfect human being, that is, a family, came the cult of God the Mother, the Virgin Mary, and the cult of the Child Jesus.

8.42 The cult of the Virgin, in fact—Mariolatry—has little by little raised the divine element in the Virgin in dignity, to the point of almost deifying her. It answers to nothing but the emotional need for God to be a perfect human being, for femininity to enter into God. Starting from the expression Mother of God, θεοτόκος, *deipara*, Catholic piety has gone on exalting the Virgin Mary until it declared her co-redemptrix and proclaimed as dogma her conception without stain of original sin. This places her between Humanity and Divinity, and nearer the latter than

the former. And someone has voiced the suspicion that in time she may perhaps be made into something like one more divine person.

8.43 And perhaps the Trinity would not turn into a Quaternity on that account. If πνεῦμα, "spirit" in Greek, were feminine instead of neuter, who knows whether the Virgin Mary might not already have been made an incarnation, or humanization, of the Holy Spirit? The Gospel text according to Luke, verse 35 of chapter 1, narrates the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel, who says to her: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you," πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται ἐπὶ σέ. That would have been enough for a fervent piety that always knows how to bend theological speculation to its desires. And a dogmatic labor would have been carried out parallel to the one that divinized Jesus, the Son, and identified him with the Word.

8.44 In any case, the cult of the Virgin, of the eternal feminine, or rather of the divine feminine, of divine motherhood, comes in to complete the personalization of God by making him a family.[9]

8.45 In one of my books (*Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho*, part two, chap. LXVII) I have said that "God was and is masculine in our minds. His way of judging and condemning men is the way of a male, not of a human person above sex; the way of a Father.[10] And to compensate for it the Mother was needed: the Mother who always forgives, the Mother who always opens her arms to her child when he flees from the raised hand or the frowning brow of the angry father. In her lap we seek, as consolation, a dim remembrance of that warm peace of unconsciousness which, within her, was the dawn that preceded our birth, and a lingering taste of that sweet milk that perfumed our dreams of innocence. She is the mother who knows no justice but forgiveness and no law but love. Our poor and imperfect conception of

9 "The eternal feminine" echoes Goethe's *das Ewig-Weibliche* in the closing lines of *Faust*, Part II.

10 *Life of Don Quixote and Sancho* (1905), Unamuno's commentary on Cervantes's novel.

a God with a long beard and a voice of thunder needed to be compensated and completed: a God who imposes precepts and pronounces sentences, a God who is Master of the house, a *Pater familias* [father of the family] in the Roman manner. At bottom we cannot conceive of the personal and living God as above human traits, nor even as above masculine traits, much less as a neuter or hermaphrodite God. So we have resorted to giving him a feminine God, and beside God the Father we have placed the Mother Goddess, she who always forgives. Because she looks with blind love, she always sees the root of the fault, and in that root the sole justice of forgiveness..."

8.46 To this I must now add that not only can we not conceive of the whole and living God as solely male; we cannot conceive of him as solely an individual either, as the projection of a solitary self, outside society, of a self that is in reality abstract. My living self is a self that is really a we. My living, personal self lives only in the other selves, from them and through them. I come from a multitude of grandparents and carry them in me in concentrated form, and at the same time I carry in me, potentially, a multitude of grandchildren. And God, the projection of my self into the infinite—or rather I, the projection of God into the finite—is also a multitude. And hence, to save the personality of God, that is, to save the living God, arises a need of faith—that is, of feeling and imagination—to conceive of him and feel him with a certain inner multiplicity.

8.47 The pagan sense of a living divinity met this need with polytheism. It is the ensemble of its gods, their commonwealth, that really constitutes its Divinity. The true God of Hellenic paganism is not so much Father Zeus (*Jupiter*) as the whole society of gods and demigods. Hence the solemnity of Demosthenes' invocation when he called on all the gods and all the goddesses: τοῖς θεοῖς εὔχομαι πᾶσι καὶ πάσαις. Then the reasoners substantivized the term god, θεός, which is properly an adjective, a quality predicated of each of the gods, and added an article to it. In doing so they forged *the* god—ὁ θεός—abstract or dead, of philosophical rationalism: a quality made into a noun, and therefore

lacking personality. For *the* god is nothing more than *the* divine. The point is that one cannot pass, without risk to feeling, from sensing divinity in everything to substantivizing it and making Divinity into God. And the Aristotelian God, the God of the logical proofs, is nothing more than Divinity. He is a concept, not a living person who can be felt and with whom man can commune through love. That God, who is nothing but an adjective made into a noun, is a constitutional God who reigns but does not govern, with Science as his constitutional charter.

8.48 Within Greco-Latin paganism itself, the tendency toward a living monotheism can be seen in the way Zeus was conceived and felt as father. Homer calls him Ζεὺς πατήρ; among the Latins he is *Iu-piter*, that is, *Iu-pater*. He is the father of a whole extended family of gods and goddesses, who together with him make up the Divinity.

8.49 From the conjunction of pagan polytheism with Jewish monotheism, which had tried by other means to save the personality of God, there arose the sense of the Catholic God. He is a society, as the pagan God I spoke of was a society, and he is one, as the God of Israel finally came to be. And such is the Trinity. Its deepest meaning has seldom been understood by rationalist deism, which is more or less imbued with Christianity but always Unitarian or Socinian.[11]

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE UNIVERSE

God is felt as the consciousness of all humanity and of everything, personalized.

8.50 The truth is that we feel God not so much as a superhuman consciousness as the very consciousness of the whole human race, past, present and future. We feel him as the collective consciousness of the entire race, and more still, as the total and infinite consciousness that embraces and sustains all consciousnesses, infra-human, human and perhaps super-human. The

11 Socinians: followers of the 16th-century Italian reformers Lelio and Fausto Sozzini, who denied the Trinity.

divinity that is in everything, from the lowest living form, that is, the least conscious, up to the highest, passing through our human consciousness: this divinity we feel personalized, conscious of itself, in God. We feel the leap from our human consciousness to the fully divine, universal one. To this gradation of consciousnesses corresponds the belief in angels, with their various hierarchies, as intermediaries between our human consciousness and God's. A faith consistent with itself must believe these gradations to be infinite, for only through an infinite number of degrees can one pass from the finite to the infinite.

8.51 Deist rationalism conceives of God as the Reason of the Universe, but its logic leads it to conceive of him as an impersonal reason, that is, as an idea. Deist vitalism, on the other hand, feels and imagines God as Consciousness, and therefore as a person, or rather as a society of persons. The consciousness of each of us is, in fact, a society of persons. Several selves live in me, and even the selves of those with whom I live.

8.52 The God of deist rationalism, the God of the logical proofs of his existence, the *ens realissimum* [the most real being] and unmoved prime mover, is indeed nothing more than a supreme Reason. But he is so only in the sense in which we can call the law of universal gravitation the reason for the fall of bodies, since it is their explanation. Will anyone say that what we call the law of universal gravitation, or any other law, or some mathematical principle, is a reality in its own right and independent? That it is an angel, something conscious of itself and of others, a person? No, it is nothing but an idea with no reality outside the mind of whoever conceives it. And so that Reason-God either is conscious of itself or has no reality outside the mind of whoever conceives it. And if it is conscious of itself, it is already a personal reason, and then the whole value of those proofs vanishes, because those proofs proved only a reason, not a supreme consciousness. Mathematics proves an order, a constancy, a reason in the series of mechanical phenomena, but it does not prove that this reason is conscious of itself. It is a logical necessity, but logical necessity does not prove teleological necessity, necessity

of purpose. And where there is no purpose there is no personality either; there is no consciousness. The rational God, then—that is, the God who is nothing but the Reason of the Universe—destroys himself in our mind as God. He is reborn in us only when we feel him in our heart as a living person, as Consciousness, and no longer merely as the impersonal and objective Reason of the Universe. To explain rationally how a machine is built, it is enough for us to know the mechanical science of the person who built it. But to understand that such a machine exists at all—since Nature does not make machines, and human beings do—we have to suppose a conscious being who built it. But this second part of the reasoning cannot be applied to God, even if it is said that in him the mechanical science and the mechanism that build the machine are one and the same thing. Rationally, this identification is nothing but begging the question. And that is how reason destroys that supreme Reason as a person.

8.53 It is not human reason—a reason that in its turn rests on nothing but the irrational, on the whole of vital consciousness, on will and feeling—it is not this reason of ours that can prove to us the existence of a Supreme Reason. That Supreme Reason would in its turn have to rest on the Supreme Irrational, on the Universal Consciousness. What leads us to believe in the living God is the revelation of that Supreme Consciousness through feeling and imagination: through love, through faith, through the work of personalization.

8.54 And this God, the living God, your God, our God, is in me, is in you, lives in us, and we live and move and have our being in him. And he is in us through the hunger we have for him, through our longing, making himself desired. He is the God of the humble, for God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and the weak things to shame the strong, as the Apostle says (1 Cor. 1:27). And God is in each of us as each of us feels him and loves him. "If of two men," says Kierkegaard, "one prays to the true God with personal insincerity, and the other prays to an idol with all the passion of infinity, it is the first who

in reality is praying to an idol, while the second is truly praying to God." It is better to say that the true God is the one to whom we truly pray and whom we truly long for. Even superstition itself can be more revealing than theology. The old Father with a long beard and white locks who appears among the clouds holding the globe of the world in his hand is more alive and more true than the *ens realissimum* of theodicy.

8.55 Reason is an analytic, that is, a dissolving, force when it stops working on the form of intuitions—whether those of the individual instinct of preservation or those of the social instinct of perpetuation—and works instead on their substance, on their very matter. Reason orders the sense perceptions that give us the material world. But when its analysis is brought to bear on the reality of the perceptions themselves, it dissolves them for us and plunges us into a world of appearances, of shadows without substance; for outside the realm of form reason is nihilistic, annihilating. And it performs the same terrible office when we take it out of its own proper field and set it to scrutinize the imaginative intuitions that give us the spiritual world. For reason annihilates, and imagination makes *whole*, integrates or totalizes. Reason by itself kills, and it is imagination that gives life. It is true, though, that imagination by itself, giving us life without limit, leads us to merge with everything, and so it kills us too as individuals: it kills us by excess of life. Reason, the head, tells us: nothing! Imagination, the heart, tells us: everything! And between nothing and everything, with everything and nothing fusing in us, we live in God, who is everything, and God lives in us, who without him are nothing. Reason repeats: vanity of vanities, and all is vanity! And imagination replies: plenitude of plenitudes, and all is plenitude! And so we live the vanity of plenitude, or the plenitude of vanity.

8.56 This vital need to live in an illogical, irrational, personal or divine world springs from so deep within man that all those who do not believe in God, or believe they do not believe in him, believe in some little godling, or at least some little demon, or an omen, or a horseshoe they happened to find by the roadside.

They keep it over their heart to bring them good luck and defend them from that very reason whose faithful and devoted servants they imagine themselves to be.

8.57 The God we hunger for is the God to whom we pray, the God of the *Pater noster*, the Lord's Prayer. He is the God whom we ask, first and above all, whether we realize it or not, to instill faith in us, faith in himself, to make us believe in him, to make himself in us. He is the God whom we ask that his name be hallowed and his will be done—his will, not his reason—on earth as it is in heaven. Yet we feel that his will can be nothing but the essence of our own will, the desire to persist eternally.

8.58 And such is the God of love. It is no use anyone asking us what he is like. Let each consult his own heart and let his fancy paint him for him in the far distances of the Universe, gazing at him through his millions of eyes, which are the bright stars of the night sky. The one you believe in, reader, that one is your God. He has lived with you in you. He was born with you and was a child when you were a child, and went on becoming a man as you became a man, and he fades from you when you fade. He is your principle of continuity in the spiritual life, because he is the principle of solidarity among all men and within each man, and of men with the Universe, and he is, like you, a person. And if you believe in God, God believes in you, and believing in you he creates you continually. For at bottom you are nothing but the idea God has of you—but a living idea, as befits a God who is living and conscious of himself, a God who is Consciousness. And apart from what you are in society, you are nothing.

"TELL ME YOUR NAME!"

Like Jacob wrestling the angel, we ask God's name, which means asking him to save us.

8.59 To define God? Yes, that is our longing. That was the longing of the man Jacob when, wrestling the whole night through until the break of dawn with that divine power, he said: Tell me, I beg

you, your name! (Gen. 32:29). And listen to what that great Christian preacher, Frederick William Robertson, preached in Trinity Chapel, Brighton, on 10 June 1849, saying[12]: "And this is our struggle—*the* struggle. Let a truthful man go down into the depths of his own being, and answer us: what is the cry that comes to him from the most real part of his nature? Is it a plea for daily bread? Jacob asked for this in his *first* communion with God; he asked for safety, for preservation.[13] Is it, perhaps, that our sins be forgiven? Jacob had a sin to be forgiven; but in this, the most solemn moment of his existence, he did not utter a syllable about it. Or is it perhaps this: 'hallowed be your name'? No, my brothers. From our frail though humble humanity, the petition that rises in the most earthly hours of our religion may be this one: Save my soul! But in the least earthly moments it is this other: Tell me your name!

8.60 "We move through a world of mystery, and the deepest question is this: what is the being that is always near us, at times felt, never seen? What is it that has haunted us since childhood with a dream of something sovereignly beautiful that never becomes clear to us? What is it that at times passes over the soul like a desolation, like the breath of the wings of the Angel of Death, leaving us terrified and silent in our solitude—that which has touched us to the quick, so that the flesh has quivered with agony and our mortal affections have shrunk with pain? What is it that comes to us in aspirations of nobility and conceptions of superhuman excellence? Are we to call it It or He? What is It? Who is He? These presentiments of immortality and of God, what are they? Are they mere yearnings of my own heart, not taken up by anything living outside me? Are they the sound of my own longings echoing through the vast emptiness of nothingness? Or am I to call them God, Father, Spirit, Love? A living

12 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. *Sermons* by the Rev. Frederick W. Robertson, M. A. Collection of British Authors. Leipzig. Tauchnitz, I, p. 46.

13 Frederick William Robertson (1816–1853), Anglican preacher at Trinity Chapel, Brighton, widely read for his posthumously published sermons.

being within me or outside me? Tell me your name, you, terrible mystery of love! Such is the struggle of all my serious life."[14]

8.61 Thus Robertson. To which I must point out that "Tell me your name!" is at bottom nothing other than "Save my soul!" We ask him his name so that he may save our soul, so that he may save the human soul, so that he may save the human finality of the Universe. And if we are told that he is called He, that he is the *ens realissimum* [the most real being] or the Supreme Being or any other metaphysical name, we are not satisfied, for we know that every metaphysical name is an x, and we go on asking him his name. And there is only one name that satisfies our longing, and that name is Savior, Jesus. God is the love that saves.

> For the loving worm within its clod,
> Were diviner than a loveless God
> Amid his worlds, I will dare to say.

8.62 "I will dare to say that the worm that loves in its clod would be more divine than a god without love amid his worlds," says Robert Browning (*Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day*). The divine is love, the personalizing and eternalizing will, the will that feels hunger for eternity and for infinitude.

8.63 It is ourselves, it is our eternity that we seek in God; it is that he should make us divine. It was this same Browning who said (*Saul*, in *Dramatic Lyrics*): "'Tis the weakness in strength, that I cry for! my flesh that I seek / In the Godhead!"

8.64 "It is the weakness in strength that I cry out for; my flesh that I seek in the Divinity!"

DOES THIS GOD EXIST?

Belief in God springs from vital anguish: it is wanting God to exist and living by that longing.

8.65 But this God who saves us, this personal God, the Consciousness of the Universe that envelops and sustains our conscious-

nesses, this God who gives human finality to the whole of creation—does he exist? Do we have proofs of his existence?

8.66 The first thing that confronts us here is the meaning of this notion of existence. What is it to exist, and what are the things like of which we say that they do not exist?

8.67 To exist, in the etymological force of the word, is to be outside ourselves, outside our mind: *ex sistere* [to stand out]. But is there anything outside our mind, outside our consciousness, which embraces everything known? Undoubtedly there is. The matter of knowledge comes to us from outside. And what is that matter like? It is impossible to know, because to know is to inform matter, to give it form, and so it is not possible to know the formless as formless. That would be like having chaos in order.

8.68 This problem of the existence of God, a rationally insoluble problem, is at bottom nothing but the problem of consciousness, of the *ex-sistence* and not the *insistence* of consciousness. It is the very problem of the substantial existence of the soul, the very problem of the perpetuity of the human soul, the very problem of the human finality of the Universe. To believe in a living and personal God, in an eternal and universal consciousness that knows us and loves us, is to believe that the Universe exists *for* man. For man, or for a consciousness of the same order as the human, of the same nature though sublimated: a consciousness that may know us, and in whose bosom our memory may live forever.

8.69 Perhaps, in a supreme and desperate effort of resignation, we might bring ourselves (I have said it already) to make the sacrifice of our personality, if we knew that in dying it would enrich a Personality, a Supreme Consciousness; if we knew that the Universal Soul feeds on our souls and needs them. We might perhaps die in a desperate resignation or a resigned despair, handing over our soul to the soul of humanity, bequeathing our work, the work that bears the stamp of our person, if that

14 Unamuno adds Robertson's original English, "It or He?", in parentheses after his Spanish version.

humanity were in its turn to bequeath its soul to another soul when at last consciousness is extinguished on this Earth of suffering and yearnings. But what if it does not happen so?

8.70 And if the soul of humanity is eternal, if the collective human consciousness is eternal, if there is a Consciousness of the Universe and it is eternal, why should our own individual consciousness, yours, reader, and mine, not be so?

8.71 In all the vast universe, would this thing of consciousness that knows itself, wills itself and feels itself be an exception, tied to an organism that can live only within such and such degrees of heat, a passing phenomenon? No, it is not mere curiosity, this wanting to know whether or not the stars are inhabited by living, animate organisms, by consciousnesses akin to ours. And there is a deep longing in the dream of the transmigration of our souls through the stars that people the vast distances of the sky. The sense of the divine makes us desire and believe that everything is animate, that consciousness, in greater or lesser degree, extends to everything. We want not only to save ourselves but to save the world from nothingness. And for this, God. Such is his felt finality.

8.72 What would a universe be without any consciousness to reflect it and know it? What would objectified reason be, without will or feeling? For us, the same as nothingness; a thousand times more terrifying than nothingness.

8.73 If such a supposition becomes reality, our life lacks value and meaning.

8.74 It is not, then, rational necessity but vital anguish that leads us to believe in God. And to believe in God is, first and foremost (I must repeat it), to feel hunger for God, hunger for divinity, to feel his absence and emptiness, to want God to exist. And it is to want to save the human finality of the Universe. For one might even come to resign oneself to being absorbed by God, if our consciousness is grounded in a Consciousness, if consciousness is the end of the Universe.

8.75 "The wicked man said in his heart: there is no God." And so it is in truth. For a righteous man may say to himself in his head:

God does not exist! But only the wicked man can say it in his heart. Not to believe that there is a God, or to believe that there is not, is one thing; to resign oneself to there not being one is another, though inhuman and horrible; but not to want there to be one exceeds every other moral monstrosity. Although in fact those who deny God do so out of despair at not finding him.[15]

8.76 And now the rational, sphinx-like question comes again (the Sphinx, indeed, is reason): does God exist? This eternal and eternalizing person who gives meaning to the universe (and I will not add "human" meaning, for there is no other), is it something substantial outside our consciousness, outside our longing? Here is something insoluble, and it is better that it should be so. Let it suffice reason that it cannot prove the impossibility of his existence. To believe in God is to long for there to be one, and it is, besides, to behave as if there were; it is to live by that longing and make of it our inmost spring of action. From this longing or hunger for divinity springs hope; from hope, faith; and from faith and hope, charity. From that longing arise the senses of beauty, of finality, of goodness. Let us see.

15 Psalm 14:1 (and 53:1), usually rendered "The fool says in his heart, There is no God."

IX. Faith, Hope and Charity

Fe, esperanza y caridad
To believe is to want to believe; faith as creative hope; charity as the love that eternalizes.

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[9] *Sanctiusque ac reverentius visum de actis deorum credere quam scire.* [It was held holier and more reverent to believe than to know concerning the deeds of the gods.] / Tacitus, *Germania*, 34.

[9.1] To this God of the heart, or living God, one comes, and one returns to him after having left him for the logical or dead God, by the road of faith and not of rational or mathematical conviction.

[9.2] And what is faith?

[9.3] So asks the catechism of Christian doctrine that we were taught at school, and it answers thus: to believe what we did not see.

[9.4] A dozen years ago now I corrected this in an essay, saying: "Not to believe (*creer*) what we did not see, no! But to create (*crear*) what we do not see." And I have told you before that to believe in God is, in the first instance at least, to want there to be one, to long for the existence of God.[1]

[9.5] The theological virtue of faith is, according to the Apostle Paul, whose definition serves as the basis for the traditional Christian disquisitions on it, "the substance of the things that are hoped for, the demonstration of what is not seen." ἐλπιζομένων ὑπόστασις, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων (Hebrews 11:1).

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1 The essay is "La fe" (Faith, 1900).

9.6 The substance, or rather the sustenance or basis of hope, its guarantee. This connects faith with hope, and more than connects it: it subordinates faith to hope. And in fact it is not that we hope because we believe, but rather that we believe because we hope. It is hope in God, that is, the ardent longing that there be a God who guarantees the eternity of consciousness, that leads us to believe in him.

9.7 But faith, which is after all something compound, into which there enters a cognitive, logical or rational element together with an affective, biotic or feeling element, one that is strictly irrational, presents itself to us in the form of knowledge. Hence the insuperable difficulty of separating it from some dogma or other. Pure faith, free of dogmas, about which I wrote so much at one time, is a phantom. Nor did inventing that notion of faith in faith itself get us out of the difficulty. Faith needs some matter on which to exercise itself.

9.8 Believing is a form of knowing, even if it were nothing more than knowing our vital longing and even formulating it. Only, the term "believe" has in our ordinary language a double and even contradictory meaning. On the one hand it means the highest degree of the mind's adherence to a piece of knowledge as true, and on the other a weak and wavering adherence. For if in one sense to believe something is the greatest assent one can give, the expression "I believe it is so, though I am not sure of it" is common and everyday.

FAITH AS TRUST IN A PERSON

Faith rests on uncertainty and is trust in someone who promises, not assent to a theory.

9.9 This corresponds to what we said about uncertainty as the basis of faith. The most robust faith, insofar as it is distinct from all other knowledge that is not *pistic*, that is, of faith ("faithful," as it were), is based on uncertainty. And this is because faith, the guarantee of what is hoped for, is not so much rational adherence to a theoretical principle as trust in the person who assures

us of something. Faith presupposes an objective personal element. Rather than believing something, we believe someone who promises us or assures us of this or that. We believe a person, and we believe God insofar as he is a person and the personalization of the Universe.

9.10 This personal, or religious, element in faith is evident. Faith, it is commonly said, is not in itself either theoretical knowledge or rational adherence to a truth, nor is its essence sufficiently explained by trust in God. "Faith is inward submission to the spiritual authority of God, immediate obedience. And insofar as this obedience is the means of attaining a rational principle, faith is a personal conviction." So says Seeberg[2].[3]

9.11 The faith that Saint Paul defined, the Greek πίστις, *pistis*, is better translated as trust. The word *pistis*, in fact, comes from the verb πείθω, *peitho*, which in its active voice means to persuade, and in the middle voice is equivalent to trusting someone, heeding him, relying on him, obeying. And *fiarse*, to rely on, *fidare se*, comes from the stem *fid*, whence *fides*, faith, and whence also *confianza*, trust. And the Greek stem πιθ, *pith*, and the Latin *fid* seem to be siblings. In short, the very word faith carries implicit in its origin the sense of trust, of surrender to another's will, to a person. One trusts only persons. One trusts in Providence, which we conceive as something personal and conscious, not in Fate, which is something impersonal. And so one believes in whoever tells us the truth, in whoever gives us hope; not in the truth itself, directly and immediately, not in hope itself.

9.12 And this personal, or rather personifying, sense of faith betrays itself even in its lowest forms, for it is what produces faith in infused knowledge, in inspiration, in miracles. Well known, indeed, is the case of that Parisian doctor who, seeing

2 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. Reinold Seeberg: *Christlich-protestantische Ethik*, in the *Systematische christliche Religion* of the series *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*.

3 Reinhold Seeberg (1859–1935), German Lutheran theologian and historian of dogma.

that a folk healer in his neighborhood was taking his patients from him, moved to another neighborhood, the most distant one, where nobody knew him, advertised himself as a healer and behaved as one. And when he was reported for the illegal practice of medicine, he produced his diploma, saying more or less this: "I am a doctor, but if I had advertised myself as one I would not have gained the patients I have as a healer. And now, when my patients learn that I have studied medicine and hold a medical degree, they will flee from me to a healer who offers them the guarantee of not having studied, of curing by inspiration." For a doctor is discredited if it is proved that he has no degree and did no studies, and a healer is discredited if it is proved that he did them and is a qualified doctor. For some believe in science, in study, and others believe in the person, in inspiration, and even in ignorance.

9.13 "There is a distinction in the geography of the world which appears when we set out the different thoughts and desires of men concerning their religion. Let us remember how the whole world is in general divided into two hemispheres in this respect. One half of the world, the great dark East, is mystical. It insists on not seeing anything too clearly. Put any one of the great ideas of life distinctly and clearly, and at once it seems to the Eastern mind not to be true. He has an instinct that tells him that the vastest thoughts are too vast for the human mind, and that if they are presented in forms of expression that the human mind can comprehend, their nature is violated and their strength is lost. And on the other hand, the Westerner demands clearness and is impatient with mystery. He likes a definite proposition as much as his brother of the East dislikes it. He insists on knowing what the eternal and infinite forces mean for his personal life, how they are to make him personally happier and better, and almost how they are to build the house that shelters him and cook his supper on the stove. No doubt there are exceptions: mystics in Boston and St. Louis, men who hold to the facts in Bombay and Calcutta. The two dispositions of mind cannot be separated from each other by an ocean or a mountain range. In

certain nations and lands, as for example among the Jews and in our own England, they mingle a great deal. But in general, this is how they divide the world. The East believes in the moonlight of mystery; the West, in the noonday of scientific fact. The East asks the Eternal for vague impulses; the West seizes the present with a light hand and will not let it go until it yields reasonable, intelligible motives. Each misunderstands the other, distrusts it, and even in large part despises it. But both hemispheres together, and not either one by itself, make up the whole world." So said, in one of his sermons, the Rev. Phillips Brooks, who was bishop of Massachusetts, the great Unitarian preacher (see *The Mystery of Iniquity and Other Sermons*, sermon XII).[4]

9.14 We might rather say that throughout the whole world, in the East as in the West, the rationalists seek definition and believe in the concept, and the vitalists seek inspiration and believe in the person. The former study the Universe to wrest its secrets from it; the latter pray to the Consciousness of the Universe and try to put themselves in immediate relation with the Soul of the world, with God, in order to find a guarantee or substance for what they hope for, which is not to die, and a demonstration of what they do not see.

9.15 And since the person is a will, and the will always refers to the future, he who believes believes in what is to come, that is, in what he hopes for. Strictly speaking, one does not believe what is and what was except as a guarantee, as the substance, of what will be. For the Christian, to believe in the resurrection of Christ (that is, to believe the tradition and the Gospel, both of them personal powers, which tell him that Christ rose again) is to believe that he himself will rise again one day by the grace of Christ. And even scientific faith, for there is such a thing, refers to the future and is an act of trust. The man of science believes that on such-and-such a day to come an eclipse of the sun will take place; he believes that the laws that have governed the world until today will go on governing it.

4 Brooks was in fact an Episcopalian, not a Unitarian; he also wrote the carol "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

9.16 To believe, I say again, is to give credit to someone, and it refers to a person. I say that I know there is an animal called a horse, and that it has these and those characteristics, because I have seen it; and I say that I believe in the existence of the one called the giraffe or the platypus, and that it is like this or that, because I believe those who claim to have seen it. Hence the element of uncertainty that faith carries with it, for a person may be mistaken or may deceive us.

9.17 But, on the other hand, this personal element in belief gives it an affective, loving character, and above all, in religious faith, a reference to what is hoped for. Hardly anyone would sacrifice his life to maintain that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, for such a truth does not need the sacrifice of our life. Many, on the other hand, have lost their lives maintaining their religious faith; and the fact is that martyrs make faith even more than faith makes martyrs. For faith is not the mere adherence of the intellect to an abstract principle; it is not the recognition of a theoretical truth in which the will does nothing but move us to understand. Faith is a matter of the will; it is a movement of the spirit toward a practical truth, toward a person, toward something that makes us live and not merely understand life[5].

9.18 Faith makes us live by showing us that life, though it depends on reason, has its wellspring and its strength elsewhere, in something supernatural and marvelous. A singularly balanced mind, one richly nourished on science, that of the mathematician Cournot, has already said that it is the tendency toward the supernatural and the marvelous that gives life, and that without it all the speculations of reason come to nothing but affliction of spirit (*Traité de l'enchaînement des idées fondamentales dans les sciences et dans l'histoire*, § 329). And the fact is that we want to live.[6]

5 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. Compare Saint Thomas: *Summa*, Secunda secundae, quaestio 4, art. 2.

6 Antoine-Augustin Cournot (1801–1877), French mathematician, economist and philosopher; the title means "Treatise on the Linking of Fundamental Ideas in the Sciences and in History."

FAITH CREATES ITS OBJECT

Believing is creating: through faith and love God creates himself in us.

9.19 But although we say that faith is a matter of the will, it would perhaps be better to say that it is the will itself, the will not to die, or rather another power of the soul, distinct from intelligence, will and feeling. We would have, then, feeling, knowing, willing and believing, that is, creating. For neither feeling, nor intelligence, nor will creates; they work on matter already given, on matter given by faith. Faith is the creative power of man. But since it is more intimately related to the will than to any other of the powers, we present it in volitional form. Note, however, that wanting to believe, that is, wanting to create, is not exactly believing or creating, though it is indeed the beginning of it.

9.20 Faith, then, is, if not a creative power, the flower of the will, and its office is to create. Faith creates its object, in a certain sense. And faith in God consists in creating God; and since it is God who gives us faith in him, it is God who is continually creating himself in us. This is why Saint Augustine said: "I will seek you, Lord, by calling upon you, and I will call upon you by believing in you. My faith calls upon you, Lord, the faith you gave me, the faith you breathed into me through the humanity of your Son, through the ministry of your preacher" (*Confessions*, book I, chapter 1). The power to create a God in our image and likeness, to personalize the Universe, means nothing other than that we carry God within us, as the substance of what we hope for, and that God is continually creating us in his image and likeness.

9.21 And God is created, that is, God creates himself in us, through compassion, through love. To believe in God is to love him and to fear him with love; and one begins by loving him even before knowing him, and it is by loving him that one ends by seeing him and discovering him in everything.

9.22 Those who say they believe in God and neither love him nor fear him do not believe in him, but in those who have taught them that God exists; and these, in their turn, all too often do not believe in him either. Those who, without passion of soul, without anguish, without uncertainty, without doubt, without despair in their consolation, believe that they believe in God, believe only in the idea God, not in God himself. And just as one may believe in him out of love, one may also believe out of fear, and even out of hatred, as that thief Vanni Fucci believed in him, whom Dante makes insult him with obscene gestures from Hell (*Inferno* XXV, 1–3). For the demons too believe in God, and so do many atheists.[7]

9.23 Is it not, perhaps, a way of believing in him, that fury with which he is denied and even insulted by those who do not want there to be one, since they cannot manage to believe in him? They want him to exist just as believers do; but being weak and passive men, or wicked ones, in whom reason is stronger than will, they feel themselves swept along by reason, much to their inward sorrow. And they despair, and deny out of despair; and in denying they affirm and believe what they deny, and God reveals himself in them, affirming himself through the denial of himself.

9.24 But to all this it will be said that to teach that faith creates its object is to teach that this object is an object only for faith, that it lacks objective reality outside faith itself; just as, on the other hand, to maintain that faith is needed to restrain or to console the common people is to declare the object of faith illusory. And the truth is that to believe in God today is, first and foremost, for intellectual believers, to want God to exist.

9.25 To want God to exist, and to behave and feel as if he existed. And it is by this road of wanting his existence, and acting in accordance with that desire, that we create God, that is, that God creates himself in us, manifests himself to us, opens and reveals himself to us. For God comes out to meet whoever seeks him

7 Vanni Fucci, a thief from Pistoia, makes "the figs" at God in Dante's *Inferno*. The demons' belief echoes James 2:19.

with love and through love, and hides from whoever inquires after him through cold, unloving reason. God wants the heart to rest, but not the head; for in physical life the head sleeps and rests at times, while the heart keeps watch and works without ceasing. And so science without love separates us from God, and love, even without science, and perhaps better without it, leads us to God, and through God to wisdom. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!

HOW I BELIEVE IN GOD

Unamuno believes in God as in his friends, feeling a personality that surrounds and guides him.

9.26 And if I were asked how I believe in God, that is, how God creates himself in me and reveals himself to me, I shall perhaps have to make whoever I tell it to smile, or laugh, or even be scandalized.

9.27 I believe in God as I believe in my friends: because I feel the breath of his affection and his invisible, intangible hand that draws me and carries me and presses me hard; because I have an inward consciousness of a particular providence and of a universal mind that traces out my own destiny for me. And the concept of law—a concept, after all!—tells me nothing and teaches me nothing.

9.28 Time and again in my life I have found myself suspended over the abyss. Time and again I have found myself at cross-roads where a whole sheaf of paths opened before me, and by taking one of them I renounced the others, for the roads of life cannot be retraced. And time and again, in such unique moments, I have felt the thrust of a force that was conscious, sovereign and loving. And the path of the Lord opens before one.

9.29 One may feel that the Universe calls one and guides one as one person does another, may hear within oneself its wordless voice saying: Go and preach to all the nations! How do you know that a man standing before you has a consciousness like yours,

and that an animal also has one, more or less dim, but a stone does not? By the way the man behaves toward you as a man, like you, in your likeness; and by the way the stone does not behave toward you at all, but suffers your behavior. Well, that is how I believe that the Universe has a certain consciousness like mine: by the way it behaves toward me humanly. And I feel that a personality envelops me.

9.30 There lies a formless mass. It seems to be a kind of animal; no limbs can be made out; I see only two eyes, and eyes that look at me with a human gaze, the gaze of a fellow being, a gaze that asks me for compassion, and I hear that it breathes. And I conclude that in that formless mass there is a consciousness. And so, and in no other way, does the starry sky look at the believer, with a superhuman, divine gaze that asks him for supreme compassion and supreme love; and in the serene night he hears the breathing of God, which touches him at the very core of his heart, and God reveals himself to him. It is the Universe that lives, suffers, loves and asks for love.

9.31 From loving these little tangible things that leave us as they came, with no attachment to us, we pass to loving the more permanent things that cannot be grasped with the hands. From loving goods we pass to loving the Good; from beautiful things, to Beauty; from the true, to Truth; from loving pleasures, to loving Happiness; and, finally, to loving Love. One goes out of oneself to enter more deeply into one's supreme Self. Individual consciousness goes out of us to plunge into the Total Consciousness of which it forms part, but without dissolving in it. And God is nothing but the Love that springs from universal suffering and becomes consciousness.

9.32 Even this, it will be said, is moving within an iron circle, and such a God is not objective. And here it would be well to give reason its due and to examine what it means that something exists, that it is objective.

9.33 What, in fact, is it to exist, and when do we say that a thing exists? To exist is for something to be placed outside us in such a way that it preceded our perception of it and can go on subsist-

ing outside when we disappear. And am I really sure that anything preceded me, or that anything will survive me? Can my consciousness know that there is something outside it? All that I know or can know is in my consciousness. Let us not entangle ourselves, then, in the insoluble problem of some other objectivity of our perceptions; let us say instead that whatever acts exists, and that to exist is to act.

9.34 And here it will be said again that it is not God but the idea of God that acts in us. And we will reply that it is God through his idea, and very often rather through himself. And they will retort again, demanding proofs of the objective truth of God's existence, since we are asking for signs. And we will have to ask with Pilate: What is truth?

9.35 So indeed he asked, and without waiting for an answer he turned away to wash his hands, to clear himself of having let Christ be condemned to death. And so many ask "What is truth?" with no intention whatever of receiving an answer, and only in order to turn away and wash their hands of the crime of having helped to kill God in their own consciousness or in the consciousness of others.

9.36 What is truth? There are two kinds of truth: logical or objective truth, whose contrary is error, and moral or subjective truth, to which the lie is opposed. And in another essay I have already tried to show how error is the child of the lie[8].

9.37 Moral truth, the road that leads to the other truth, which is also moral, teaches us to cultivate science, which is first and foremost a school of sincerity and humility. Science teaches us, in fact, to submit our reason to the truth and to know and judge things as they are, that is, as they want to be, and not as we want them to be. In a religiously scientific inquiry it is the very data of reality, the perceptions we receive from the world, that come to be formulated as law in our mind; it is not we who formulate them. It is the numbers themselves that do mathematics in us. And science is the most recollected school of resignation and

8 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. In my essay "¿Qué es verdad?" [What Is Truth?], published in *La España Moderna,* March 1906 issue, volume 207.

humility, for it teaches us to bow before the fact, even the seemingly most trivial. And it is the portico of religion; but within religion its function ends.

9.38 For just as there is logical truth, to which error is opposed, and moral truth, to which the lie is opposed, there is also aesthetic truth or verisimilitude, to which nonsense is opposed, and religious truth, the truth of hope, to which the restlessness of absolute hopelessness is opposed. For aesthetic verisimilitude, that of what can be expressed with sense, is not logical truth, that of what is demonstrated with reasons; nor is religious truth, that of faith, the substance of what is hoped for, equivalent to moral truth: rather, it stands above it. He who affirms his faith on a basis of uncertainty does not lie, nor can he lie.

9.39 And not only does one not believe with reason, nor even above reason or below it: one believes against reason. Religious faith, it must be said once more, is not merely irrational; it is contra-rational. "Poetry is illusion before knowledge; religiousness, illusion after knowledge. Poetry and religiousness do away with the vaudeville of worldly wisdom about living. Every individual who does not live either poetically or religiously is a fool." So Kierkegaard tells us (*Afsluttende uvidenskabelig Efterskrift* [Concluding Unscientific Postscript], ch. 4, sect. II, A § 2), the same Kierkegaard who also tells us that Christianity is a desperate way out. And so it is; but only through the despair of this way out can we reach hope, that hope whose vitalizing illusion surpasses all rational knowledge, telling us that there is always something irreducible to reason. And of reason it can be said what was said of Christ: that whoever is not with it is against it. What is not rational is contra-rational. And such is hope.

9.40 Along this whole road we always arrive at hope.

HOPE AND TIME

Love lives on hope; the deepest hope is the hope of eternal life.

9.41 The mystery of love, which is a mystery of suffering, has a mysterious form, which is time. We tie yesterday to tomorrow

with links of yearning, and the now is, strictly speaking, nothing other than the effort of the before to become after; the present is nothing but the striving of the past to become the future. The now is a point that vanishes no sooner than it is spoken, and yet in that point lies the whole of eternity, the substance of time.

9.42 All that has been can now be only as it was, and all that is can be only as it is. The possible is always relegated to what is to come, the only realm of freedom, where imagination, the creative and liberating power, the flesh of faith, moves at its ease.

9.43 Love always looks and tends toward the future, for its work is the work of our perpetuation; what is proper to love is to hope, and it feeds on hopes alone. And as soon as love sees its longing fulfilled, it grows sad and discovers at once that what it tended toward is not its proper end, that God set it there only as a lure to move it to the work, that its end lies further on; and it sets off again after it on its toilsome course of illusions and disillusions through life. And it goes on turning its failed hopes into memories, and from those memories it draws new hopes. The quarry of the visions of our future lies in the underground vaults of our memory; out of memories imagination forges our hopes. And humanity is like a young woman full of longings, hungry for life and thirsty for love, who weaves her days out of dreams, and waits, waits always, waits without ceasing, for the eternal lover. Because he has been destined for her since before the before, from far further back than her remotest memories, from beyond the cradle toward the past, he is to live with her and for her after the after, until far beyond her remotest hopes, beyond the tomb, toward the future.[9] And the most charitable wish for this poor woman in love is, as for the young woman who always waits for her beloved, that the sweet hopes of the springtime of her life may turn, in its winter, into memories sweeter still, memories that beget new hopes. What a sap of quiet happiness, of resignation to destiny, must come in the days of our shortest sun from remembering hopes that have not

9 *Esperar* means both "to hope" and "to wait"; Unamuno plays on both senses here and in what follows.

yet been fulfilled, and that, because they have not been fulfilled, keep their purity!

9.44 Love hopes—hopes always, never tiring of hoping—and love of God, our faith in God, is above all hope in him. For God does not die, and whoever hopes in God will live forever. And our fundamental hope, the root and trunk of all our hopes, is the hope of eternal life.

9.45 And if faith is the substance of hope, hope in turn is the form of faith. Before it gives us hope, faith is formless: vague, chaotic, potential. It is nothing but the possibility of believing, a longing to believe. But one has to believe in something, and one believes in what one hopes for; one believes in hope. One remembers the past, one knows the present; one believes only in the future. To believe what we have not seen is to believe what we shall see. Faith, then—I repeat it—is faith in hope; we believe what we hope for.[10]

9.46 Love makes us believe in God, in whom we hope and from whom we hope for the life to come; love makes us believe in what the dream of hope creates for us.

9.47 Faith is our longing for the eternal, for God; and hope is the longing of God, of the eternal, of our divinity, which comes out to meet faith and lifts us up. Man aspires to God through faith and says to him: "I believe—give me, Lord, something to believe in!" And God, his divinity, sends him hope in another life so that he may believe in it. Hope is the reward of faith. Only he who believes truly hopes, and only he who truly hopes believes. We believe only what we hope for, and we hope only for what we believe.

9.48 It was hope that called God Father, and it is hope that goes on giving him that name, pregnant with consolation and with mystery. Our father gave us life and gives us the bread to sustain it, and it is to our father that we pray to preserve it for us. And if Christ was the one who, with the fullest heart and the purest lips, called his Father and ours Father, and if Christian feeling reaches its summit in the feeling of the fatherhood of God, it is

10 An echo of Hebrews 11:1: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for."

because in Christ the human race sublimated its hunger for eternity.

9.49 It will perhaps be said that this longing of faith, this hope, is more than anything else an aesthetic feeling. Perhaps that feeling does give it form as well, but without wholly satisfying it.

BEAUTY AND ETERNITY

Beauty is the eternal in things, revealed by love and born of compassion.

9.50 In art, indeed, we seek an imitation of eternalization. If in the beautiful the spirit grows quiet for a moment, and rests and finds relief, even if its anguish is not cured, it is because the beautiful is a revelation of the eternal, of the divine in things, and beauty is nothing but the perpetuation of the momentary. For just as truth is the end of rational knowledge, so beauty is the end of hope, which is perhaps irrational at bottom.

9.51 Nothing is lost, nothing passes away entirely, for everything is perpetuated in one way or another, and everything, after passing through time, returns to eternity. The temporal world has roots in eternity, and there yesterday is joined with today and tomorrow. The scenes pass before us as in a cinematograph, but the film remains one and whole beyond time.

9.52 The physicists say that not a single scrap of matter, not a single jot of energy, is lost, but that each is transformed and transmitted and persists. And is any form lost, then, however fleeting it may be? We must believe—believe it and hope it!—that no form is lost either. Somewhere it is filed away and perpetuated; there is a mirror of eternity in which all the images that file past through time are summed up, without losing themselves in one another. Every impression that reaches me remains stored in my brain, even if so deeply or so faintly that it sinks into the depths of my subconscious. But from there it animates my life. If my whole spirit, the whole content of my soul, became conscious to me, all the fleeting impressions I for-

got as soon as I perceived them would rise up again, and even those that passed me by unnoticed. I carry within me everything that has filed past before me, and I perpetuate it with me. Perhaps it all goes into my seed, and all my ancestors live wholly in me, and will live, together with me, in my descendants. And perhaps I go, the whole of me, with all this universe of mine, into each of my works—or at least there goes into them what is essential in me, what makes me myself, my individual essence.

9.53 And this individual essence of each thing, what makes it itself and not another—how is it revealed to us if not as beauty? What is the beauty of something if not its eternal ground, what unites its past with its future, what of it rests and remains in the heart of eternity? Or rather, what is it but the revelation of its divinity?

9.54 And this beauty, which is the root of eternity, is revealed to us through love. It is the greatest revelation of God's love and the sign that we are to overcome time. It is love that reveals to us what is eternal in us and in our neighbors.

9.55 Is it the beautiful, the eternal in things, that awakens and kindles our love for them, or is it our love for things that reveals to us the beautiful, the eternal in them? Is not beauty perhaps a creation of love, just as the sensible world is a creation of the instinct of self-preservation, and the supersensible world of the instinct of perpetuation, and in the same sense? Is not beauty, and eternity with it, a creation of love? "Our outward man," writes the Apostle (2 Cor. 4:16), "is wearing away, but the inward man is renewed day by day." The man of passing appearances wears away and passes with them; but the man of reality remains and grows. "For what is at present momentary and light in our tribulation gives us a weight of glory exceedingly high and eternal" (v. 17). Our suffering brings us anguish, and anguish, bursting from its own fullness, seems to us consolation. "While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal" (v. 18).

9.56 This suffering gives hope, which is what is beautiful in life, the supreme beauty, or in other words the supreme consolation. And since love is sorrowful, since it is compassion, pity, beauty springs from compassion and is nothing but the temporal consolation that compassion seeks for itself. A tragic consolation. And the supreme beauty is that of tragedy. Anguished at feeling that everything passes—that we pass, that what is ours passes, that all that surrounds us passes—we find that anguish itself reveals to us the consolation of what does not pass, of the eternal, of the beautiful.

9.57 And this beauty thus revealed, this perpetuation of the momentary, is carried out in practice, lives at all, only through the work of charity. Hope in action is charity, just as beauty in action is the good.

THE SUFFERING GOD

Charity springs from compassion for God, who suffers in all consciousness bound to matter.

9.58 The root of charity—which makes eternal all it loves and draws out for us the beauty hidden in it, giving us the good—is the love of God, or, if you like, charity toward God, compassion for God. Love, compassion, personalizes everything, we said. Discovering suffering in everything and personalizing everything, it personalizes the Universe itself too, which also suffers, and it discloses God to us. For God is revealed to us because he suffers and because we suffer. Because he suffers he demands our love, and because we suffer he gives us his, and covers our anguish with the eternal and infinite anguish. This was the scandal of Christianity among Jews and Greeks, among Pharisees and Stoics; and this, which was its scandal, the scandal of the cross, still is and will remain so, even among Christians: the scandal of a God who becomes man in order to suffer and die and to rise again for having suffered and died—of a God who suffers and dies. And this truth that God suffers, before which men feel terrified, is the revelation of the very heart of

the Universe and of its mystery—the revelation he gave us when he sent his Son to redeem us by suffering and dying. It was the revelation of the divinity of suffering, for only what suffers is divine.

9.59 And men made a god of Christ, who suffered, and through him they discovered the eternal essence of a living, human God—that is, one who suffers (only the dead, the inhuman, does not suffer)—who loves, who thirsts for love, for compassion, who is a person. Whoever does not know the Son will never know the Father, and the Father is known only through the Son. Whoever does not know the Son of Man—who suffers anguish unto blood and the rending of the heart, who lives with his soul sorrowful unto death, who suffers pain that kills, and is raised again—will not know the Father, nor know anything of the suffering God.

9.60 The one who does not suffer—and does not suffer because he does not live—is that logical, frozen *ens realissimum* [most real being], the *primum movens* [prime mover], that impassible entity which, being impassible, is nothing but pure idea. The category does not suffer, but neither does it live or exist as a person. And how is the world to flow and live from an impassible idea? It would be nothing but the idea of the world itself. But the world suffers, and suffering is feeling the flesh of reality; it is the spirit feeling itself solid and substantial; it is touching oneself; it is immediate reality.

9.61 Suffering is the substance of life and the root of personality, for only by suffering is one a person. And it is universal: what unites all of us beings is suffering, the universal or divine blood that flows through all. What we call will—what is it but suffering?

9.62 And suffering has its degrees, according to how deep it goes: from the suffering that floats on the sea of appearances down to eternal anguish, the source of the tragic sense of life, which comes to rest in the depths of the eternal and there awakens consolation; from the physical pain that makes our body recoil, to religious anguish, which makes us lie down in the bosom of God and be watered there by his divine tears.

9.63 Anguish is something far deeper, more inward and more spiritual than suffering. One often feels anguish even in the midst of what we call happiness, and because of happiness itself, to which one is not resigned and before which one trembles. Happy men who resign themselves to their apparent good fortune, a passing good fortune, would seem to be men without substance—or at least men who have not discovered it in themselves, who have never touched it. Such men are usually incapable of loving and of being loved, and they live, at bottom, with neither sorrow nor glory.

9.64 There is no true love except in suffering, and in this world one must choose either love, which is suffering, or happiness. And love leads us to no happiness other than that of love itself, and its tragic consolation of uncertain hope. The moment love becomes happy and is satisfied, it no longer desires, and it is no longer love. The satisfied, the happy, do not love; they fall asleep in habit, which borders on annihilation. To grow used to things is already to begin not to be. Man is the more man—that is, the more divine—the greater his capacity for suffering, or rather, for anguish.

9.65 On coming into the world we are given a choice between love and happiness, and we want—poor things!—both: the happiness of loving and the love of happiness. But we should ask to be given love and not happiness, and not to be allowed to doze off in habit, for we might fall asleep altogether and, never waking, lose consciousness never to recover it. We must ask God to let us feel ourselves within ourselves, in our own suffering.

9.66 What is Destiny, what is Fate, but the brotherhood of love and suffering, and that terrible mystery that love, though it strives toward happiness, dies as soon as it touches it, and true happiness dies with it? Love and suffering beget each other; love is charity and compassion, and love that is not charitable and compassionate is not love. Love, in short, is resigned despair.

9.67 What mathematicians call a problem of maxima and minima, which is also called the law of economy, is the formula of every existential—that is, passional—movement. In material

mechanics and in social mechanics, in industry and political economy, the whole problem comes down to obtaining the greatest possible useful result with the least possible effort: the most income with the least expenditure, the most pleasure with the least pain. And the terrible, tragic formula of the inner spiritual life is either to obtain the most happiness with the least love, or the most love with the least happiness. And one must choose between the one and the other. And one must be sure that whoever approaches the infinite of love, infinite love, approaches the zero of happiness, supreme anguish. And on reaching this zero, one is beyond the misery that kills. "Do not be, and you will be able to do more than all that is," says the master Friar Juan de los Ángeles in one of his *Diálogos de la conquista del reino de Dios* (*Dialogues on the Conquest of the Kingdom of God*) (Dial. III, 8).[11]

9.68 And there is something more anguishing than suffering.

9.69 That man expected, when he received the long-dreaded blow, to suffer so severely that he would succumb to the suffering. The blow fell on him, and he scarcely felt any pain. But afterwards, coming to himself and finding that he felt nothing, he was seized with terror—a tragic terror, the most terrifying of all—and he cried out, choking with anguish: "Then I do not exist!" What would terrify you more: to feel a pain that robbed you of your senses as a red-hot iron pierced your entrails, or to see them pierced like that without feeling any pain at all? Have you never felt the terror, the horrible terror, of finding yourself without tears and without pain? Suffering tells us that we exist; suffering tells us that those we love exist; suffering tells us that the world we live in exists; and suffering tells us that God exists and suffers. But it is the suffering of anguish, of the anguish to survive and be eternal. Anguish discloses God to us and makes us love him.

9.70 To believe in God is to love him, and to love him is to feel him suffering, to feel compassion for him.

9.71 It may seem blasphemy, this saying that God suffers, since suffering implies limitation. And yet God, the consciousness of the Universe, is limited by the brute matter in which he lives, by the unconscious, from which he seeks to free himself and to free us. And we, in turn, must seek to free him from it. God suffers in each and all of us, in each and every consciousness imprisoned in transient matter, and we all suffer in him. Religious anguish is nothing but the divine suffering: feeling that God suffers in me and that I suffer in him.

9.72 Universal suffering is the anguish of everything at trying to be everything else without being able to achieve it—the anguish of each being what it is while being at the same time all that it is not, and being so forever. The essence of a being is not only the effort to persist forever, as Spinoza taught us, but also the effort to universalize itself; it is the hunger and thirst for eternity and infinity. Every created being strives not only to preserve itself in itself, but to perpetuate itself, and moreover to invade all the others, to be the others without ceasing to be itself, to extend its boundaries to infinity, but without breaking them. It does not want to break down its walls and leave everything flat ground, common and defenseless, merging and losing its individuality. It wants to carry its walls out to the farthest ends of creation and take in everything within them. It wants the maximum of individuality together with the maximum of personality too; it aspires to the Universe being itself; it aspires to God.

9.73 And this vast I, into which each I wants to put the Universe —what is it but God? And because I aspire to him I love him, and this aspiration of mine to God is my love for him; and just as I suffer to be him, he too suffers to be me and each one of us.

9.74 I know well that, despite my warning that what we are attempting here is to give logical form to a system of alogical feelings, more than one reader will go on being scandalized at my speaking of a passible God, a God who suffers, and at my applying to God himself, as God, the passion of Christ. The God

11 Juan de los Ángeles (c. 1536–1609) was a Spanish Franciscan mystical writer.

of so-called rational theology does indeed exclude all suffering. And the reader will think that this talk of suffering can have only a metaphorical value when applied to God, as it has, they say, when the Old Testament speaks to us of human passions in the God of Israel. For there can be no wrath, anger and vengeance without suffering. And as for his suffering while bound to matter, I shall be told, with Plotinus (*Enneads* II, IX, 7), that the soul of the whole cannot be bound by the very thing—bodies, or matter—that is bound by it.

9.75 The whole problem of the origin of evil is involved in this, the evil of guilt as much as the evil of punishment. For if God does not suffer, he makes others suffer; and if his life—since God lives—is not a gradual becoming of a total consciousness ever fuller, that is, ever more God, it is a gradual drawing of all things toward himself, a giving of himself to all, a making of the consciousness of each part enter into the consciousness of the whole, which is he himself, until he comes to be all in all, πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν [all things in all], in the expression of Saint Paul, the first Christian mystic. But more of this in the next essay, on the apocatastasis or beatific union.

9.76 For now, let us say that a tremendous current of suffering drives beings toward one another, and makes them love and seek one another, and try to complete one another, and each to be both itself and the others at once. In God everything lives, and in his suffering everything suffers; and in loving God we love his creatures in him, just as in loving creatures and feeling compassion for them we love God in them and feel compassion for him. The soul of each of us will not be free while anything is enslaved in this world of God's; nor will God, who lives in the soul of each of us, be free until our soul is free.

9.77 And what is most immediate is to feel and love my own misery, my anguish—to feel compassion for myself, to have love for myself. And this compassion, when it is lively and superabundant, overflows from me to others, and out of the excess of my compassion for myself I feel compassion for my neighbors.

My own misery is so great that the compassion it awakens in me for myself soon overflows, revealing to me the universal misery.

9.78 And charity—what is it but an overflowing of compassion? What is it but reflected suffering, which spills over and pours out into compassion for the ills of others and into the exercise of charity?

9.79 When the fullness of our compassion brings us to the consciousness of God within us, so great an anguish fills us at the divine misery poured out in everything that we have to pour it outward, and we do so in the form of charity. And in pouring it out thus we feel relief and the sorrowful sweetness of the good. It is what the mystic doctor Teresa of Jesus, who knew about sorrowful loves, called "delicious pain." It is like someone who contemplates something beautiful and feels the need to let others share in it. For the impulse to produce, in which charity consists, is the work of sorrowful love.

9.80 We feel, indeed, a satisfaction in doing good when we have good to spare, when we are brimming with compassion; and we are brimming with it when God, filling our soul, gives us the sorrowful sensation of universal life, of the universal longing for eternal divinization. For we are not simply placed in the world beside others, with no common root with them, nor is their fate indifferent to us: their suffering pains us, their anguish is our anguish, and we feel our common origin and common suffering even without knowing it. It is suffering, and the compassion born of it, that reveal to us the brotherhood of all that exists as living and more or less conscious. "Brother Wolf," Saint Francis of Assisi called the poor wolf that feels a painful hunger for sheep, and perhaps the pain of having to devour them; and this brotherhood reveals to us the fatherhood of God, reveals that God is Father and exists. And as Father he shelters our common misery.

9.81 Charity, then, is the impulse to free myself and all my neighbors from suffering, and to free from it God, who embraces us all.

SUFFERING, SPIRIT AND MATTER

Suffering is the clash of consciousness with matter, and only anguish makes the soul master of itself.

9.82 Suffering is something spiritual and the most immediate revelation of consciousness; perhaps our body was given to us only to give suffering occasion to show itself. Whoever had never suffered, little or much, would have no consciousness of himself. Man's first cry at birth comes when the air, entering his chest and constraining him, seems to say to him: you have to breathe me in order to live!

9.83 The material or sensible world, the one our senses create for us, exists—we must believe by faith, whatever reason may teach us—only to embody and sustain the other world, the spiritual or imaginable world, the one that imagination creates for us. Consciousness strives to be ever more consciousness, to become conscious, to have full consciousness of all of itself, of its whole content. In the depths of our own body, in animals, in plants, in rocks, in everything living, in the whole Universe, there is—we must believe by faith, whatever reason may teach us—a spirit that struggles to know itself, to gain consciousness of itself, to be itself—for to be oneself is to know oneself—to be pure spirit. And since it can achieve this only by means of the body, by means of matter, it creates matter and makes use of it, while at the same time remaining its prisoner. One can see one's face only as it is reflected in a mirror; but to see oneself one is held prisoner by the mirror in which one sees oneself, and one sees oneself in it just as the mirror distorts one. If the mirror breaks, one's image breaks; if it clouds over, one's image clouds over.

9.84 Spirit finds itself limited by the matter in which it has to live and gain consciousness of itself, in the same way that thought is limited by the word, which is its social body. Without matter there is no spirit, but matter makes spirit suffer by limiting it. And suffering is nothing but the obstacle that matter sets

before spirit; it is the collision of consciousness with the unconscious.

9.85 Suffering is, indeed, the barrier that unconsciousness—that is, matter—sets before consciousness, before spirit. It is the resistance to the will, the limit that the visible universe sets to God; it is the wall that consciousness runs up against when it tries to expand at the expense of unconsciousness; it is the resistance that unconsciousness puts up against becoming conscious.

9.86 Although we believe it on authority, we do not know that we have a heart, a stomach or lungs until they ache, weigh on us or distress us. It is physical pain, or at least discomfort, that reveals to us the existence of our own inner organs. And so it is also with spiritual suffering, with anguish: we do not realize that we have a soul until it hurts us.

9.87 It is anguish that makes consciousness turn back upon itself. The man without anguish knows what he does and what he thinks, but he does not truly know that he does it and thinks it. He thinks, but he does not think that he thinks, and his thoughts are as though they were not his. Nor does he belong to himself. For it is only through anguish, through the passion never to die, that a human spirit becomes master of itself.

9.88 Suffering, which is an undoing, makes us discover our inner depths; and in the supreme undoing, that of death, we shall come through the suffering of annihilation to the inmost depths of our temporal depths—to God, whom in spiritual anguish we breathe and learn to love.

9.89 This is how we must believe by faith, whatever reason may teach us.

9.90 The origin of evil, as many have seen since ancient times, is nothing but what by another name is called the inertia of matter, and in the spirit, sloth. Not for nothing has it been said that sloth is the mother of all vices. Without forgetting that the supreme sloth is that of not longing madly for immortality.

9.91 Consciousness—the yearning for more and more, ever more, the hunger for eternity and thirst for infinity, the craving

for God—is never satisfied. Each consciousness wants to be itself and to be all the others without ceasing to be itself; it wants to be God. And matter, unconsciousness, tends to be less, ever less, to be nothing, its thirst being a thirst for rest. Spirit says: I want to be! And matter answers it: I do not want to!

9.92 And in the order of human life, the individual, moved by the mere instinct of self-preservation, which creates the material world, would tend toward destruction, toward nothingness, were it not for society. Society, giving him the instinct of perpetuation, which creates the spiritual world, carries and drives him toward the whole, toward immortalizing himself. And everything that man does as a mere individual, set against society, to preserve himself even at society's expense, is bad; and everything he does as a social person, for the society in which he is included, to perpetuate himself in it and to perpetuate it, is good. And many who seem great egoists, who trample everything underfoot to carry out their work, are nothing but souls on fire with charity and overflowing with it, because they submit and subjugate their petty I to the social I, which has a mission to fulfill.

9.93 Whoever ties the work of love, of spiritualization, of liberation, to transitory and individual forms crucifies God in matter; everyone who makes the ideal serve his temporal interests or his worldly glory crucifies God in matter. Such a man is a deicide.

9.94 The work of charity, of the love of God, is to try to free him from brute matter, to try to spiritualize everything, to make everything conscious, to universalize everything. It is to dream that the rocks will come to speak, and to act in accordance with that dream: that all that exists should become conscious, that the Word should rise again.

9.95 One need only look at it in the Eucharistic symbol. They have imprisoned the Word in a piece of material bread, and they have imprisoned it there so that we may eat it, and by eating it make it ours, part of this body of ours in which the spirit dwells, so that it may stir in our heart and think in our brain and be

consciousness. They have imprisoned it in that bread so that, buried in our body, it may rise again in our spirit.

9.96 For everything must be spiritualized. And this is achieved by giving to everyone and to everything my spirit, which grows the more I share it out. And to give my spirit is to invade that of others and make myself master of them.

9.97 In all this we must believe by faith, whatever reason may teach us.

9.98 And now we are going to see the practical consequences of all these more or less fantastic doctrines for logic, for aesthetics, and above all for ethics: their religious concretion. And then perhaps whoever, despite my warnings, has looked here for the scientific, or even philosophical, development of an irrational system may find them more justified.

9.99 I do not think it superfluous to refer the reader once more to all I said at the end of the sixth chapter, the one titled "In the Depths of the Abyss"; but now we are approaching the practical or pragmatic part of this whole treatise. Before that, however, we still have to see how religious feeling can take concrete form in the hopeful vision of another life.

X. Religion, the Mythology of the Beyond, and Apocatastasis

Religión, mitología de ultratumba y apocatástasis
Heaven, hell and the dream that in the end God will be all in all.

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10 καὶ γὰρ ἴσως καὶ μάλιστα πρέπει μέλλοντα ἐκεῖσε ἀποδημεῖν διασκοπεῖν τε καὶ μυθολογεῖν περὶ τῆς ἀποδημίας τῆς ἐκεῖ, ποίαν τινὰ αὐτὴν οἰόμεθα εἶναι. [For perhaps it is most fitting of all, for one who is about to journey there, to examine and tell stories about the journey there, and what sort of thing we think it is.] / Plato, *Phaedo*.[1]

10.1 The sense of divinity and of God, and the faith, hope and charity founded on it, found religion in their turn. From faith in God is born faith in men; from hope in him, hope in them; and from charity or piety toward God—for, as Cicero said (*De natura deorum*, bk. I, ch. 41), *est enim pietas iustitia adversum deos* [for piety is justice toward the gods]—charity toward men. In God are summed up not only Humanity but the whole Universe, and that Universe spiritualized and made inward, since Christian faith says that God will in the end be all in all. Saint Teresa said, and Miguel de Molinos repeated it in a harsher and more despairing sense, that the soul must reckon that there is nothing but itself and God.[2]

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1 Phaedo 61e: Socrates, on the day of his death, speaking of the journey to the other world.

2 Miguel de Molinos (1628–1696), Spanish priest and founder of Quietism, was condemned by the Roman Inquisition.

10.2 And the relation with God, the more or less intimate union with him, is what we call religion.

10.3 What is religion? How does it differ from religiosity, and what relations hold between the two? Each of us defines religion according to how he feels it in himself, even more than according to how he observes it in others; nor can it be defined without feeling it in one way or another. Tacitus said (*Hist.* V, 4), speaking of the Jews, that everything that was sacred to the Romans was profane to them, and, conversely, that the Jews allowed what the Romans held impure: *profana illic omnia quae apud nos sacra, rursum concessa apud illos quae nobis incesta.* And hence he, the Roman, calls the Jews (V, 13) a people given to superstition and opposed to religion, *gens superstitioni obnoxia, religionibus adversa*; and when he turns his attention to Christianity, which he knew very poorly and scarcely distinguished from Judaism, he deems it a pernicious superstition, *exitialis superstitio*, arising from hatred of the human race, *odium generis humani* (*Ab excessu Aug.* XV, 44). So Tacitus, and so many with him. But where does religion end and superstition begin—or perhaps, where does superstition end and religion begin? What is the criterion for telling them apart?

10.4 It would get us little to run through here, even cursorily, the main definitions of religion that have been given, each according to the feeling of the one defining it. Religion is described rather than defined, and felt rather than described. But if any of those definitions has lately come into vogue, it is Schleiermacher's: that religion is the simple feeling of a relation of dependence on something higher than ourselves, and the desire to enter into relations with that mysterious power. Nor is W. Hermann's saying a bad one (in the work already cited): that man's religious longing is the desire for the truth of his human existence.[3] And to have done with the testimony of others, I shall cite that of the judicious and clear-sighted Cournot, when he says that "religious manifestations are the necessary consequence of man's inclination to believe in the existence of an

3 Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), German Protestant theologian.

invisible, supernatural and marvelous world, an inclination that has been regarded now as a reminiscence of an earlier state, now as the presentiment of a future destiny" (*Traité de l'enchaînement des idées fondamentales dans les sciences et dans l'histoire*, § 396). And here we have already reached the question of future destiny, of eternal life, that is, of the human finality of the Universe, or of God. Every religious path leads there, for it is the very essence of all religion.

10.5 Religion—from that of primitive man, who personalizes the whole Universe in the fetish—springs, indeed, from the vital need to give a human finality to the Universe, to God; and for that one must therefore attribute to him consciousness of himself and of his end. And one may say that religion is nothing but union with God, each of us feeling him as he feels him. God gives transcendent meaning and finality to life; but he gives it in relation to *each* one of us who believe in him. And so God is as much for man as man is for God, since he gave himself to man by becoming man, by becoming human, out of love for him.

10.6 And this religious longing to be united with God comes neither by science nor by art; it comes by life. "He who possesses science and art has religion; he who possesses neither, let him have religion," said Goethe in one of his very frequent fits of paganism. And yet, despite what he said, he himself, Goethe...?

10.7 And to desire union with God is not to lose ourselves and be engulfed in him—for to lose oneself and be engulfed is always to go and dissolve in the dreamless sleep of nirvana; it is to possess him rather than to be possessed by him. When, in view of the human impossibility of a rich man's entering the kingdom of heaven, his disciples asked Jesus who then could be saved, and the Master answered them that with men this was impossible, but not with God, Peter said to him: "Behold, we have left everything and followed you; what then shall we have?" And Jesus answered them, not that they would be engulfed in the Father, but that they would sit on twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:23–26).

10.8 It was a Spaniard, and a very Spanish one, Miguel de Molinos, who in his *Guía espiritual que desembaraza al alma y la conduce por el interior camino para alcanzar la perfecta contemplación y el rico tesoro de la paz interior* (*Spiritual Guide, Which Disentangles the Soul and Leads It along the Inward Way to Attain Perfect Contemplation and the Rich Treasure of Inner Peace*) said (§ 175) "that whoever is to attain mystical knowledge must detach and strip himself of five things: first, of creatures; second, of temporal things; third, of the very gifts of the Holy Spirit; fourth, of self; and fifth, he must detach himself from God himself." And he adds that "this last is the most perfect, because the soul that knows how to detach itself thus is the one that comes to lose itself in God, and only the soul that comes to lose itself thus is the one that succeeds in finding itself." Very Spanish, Molinos, yes, and no less Spanish this paradoxical expression of quietism, or rather of nihilism—since he himself speaks of annihilation elsewhere. But no less Spanish, and perhaps more so, were the Jesuits who fought him, standing up for the rights of the all against nothingness. For religion is not a longing to annihilate oneself but to make oneself total; it is a longing for life and not for death. The "eternal religion of man's inmost being… the individual dream of the heart, is the worship of his being, is the adoration of life," as the tormented Flaubert felt (*Par les champs et par les grèves* [Over Strand and Field], VII).

FROM THE CULT OF WOMAN TO SCIENCE

Chivalry and the cult of the Virgin gave way to the religion of science, all seeking to save life.

10.9 When, at the beginning of the so-called modern age, with the Renaissance, pagan religious feeling comes back to life, it takes concrete form in the chivalric ideal with its codes of love and honor. But it is a Christianized, baptized paganism. "Woman, the lady—the *donna*—was the divinity of those rough hearts. Whoever searches the records of that first age will find this ideal of woman in its purity and in its omnipotence: the Universe is

woman. And so it was at the beginning of the modern age in Germany, in France, in Provence, in Spain, in Italy. History was made in this image: Trojans and Romans were pictured as knights-errant, and so were the Arabs, Saracens, Turks, the Sultan and Saladin... In this universal fraternity are found the angels, the saints, the miracles, paradise, in a strange jumble with the fantastic and the voluptuous of the Eastern world, all of it baptized under the name of *chivalry*." So writes Francesco De Sanctis (*Storia della letteratura italiana* [History of Italian Literature], II), who shortly before tells us that for those men, "in paradise itself the lover's delight is to contemplate his lady—*Madonna*—and without his lady *he would not even want to go there*." What, indeed, was chivalry—which Cervantes later purified and Christianized in Don Quixote, when he set out to put an end to it through laughter—but a true and monstrous religion, a hybrid of paganism and Christianity, whose Gospel was perhaps the legend of Tristan and Iseult?[4] And did not the very Christian religion of the mystics—those knights-errant of the divine—culminate in the cult of woman divinized, of the Virgin Mother? What is the Mariolatry of a Saint Bonaventure, the troubadour of Mary? And it was love for the source of life, for her who saves us from death.

10.10 But as the Renaissance advanced, people passed from this religion of woman to the religion of science. Concupiscence ended in what it already was at bottom: curiosity, the yearning to taste the fruit of the tree of good and evil. Europe hurried to the University of Bologna to learn. Chivalry was succeeded by Platonism. People wanted to uncover the mystery of the world and of life. But at bottom it was in order to save life, which had sought to save itself through the cult of woman. Human consciousness wanted to penetrate the Universal Consciousness, but it did so, whether it knew it or not, in order to save itself.

10.11 The fact is that we feel and imagine the Universal Consciousness—and this feeling and imagining are religiousness—

4 Francesco De Sanctis (1817–1883), Italian literary critic and historian.

only in order to save our own individual consciousnesses. And how?

PICTURING THE OTHER LIFE

Every attempt to imagine eternal life raises greater difficulties than rationalizing God.

10.12 I must repeat once more that the longing for the immortality of the soul, for the persistence, in one form or another, of our personal and individual consciousness, is as much of the essence of religion as the longing that there be a God. The one does not occur without the other, and that is because at bottom the two are one and the same thing. But from the moment we try to make that first longing concrete and rational, to define it to ourselves, even more difficulties arise than arose when we tried to rationalize God.

10.13 To justify the immortal longing for immortality before our own poor reason, appeal has also been made to the consensus of mankind: *Permanere animos arbitratur consensu nationum omnium* [by the consensus of all nations, souls are held to survive], said Cicero, following the ancients (*Tuscul. Quaest.*, XVI, 36). But this same compiler of their feelings confessed that while he was reading the arguments for the immortality of the soul in Plato's *Phaedo*, he assented to them; yet as soon as he put the book down and began to turn the problem over in his mind, all that assent slipped away from him, *assentio omnis illa illabitur* [all that assent slips away] (chap. XI, 25). And what happened to Cicero happens to the rest of us. It happened to Swedenborg, the most intrepid visionary of another world, when he confessed that whoever speaks of the life beyond without learned speculations about the soul or its mode of union with the body believes that after death he will live in splendid enjoyment and vision, like a man among angels; but as soon as he starts to think about the doctrine of the union of the soul with the body, or about hypotheses concerning the soul, doubts arise in him as to whether the soul is like this or like

that, and as soon as they arise, the former idea vanishes (*De coelo et inferno*, § 183). And yet, "what touches me, what troubles me, what consoles me, what leads me to self-denial and sacrifice, is the destiny that awaits *me or my person*, whatever may be the origin, the nature, the essence of that inaccessible bond without which the philosophers are pleased to decide that my person would vanish," as Cournot says (*Traité*... § 297).

10.14 Are we to accept a pure and naked faith in an eternal life without trying to picture it to ourselves? That is impossible; we cannot bring ourselves to it. And yet there are those who call themselves Christians and have all but set that picture aside. Take any book of the most enlightened Protestantism, that is, the most rationalist, the most cultured—the *Dogmatik* of Dr. Julius Kaftan, for example—and of the 668 pages of its sixth edition, that of 1909, only one, the last, is devoted to this problem. And on that page, after establishing that Christ is the end of History just as he is its beginning and middle, and that those who are in Christ will attain the life of fullness, the eternal life of those who are in Christ, there is not a single word about what that life might be. At most, a few words about eternal death, that is, hell, "because the moral character of Christian faith and hope requires it." Its moral character, eh? Not its religious character, for I do not know that this requires any such thing. And all of it with a prudent agnostic parsimony.

10.15 Yes, the prudent thing, the rational thing, and some will say the pious thing, is not to try to penetrate mysteries that are barred to our knowledge, not to insist on achieving a tangible picture of eternal glory like that of a *Divine Comedy*. True faith, true Christian piety, we shall be told, consists in resting in the confidence that God, through the grace of Christ, will in one way or another make us live in him, his Son; that since our destiny is in his almighty hands, we should abandon ourselves to them, certain that he will do with us what is best for the final end of life, of the spirit and of the universe. Such is the lesson that has run through many centuries, and above all through the period from Luther to Kant.

10.16 And yet men have not ceased trying to picture to themselves how that eternal life may be, nor will they ever cease trying, as long as they are men and not thinking machines. There are books of theology—or whatever it may be—full of disquisitions on the condition in which the blessed live, on the manner of their enjoyment, on the properties of the glorified body, since the soul cannot be conceived without some body.

10.17 And it is largely to this same need, a true need to form a concrete picture of what that other life may be, that the indestructible vitality of doctrines such as spiritism, metempsychosis, the transmigration of souls through the stars and others like them responds. These are doctrines which, as often as they are declared defeated and dead, are reborn just as often in one form or another, more or less new. And it is a signal blunder to try to dispense with them altogether and not look for their permanent core. Man will never resign himself to giving up a concrete picture of that other life.

10.18 But is an eternal and endless life after death even thinkable? What can the life of a disembodied spirit be? What can such a spirit be? What can a pure consciousness be, without a bodily organism? Descartes divided the world between thought and extension, a dualism imposed on him by the Christian dogma of the immortality of the soul. But is it extension, matter, that thinks or becomes spiritual, or is it thought that becomes extended and material? The gravest metaphysical questions arise in practice—and that is how they acquire their value, ceasing to be idle discussions of useless curiosity—when we try to account for the possibility of our immortality. The fact is that metaphysics has value only insofar as it tries to explain how that vital longing of ours can or cannot be fulfilled. And so there is, and there always will be, a rational metaphysics and a vital metaphysics, in perennial conflict with each other, the one starting from the notion of cause, the other from that of substance.

10.19 And even supposing a personal immortality, might we not feel it as something as terrible as its negation? “Calypso could not console herself for the departure of Ulysses; in her grief she

found herself desolate at being immortal," the gentle Fénelon, the mystic, tells us at the beginning of his *Telemachus*. Did it not come to be the doom of the ancient gods, as of the demons, that they were not allowed to kill themselves?

10.20 When Jesus, having taken Peter, James and John up a high mountain, was transfigured before them, his garments becoming shining white as snow, and Moses and Elijah appeared and talked with him, Peter said to the Master: "Master, it would be good for us to stay here and make three tabernacles, one for you and the other two for Moses and Elijah," because he wanted to make that moment eternal. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus ordered them to tell no one what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. And they, keeping this saying, argued about what this rising from the dead might mean, as men who did not understand it. And it was after this that Jesus met the father of the boy possessed by a mute spirit, who said to him: "I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9.)

10.21 Those three apostles did not understand what rising from the dead might be. Nor did those Sadducees who asked the Master whose wife, in the resurrection, the woman would be who had had several husbands in this life (Matt. 22)—which is when he said that God is not the God of the dead but of the living. And indeed no other life is thinkable for us except in the very forms of this earthly and passing one. Nor does all that about the grain and the wheat that springs from it shed any light on the mystery—the image with which the apostle Paul answers the question: "How will the dead rise? With what body will they come?" (1 Cor. 15:35).

10.22 How can a human soul live and enjoy God eternally without losing its individual personality, that is, without losing itself? What is it to enjoy God? What is eternity as opposed to time? Does the soul change or not change in the other life? If it does not change, how does it live? And if it changes, how does it keep its individuality over so long a time? The other life may exclude space, but it cannot exclude time, as Cournot, already cited, points out.

10.23 If there is life in heaven, there is change. Swedenborg pointed out that the angels change, because the delight of heavenly life would little by little lose its value if they always enjoyed it in its fullness, and because angels, like men, love themselves, and whoever loves himself undergoes alterations of state. And he adds that at times the angels grow sad, and that he, Swedenborg, spoke with some of them when they were sad (*De coelo et inferno* § 158, 160). In any case, it is impossible for us to conceive of life without change—change of growth or of decline, of sadness or of joy, of love or of hatred.

THE BEATIFIC VISION

An eternal vision of God seems to drown consciousness; true bliss would be endless learning.

10.24 The fact is that an eternal life is unthinkable, and more unthinkable still is an eternal life of absolute happiness, of beatific vision.

10.25 And what is this beatific vision? We see, in the first place, that it is called vision and not action, which supposes something passive. And does this beatific vision not suppose the loss of one's own consciousness? A saint in heaven, says Bossuet, is a being who scarcely feels himself, so possessed is he by God and so engulfed in his glory... One cannot stop at him, because one finds him outside himself, held by an unchangeable love to the source of his being and of his happiness. (*Du culte qui est dû à Dieu*.) And this is said by Bossuet the anti-quietist. That loving vision of God supposes an absorption in him.[5] One of the blessed who fully enjoys God must not think of himself, nor remember himself, nor have consciousness of himself, but must be in perpetual ecstasy—ἔκστασις—outside himself, carried away from himself. And the mystics describe to us a prelude to that vision in ecstasy.

10.26 He who sees God dies, says Scripture (Judges 13:22); and is the eternal vision of God not perhaps an eternal death, a faint-

ing away of the personality? But Saint Teresa, in chapter XX of her *Life*, describing the last degree of prayer—the rapture, transport, flight or ecstasy of the soul—tells us that the soul is lifted up as if by a cloud or a mighty eagle, but "you see yourself carried away and do not know where," and it is "with delight," and "if one does not resist, one does not lose one's senses; at least in my case I was in such a state that I could understand I was being carried away"—that is, without loss of consciousness. And God "does not seem content with drawing the soul so truly to himself, but wants the body too, mortal as it is and of such foul clay." "Many times the soul is engulfed—or rather the Lord engulfs it in himself—and, holding it in himself for a little while, he is left with the will alone," not with the intelligence alone. It is not, then, as can be seen, vision, but a union of the will; and meanwhile "the understanding and memory wandering... like a person who has slept and dreamed a long time and has not yet fully woken." It is "a gentle flight, a delightful flight, a flight without noise." And it is a delightful flight, with consciousness of self, knowing oneself distinct from the God with whom one is united. And to this rapture, according to the Spanish mystic doctor, one rises through contemplation of the Humanity of Christ, that is, of something concrete and human; it is the vision of the living God, not of the idea of God. And in chapter XXVIII she tells us that "even if there were nothing else in heaven to delight the eyes but the great beauty of the glorified bodies, it would be the greatest glory, especially to see the Humanity of Jesus Christ our Lord..." "This vision," she adds, "although it is imaginary, I never saw with my bodily eyes, nor any other vision, but with the eyes of the soul." And it turns out that in heaven one does not see God alone, but everything in God; or rather, one sees everything as God, since he embraces everything. And Jakob Boehme stresses this idea even more.[6] The saint, for her part, tells us in the *Moradas sétimas* (*Seventh Mansions*), chapter II, that "this secret union

5 Bossuet led the attack on Quietism, the mysticism of total passivity and self-abandonment in God defended by Fénelon and Madame Guyon.

6 Jakob Boehme (1575–1624), German Lutheran mystic and shoemaker.

takes place in the very innermost center of the soul, which must be where God himself is." And then that "the soul—I mean the spirit of this soul—is made one thing with God..."; and it is "as if two wax candles were joined so completely that all the light were one, or that the wick and the light and the wax are all one; but afterwards one candle can well be separated from the other, and there remain two candles, or the wick apart from the wax." But there is another, more intimate union, which is "as if water falling from the sky into a river or spring, where it all becomes water, so that they can no longer divide or separate which is the water of the river and which fell from the sky; or as if a little stream enters the sea, so that there will be no way of separating them; or as if in a room there were two windows through which a great light entered: although it enters divided, it all becomes one light." And what difference is there between this and that inner, mystical silence of Miguel de Molinos, whose third and most perfect degree is the silence of thought? (*Guía*, chap. XVII, § 129). Are we not close to the idea that nothingness is the road to that high state of the reformed spirit? (chap. XX, § 186). And is it any wonder that Amiel should twice use the Spanish word *nada* ("nothing") in his "Intimate Journal," no doubt because he found no more expressive word in any other language? And yet, if one reads our mystic doctor carefully, one will see that the element of sensation, of delight—that is, of one's own consciousness—is never left out. The soul lets itself be absorbed by God in order to absorb him, to become conscious of its own divinity.

10.27 A beatific vision, a loving contemplation in which the soul is absorbed in God and as though lost in him, appears to our natural way of feeling either as self-annihilation or as prolonged tedium. Hence that feeling which we often observe, and which has been voiced more than once in satirical expressions not free of irreverence and perhaps of impiety: that the heaven of eternal glory is a dwelling of eternal boredom. And it is no use trying to disdain such feelings, so spontaneous and natural, or seeking to denigrate them.

10.28 Of course, those who feel this way are those who fail to realize that man's supreme pleasure is to acquire and increase consciousness. Not precisely the pleasure of knowing, but of learning. Once we know a thing, we tend to forget it, to make our knowledge of it unconscious, if one may put it that way. Man's pleasure, his purest delight, is bound up with the act of learning, of finding out, of acquiring knowledge, that is, with a differentiation. And hence Lessing's famous saying, already cited. Well known is the story of that old Spaniard who was with Vasco Núñez de Balboa when, on reaching the summit of Darién, they caught sight of the two Oceans: falling to his knees, he exclaimed, "Thank you, my God, for not letting me die without having seen such a wonder." But if this man had stayed there, the wonder would soon have ceased to be one, and with it the pleasure. His joy was that of discovery. And perhaps the joy of the beatific vision is not precisely that of contemplating the supreme Truth, whole and entire, for the soul could not withstand that, but that of a continual discovery of it, of an unceasing learning through an effort that always keeps alive the sense of one's own active consciousness.

10.29 A beatific vision of mental quiet, of full knowledge and not of gradual apprehension, is not hard to conceive of as simply a nirvana, a spiritual diffusion, a dissipation of energy in the bosom of God, a return to unconsciousness through lack of shock, of difference, that is, of activity.

10.30 Is it not perhaps the case that the very condition that makes our eternal union with God thinkable destroys our longing? What difference is there between being absorbed by God and absorbing him into oneself? Is it the little stream that is lost in the sea, or the sea in the little stream? It comes to the same thing.

10.31 What lies at the emotional bottom is our longing not to lose the sense of the continuity of our consciousness, not to break the chain of our memories, the sense of our own concrete personal identity, even though we may perhaps be gradually absorbed into him, enriching him. Who at eighty remembers

the one he was at eight, even though he feels the chain between the two? And it might be said that the emotional problem comes down to whether there is a God, a human purpose to the Universe. But what is purpose? For just as it is always possible to ask for a why of every why, so it is always possible to ask for a what-for of every what-for. Supposing there is a God, what is God for? For himself, it will be said. And there will be no lack of people to reply: and what difference does this consciousness make, as against non-consciousness? But it will always come back to what Plotinus said (*Enn.* II, IX, 8): that asking why he made the world is the same as asking why there is a soul. Or better still, that the why is, for you, the what-for.

10.32 For one who places himself outside himself, in a hypothetical objective position—which is to say an inhuman one—the ultimate what-for is as unattainable and, strictly speaking, as absurd as the ultimate why. What difference does it make, indeed, that there should be no purpose at all? What logical contradiction is there in the Universe not being destined to any purpose, human or superhuman? In what way is it contrary to reason that all this should have no other object than to exist, passing as it exists and passes? That is for one who places himself outside himself; but for one who lives and suffers and longs within himself... for him it is a question of life or death.

10.33 Seek yourself, then! But on finding oneself, does one not come face to face with one's own nothingness? "Man, having become a sinner by seeking himself, has become wretched by finding himself," said Bossuet (*Traité de la concupiscence*, chap. XI). "Seek yourself!" begins with "Know yourself!" To which Carlyle replies (*Past and Present*, book III, chap. XI): "The latest gospel in this world is: know your work and do it! Know yourself...! This self of yours has tormented you for a long time; you will never come to know it, it seems to me. Do not think your task is to know yourself; you are an unknowable individual. Know what you can do, and do it like a Hercules. That will be best." Yes; but what I do—will that not also be lost in the end? And if it is lost, what is the point of doing it? Yes, yes; carrying

out my work—and what is my work?—without thinking of myself may perhaps be loving God. And what is loving God?

10.34 And on the other hand, loving God in myself—is that not loving myself more than God, loving myself in God?

10.35 What in truth we long for after death is to go on living this life, this same mortal life, but without its evils, without tedium and without death. That is what Seneca, the Spaniard, expressed in his *Consolation to Marcia* (XXVI); that is what he wanted, to live this life again: *ista moliri* [to toil at these same things]. And that is what Job asked for (19:25–27): to see God in the flesh, not in spirit. And what else does that comic notion of the *eternal return* mean, which sprang from the tragic depths of poor Nietzsche, hungry for a concrete and temporal immortality?

10.36 That beatific vision presented to us as the first Catholic solution—how can it be fulfilled, I repeat, without drowning consciousness of self? Will it not be as in sleep, when we dream without knowing what we dream? Who would desire an eternal life like that? To think without knowing that one thinks is not to feel oneself, it is not to be oneself. And is eternal life not perhaps eternal consciousness—not only seeing God but seeing that one sees him, seeing oneself at the same time and as distinct from him? He who sleeps lives, but has no consciousness of himself; and would anyone want such a sleep to be eternal? When Circe advises Ulysses to go down to the dwelling of the dead to consult the seer Tiresias, she tells him that Tiresias, there among the shades of the dead, is the only one who has his senses, for the others flit about like shadows (Odyssey X, 487–495). And did the others, apart from Tiresias, conquer death? Is it conquering death, perhaps, to wander about like senseless shadows?

10.37 On the other hand, can we not perhaps imagine that this earthly life of ours is to the other life as sleep is here to waking? Might not our whole life be a dream, and death an awakening? But an awakening to what? And what if all this were only a dream of God's, and God were one day to wake? Will he remember his dream?

10.38 Aristotle, the rationalist, speaks to us in his *Ethics* of the superior happiness of the contemplative life—βίος θεωρητικός—and it is common among all rationalists to place happiness in knowledge. And the conception of eternal happiness, of the enjoyment of God, as beatific vision, as knowledge and comprehension of God, is rationalist in origin; it is the kind of happiness that corresponds to the God-Idea of Aristotelianism. But the fact is that happiness requires, besides vision, delectation, and delectation is very little rational and attainable only by feeling oneself distinct from God.

10.39 Our Aristotelian Catholic theologian, the one who tried to rationalize Catholic feeling, Saint Thomas Aquinas, tells us in his *Summa* (*primae secundae partis quaestio* IV, art. 1) that "delectation is required for happiness; that delectation arises from the appetite's resting in the good attained; and that since happiness is nothing other than the attainment of the highest good, there can be no happiness without concomitant delectation." But what delectation is there for one who rests? To rest, *requiescere*—is that not to sleep and not even be conscious that one is resting? "From the very vision of God delectation arises," the theologian adds. But does the soul feel itself as distinct from God? "The delectation that accompanies the operation of the intellect does not hinder it, but rather strengthens it," he says next. Of course! Otherwise, what kind of bliss would that be? And to save delectation, delight, pleasure—which, like pain, always has something material about it, and which we cannot conceive of except in a soul embodied in a body—it was necessary to imagine that the blessed soul is united to its body. Without some kind of body, how can there be delight? The immortality of the pure soul, without some kind of body or perispirit, is not true immortality. And at bottom, the longing to prolong this life, this and no other, this life of flesh and suffering, this life that we sometimes curse only because it comes to an end. Most suicides would not take their own lives if they were sure of never dying on earth. He who kills himself does so because he will not wait to die.

10.40 When Dante comes to tell us, in canto XXXIII of the *Paradiso*, how he reached the vision of God, he says that just as one who sees in a dream is left, after the dream, with the passion impressed on his mind and nothing else, so it is with him: almost all his vision fades, and yet the sweetness born of it still distills in his heart, *Cotal son io, che quasi tutta cessa*
mia visione ed ancor mi distilla
nel cuor lo dolce che nacque da essa, just as the snow melts away in the sun, *così la neve al sol si disigilla*. That is, the vision, the intellectual part, leaves him, and the delight remains: the *passione impressa*, the emotional, the irrational—in short, the bodily.

10.41 A bodily happiness, a happiness of delight, not only spiritual, not only vision, is what we desire. That other happiness, that rationalist *beatitude* of drowning oneself in comprehension, can only... I will not say satisfy or deceive, for I believe it neither satisfied nor deceived even a Spinoza. He, at the end of his *Ethics*, in propositions XXXV and XXXVI of the fifth part, establishes that God loves himself with an infinite intellectual love; that the intellectual love of the mind toward God is the very love of God with which God loves himself, not insofar as he is infinite, but insofar as he can be explained through the essence of the human mind considered under the aspect of eternity; that is, that the intellectual love of the mind toward God is part of the infinite love with which God loves himself. And after these tragic, these desolating propositions, the last of the whole book, the one that closes and crowns that tremendous tragedy of the *Ethics*, tells us that happiness is not the reward of virtue but virtue itself, and that we do not rejoice in it because we restrain our appetites, but that because we rejoice in it we are able to restrain them. Intellectual love! intellectual love! What is this intellectual love? Something like a red taste, or a bitter sound, or an aromatic color—or rather, something like a triangle in love or an enraged ellipse: a pure metaphor, but a tragic metaphor. And a metaphor that corresponds tragically to that saying that the

heart too has its reasons. Reasons of the heart! loves of the head! [7] intellective delight! delightful intellection! tragedy, tragedy and tragedy!

10.42 And yet there is something that can be called intellectual love, and that is the love of understanding, Aristotle's contemplative life itself; for understanding is something active and loving, and the beatific vision is the vision of total truth. Is there not, perhaps, curiosity at the bottom of every passion? Did not our first parents, according to the biblical account, fall through the yearning to taste the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and to be like gods, possessing that knowledge? The vision of God, that is, of the Universe itself in its soul, in its inmost essence—would it not quench all our longing? And this prospect can fail to satisfy only coarse men who do not grasp that a man's greatest joy is to be more a man, that is, more a god, and that he is more a god the more consciousness he has.

10.43 And that intellectual love, which is nothing but so-called Platonic love, is a means of dominating and possessing. There is indeed no more perfect dominion than knowledge; whoever knows something possesses it. Knowledge unites the knower with the known. "I contemplate you and make you mine by contemplating you": such is the formula. And to know God—what can that be but to possess him? He who knows God is already God himself.

ENERGY RUNS DOWN

Science predicts the world's leveling and death; Unamuno asks what becomes of spirit.

10.44 B. Brunhes relates (*La Dégradation de l'énergie*, part IV, chap. XVIII, § 2) that M. Sarrau told him, having heard it from Father Gratry, that Gratry was once walking in the Luxembourg Gardens, conversing with the great mathematician and Catholic Cauchy about the bliss the elect would have in knowing at last,

7 Pascal, *Pensées*: "Le cœur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point" [The heart has its reasons, which reason does not know].

without restriction or veil, the truths so long and laboriously pursued in this world. And Father[8] Gratry, alluding to Cauchy's studies on the mechanical theory of the reflection of light, put forward the idea that one of the illustrious geometer's greatest intellectual joys would be to penetrate the secret of light. To this Cauchy replied that it did not seem possible to him to know more about this than he already knew, nor could he conceive that the most perfect intelligence could understand the mystery of reflection better than he had set it out, since he had given a mechanical theory of the phenomenon. "His piety," Brunhes adds, "did not go so far as to believe that it was possible to do otherwise, or to do it better."

10.45 There are two parts of this story that interest us. The first is its expression of what contemplation, intellectual love or the beatific vision may be for superior men who make knowledge their central passion; the other is its faith in the mechanistic explanation of the world.

10.46 Bound up with this mechanistic disposition of the intellect is the now celebrated formula "nothing is created, nothing is lost, everything is transformed," with which people have sought to interpret the ambiguous principle of the conservation of energy. They forget that for us, for human beings, in practice, energy means usable energy, and that this is continually being lost: it dissipates through the diffusion of heat, it degrades, tending toward leveling and homogeneity. What counts for us—more than that, what is real for us—is the differential, which is the qualitative; pure quantity, without differences, is as if it did not exist for us, since it does not act. And the material Universe, the body of the Universe, seems to be moving little by little—for neither the retarding action of living organisms nor, still less, the conscious action of man is of any avail—toward a state of perfect stability, of homogeneity (see Brunhes, work cited). For if spirit tends to concentrate, material energy tends to diffuse.

8 Bernard Brunhes (1867–1910), French physicist; Alphonse Gratry (1805–1872), French priest and philosopher; Augustin-Louis Cauchy (1789–1857), French mathematician.

10.47 And does this not perhaps bear intimately on our problem? Might there not be a relation between this conclusion of scientific philosophy concerning a final state of stability and homogeneity and the mystical dream of apocatastasis? Might not this death of the body of the Universe be the final triumph of its spirit, of God?

10.48 The intimate relation between the religious demand for an eternal life after death and the conclusions—always provisional—that scientific philosophy reaches about the probable future of the material or perceptible Universe is evident. And the fact is that just as there are theologians of God and of the immortality of the soul, there are also those whom Brunhes (work cited, chap. XXVI, § 2) calls theologians of monism, and whom it would be better to call atheologians: people who persist in the spirit of *a priori* affirmation—a spirit which becomes unbearable, he adds, when they harbor the pretension of disdaining theology. A specimen of these gentlemen is Haeckel, who has managed to dispel the riddles of Nature![9]

10.49 These atheologians have seized on the conservation of energy, on "nothing is created and nothing is lost, everything is transformed"—a principle already theological in origin in Descartes—and have used it to let us do without God. "The world built to last," writes Brunhes, "which does not wear out, or rather repairs by itself the cracks that appear in it—what a fine theme for oratorical amplification! But these same amplifications, after serving in the seventeenth century to prove the wisdom of the Creator, have served in our day as arguments for those who claim to do without him." It is the same old story: so-called scientific philosophy, theological or religious at bottom in its origin and inspiration, ending up in an atheology or irreligion that is nothing other than theology and religion. Let us recall that saying of Ritschl, already cited in these essays.

10.50 Now, the last word of science, even more than of scientific philosophy, seems to be that the material, perceptible world is

9 Ernst Haeckel (1834–1919), German biologist and monist, author of *Die Welträtsel* (*The Riddle of the Universe*, 1899).

moving, through the degradation of energy and the predominance of irreversible phenomena, toward a final leveling, a kind of final homogeneity. And this reminds us of that hypothetical primitive homogeneity which Spencer so used and abused, and of that fantastic instability of the homogeneous—an instability which Spencer's atheological agnosticism needed in order to explain the inexplicable passage from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. For how can any heterogeneity arise, without external action, from the perfect and absolute homogeneous? But every kind of creation had to be ruled out, and for that the unemployed engineer turned metaphysician, as Papini called him, invented the instability of the homogeneous, which is more... how shall I put it?... more mystical and even more mythological, if you like, than the creative action of God.[10]

10.51 That Italian positivist, Roberto Ardigò, was right when, objecting to Spencer, he told him that the most natural thing was to suppose that it was always as it is today: that there were always worlds in formation, in nebula, worlds formed and worlds breaking up; that heterogeneity is eternal. Another way, as can be seen, of not resolving anything.[11]

10.52 Is this the solution? But in that case the Universe would be infinite, and in reality one cannot conceive of an eternal and bounded Universe such as the one Nietzsche took as the basis of his eternal return. If the Universe is to be eternal, if periods of homogenization, of degradation of energy, are to alternate in it, for each of its worlds, with periods of heterogenization, it must be infinite, so that there is always room, and in each world, for an action from outside. And in fact the body of God can only be eternal and infinite.

10.53 But for our world, its gradual leveling—or, if we like, its death—seems proven. And what is to be the fate of our spirit in this process? Will it dwindle with the degradation of our world's energy and return to unconsciousness? Or will it rather grow as

10 Herbert Spencer had trained as a railway engineer; Giovanni Papini (1881–1956), Italian writer and polemicist.

11 Roberto Ardigò (1828–1920), leading Italian positivist philosopher.

usable energy dwindles, and through the very efforts to retard that process and to master Nature, which is what constitutes the life of the spirit? Could consciousness and its extended support be two powers so opposed that the one grows at the expense of the other?

10.54 The fact is that the best of our scientific labor, the best of our industry—that is, what in it does not conspire toward destruction, which is a great deal—is directed toward retarding that fatal process of the degradation of energy. Organic life itself, the support of consciousness, is already an effort to avoid that fateful end as far as possible, to keep putting it off.

10.55 It is no use trying to deceive ourselves with pagan hymns to Nature—to her whom Leopardi, that Christian atheist, with deeper insight called "a mother in bearing, in loving a stepmother," in that stupendous song of his to the broom (*La Ginestra*). It was against her that human fellowship was first ordered; it was horror of impious Nature that first bound men together in the social chain. Human society, indeed, mother of reflective consciousness and of the yearning for immortality, is what inaugurates the state of grace over the state of Nature; and it is man who, humanizing and spiritualizing Nature with his industry, supernaturalizes it.[12]

10.56 The tragic Portuguese poet Antero de Quental dreamed, in two splendid sonnets which he entitled *Redemption*, that there is a spirit imprisoned. It is imprisoned not merely in atoms or ions or crystals but, as befits a poet, in the sea, in the trees, in the forest, in the mountain, in the wind, in all material individualities and forms. And one day all these souls, still in the limbo of existence, will awaken into consciousness and, hovering as pure thought, will see the forms, daughters of illusion, fall apart like an empty dream. It is the grandiose dream of everything becoming conscious.[13]

12 Giacomo Leopardi's late poem *La ginestra* (*The Broom*, 1836), on the desert flower growing on the slopes of Vesuvius.

13 Antero de Quental (1842–1891), Portuguese poet and thinker, who took his own life.

10.57 Is it not perhaps that the Universe—this Universe of ours: who knows whether there are others?—began with a zero of spirit—and zero is not the same as nothing—and an infinity of matter, and is moving toward ending in an infinity of spirit with a zero of matter? Dreams!

10.58 Is it not perhaps that everything has a soul, and that this soul begs for liberation? "Oh lands of Alvargonzález, in the heart of Spain, poor lands, sad lands, so sad that they have a soul!" sings our poet Antonio Machado (*Campos de Castilla* [Fields of Castile]). The sadness of the fields: is it in them, or in us who contemplate them? Is it not that they suffer? But what can an individual soul be in the world of matter? Is a rock or a mountain an individual? Is a tree?[14]

10.59 And yet it always turns out that spirit and matter are at war. Espronceda said as much when he said: Here, if one is to live in holy calm, / either matter or soul is one too many,[15]

10.60 And is there not, in the history of thought—or, if you prefer, of the human imagination—something corresponding to this process of reducing the material, in the sense of a reduction of everything to consciousness?

PAUL'S APOCATASTASIS

Paul's hope that God will be all in all poses the problem of what becomes of each self.

10.61 Yes, there is. It comes from the first Christian mystic, Saint Paul of Ephesus, the apostle to the Gentiles. Because he had never seen the carnal and mortal Christ, the ethical Christ, with the fleshly eyes of his face, he created him within himself, immortal and religious. He was caught up into the third heaven, where he saw unspeakable secrets (2 Corinthians 13). And this first Christian mystic also dreamed of a final triumph of spirit,

14 Antonio Machado (1875–1939), Spanish poet; the lines come from "La tierra de Alvargonzález," a ballad in *Campos de Castilla* (1912).
15 José de Espronceda (1808–1842), Spanish Romantic poet.

of consciousness. This is what theology technically calls the apocatastasis, or reconstitution.[16]

10.62 It is in verses 26 to 28 of chapter 15 of his First Epistle to the Corinthians that he tells us the last enemy to be overcome will be death, for God has put all things under his feet. But when he says that all things are put under him, it is clear that he is excepted who put all things under him. And when all things have been subdued to him, then the Son himself will also be subject to him who put all things under him, so that God may be all in all: ἵνα ᾖ ὁ θεὸς πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν. That is to say, the end is that God, Consciousness, should end by being all in all.

10.63 This doctrine is completed by all that the same Apostle sets out, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, about the end of the whole history of the world. There, as is well known, he presents Christ to us as head of all things (1:22). It is by him that all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, were made (Col. 1:16). And in him, in this head, we are all to rise again, to live in the communion of saints, to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses all knowledge (3:18–19). And this gathering of ourselves together in Christ, head of Humanity and as it were its summing-up, is what the Apostle calls the gathering up, the recapitulation or collecting of all things in Christ, ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν Χριστῷ. This recapitulation—ἀνακεφαλαίωσις, *anakephalaiosis*—the end of the history of the world and of the human race, is nothing but another aspect of the apocatastasis. The apocatastasis, God's coming to be all in all, therefore reduces to the anakephalaiosis, to everything being gathered up in Christ, in Humanity; Humanity is therefore the end of creation. And does not this apocatastasis, this humanization or divinization of everything, abolish matter?[17] But once matter is abolished—matter, which is the principle of individuation, the *principium individuationis* of the

16 Unamuno writes "Paul of Ephesus"; Paul was from Tarsus.

17 Anakephalaiosis: Greek for "summing up" or "recapitulation," from Ephesians 1:10.

Schoolmen—does not everything return to a pure consciousness which, in its sheer purity, neither knows itself nor is anything conceivable or perceptible? And with all matter abolished, what does spirit rest on?

10.64 The same difficulties, the same unthinkabilities, come at us by another road.

10.65 Someone might say, on the other hand, that the apocatastasis, God's coming to be all in all, supposes that he was not so before. That all beings should come to enjoy God supposes that God comes to enjoy all beings, for the beatific vision is mutual. God is perfected by being better known, and he feeds on souls and is enriched by them.

10.66 On this road of mad dreams one might imagine an unconscious God, slumbering in matter, who moves toward being a God wholly conscious, conscious of his divinity. The whole Universe would become conscious of itself as a whole and of each of the consciousnesses that make it up; it would become God. But in that case, how did this unconscious God begin? Is he not matter itself? God would thus be not the beginning but the end of the Universe. But can that be the end which was not the beginning? Or is there, outside time, in eternity, any difference between beginning and end? "The soul of the whole would not be bound by that very thing (that is, matter) which is bound by it," says Plotinus. (*Enneads* II. IX, 7). Or is it not rather the Consciousness of the Whole striving to become the consciousness of each part, so that each partial consciousness may be conscious of it, of the total one? Is it not a monotheistic or solitary God on the way to becoming pantheistic? And if this is not so, if matter and suffering are alien to God, one will ask: why did God create the world? Why did he make matter and bring in suffering? Would it not have been better had he made nothing at all? What glory does it add to him to create angels or men who fall, and whom he must condemn to eternal torment? Did he perhaps make evil in order to cure it? Or was redemption, total and absolute redemption of everything and everyone, his design? For

this hypothesis is neither more rational nor more pious than the other.

10.67 As soon as we try to picture eternal happiness to ourselves, we are faced with a series of questions that have no satisfactory—that is, rational—answer. This holds whether we start from a monotheistic supposition, a pantheistic one or even a panentheistic one.

10.68 Let us return to the Pauline apocatastasis.

10.69 When God becomes all in all, is it not perhaps that he completes himself, that he finishes becoming God, an infinite consciousness embracing all consciousnesses? And what is an infinite consciousness? Consciousness presupposes a limit; or rather, consciousness is consciousness of limit, of distinction. Does it not, for that very reason, exclude infinity? What value has the notion of infinity when applied to consciousness? What is a consciousness that is all consciousness, with nothing outside it that is not consciousness? Of what, in that case, is consciousness conscious? Of its content? Or is it not rather that we are approaching the apocatastasis, the final apotheosis, without ever reaching it, having set out from a chaos, from an absolute unconsciousness, in the eternity of the past?

10.70 Is not this apocatastasis, this return of all things to God, rather an ideal limit which we ceaselessly approach and are never to reach, some of us at a swifter pace than others? Will not absolute and perfect eternal happiness be an eternal hope, which would die if it were fulfilled? Can one be happy without hope? And once possession is achieved, there is no room left for hope, for possession kills hope, kills yearning. Might it not be, I say, that all souls grow without ceasing, some at a greater rate than others, but all having at some time to pass through any given degree of growth? And that they never reach the infinite, God, whom they continually approach? Is not eternal happiness an eternal hope, with its eternal core of sorrow, so that bliss may not sink into nothingness?

10.71 The unanswered questions go on.

10.72 "He will be all in all," says the Apostle. But will he be so in a different way in each one, or in the same way in all? Will God not be all in one of the damned? Is he not in his soul? Is he not in what is called hell? And how is he in it?

HEAVEN AND HELL

Unamuno weighs eternal punishment, universal salvation and salvation for those who long for it.

10.73 From this new problems arise: those concerning the opposition between heaven and hell, between eternal happiness and eternal unhappiness.

10.74 Is it not that in the end all are saved, even Cain and Judas, and Satan himself, as Origen held, developing the Pauline apocatastasis?[18]

10.75 When our Catholic theologians try to justify rationally—that is, ethically—the dogma of the eternity of the pains of hell, they give reasons so specious, ridiculous and childish that it is hard to believe they have ever gained currency. They say that since God is infinite, an offense against him is infinite too, and therefore demands eternal punishment. Quite apart from the inconceivability of an infinite offense, this overlooks the fact that in human morality, as opposed to human policing, the gravity of an offense is measured less by the dignity of the one offended than by the intention of the offender. And an infinite guilty intention is nonsense, and nothing more. What could be applied here are those words of Christ addressed to his Father: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing!" And there is no man who, in offending God or his neighbor, knows what he is doing. In human ethics, or if you like in human policing—what they call penal law, and which is anything but law—an eternal punishment is nonsense.[19]

18 Origen (c. AD 185–254), Alexandrian theologian whose teaching of a universal restoration was later condemned.

19 *Derecho* means both "law" and "right," so the jibe also says penal law is anything but right.

10.76 "God is just, and we are punished; that is all we need to know; the rest is for us mere curiosity." So says Lamennais (*Essai*, part IV, chapter VII), and others with him. And Calvin says the same. But is there anyone who is satisfied with that? Mere curiosity! To call mere curiosity the thing that most wrings the heart!

10.77 Might it not be that the wicked man is annihilated because he wished to be annihilated, or because, being wicked, he did not wish strongly enough to make himself eternal? May we not say that it is not believing in another life that makes one good, but that one believes in it because one is good? And what is it to be good and to be wicked? That now belongs to the demon of ethics, not to religion. Or rather, is it not the part of ethics to do good even while being wicked, and of religion to be good even while doing evil?

10.78 May we not, on the other hand, be told that if the sinner suffers eternal punishment it is because he sins without ceasing, because the damned never stop sinning? This does not solve the problem. Its whole absurdity comes from having conceived punishment as retribution or revenge, not as correction, in the manner of barbarous peoples. And so we get a police hell, to strike fear into people in this world. The worst of it is that it no longer frightens anyone, so it will have to be closed down.

10.79 But on the other hand, within a religious conception, and within the mystery, why not an eternity of suffering, even though this revolts our feelings? Why not a God who feeds on our suffering? Is our happiness perhaps the end of the Universe? Or do we not feed someone else's happiness with our suffering? Let us read again, in the *Eumenides* of the formidable tragedian Aeschylus, those choruses in which the Furies protest that the new gods, destroying the ancient laws, were snatching Orestes out of their hands—those fiery invectives against the Apollonian redemption. Is it not that redemption snatches men out of the hands of the gods, men who are their prey and their plaything, with whose sufferings they play and take delight like little boys tormenting a beetle, as the tragedian's saying has it? And let us

remember that cry: My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?[20]

10.80 Yes, why not an eternity of suffering? Hell is a making eternal of the soul, even if it be in pain. Is not pain essential to life?

10.81 Men go about inventing theories to explain what they call the origin of evil. And why not the origin of good? Why suppose that good is the positive and original, and evil the negative and derived? "Everything that is, insofar as it is, is good," pronounced Saint Augustine; but why? What does being good mean? The good is good for something, conducive to an end, and to say that everything is good amounts to saying that everything moves toward its end. But what is its end? Our appetite is to make ourselves eternal, to persist. We call good whatever conspires to that end, and evil whatever tends to diminish or destroy our consciousness. We suppose that human consciousness is an end, and not a means to anything other than consciousness, whether human or superhuman.

10.82 All metaphysical optimism, like that of Leibniz, and all pessimism of the same order, like that of Schopenhauer, have no other foundation. For Leibniz this world is the best, because it conspires to perpetuate consciousness and with it the will; because intelligence increases and perfects the will; because the end of man is the contemplation of God. For Schopenhauer this world is the worst of all possible worlds, because it conspires to destroy the will; because intelligence, representation, annuls the will, its mother. And so Franklin, who believed in another life, declared that he would live this one again, the life he had lived, from end to end, *from its beginning to the end*. And Leopardi, who did not believe in another, declared that no one would agree to live again the life he had lived. Both doctrines are not ethical but religious; and the sense of moral good, as a theological value, is of religious origin too.

20 An echo of Shakespeare's *King Lear* (IV.1): "As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods; / They kill us for their sport."

10.83 And one asks oneself again: are not all saved, are not all made eternal—and no longer in pain but in bliss—those we call good just as much as those called wicked?

10.84 In this matter of good and bad, does not the malice of the one who judges come into it? Does wickedness lie in the intention of the one who performs the act, or rather in that of the one who judges it wicked? But the terrible thing is that man judges himself, makes himself his own judge!

10.85 Who are saved? Now another imagining—neither more nor less rational than all those set out here as questions. It is that only those are saved who longed to be saved, that only those are made eternal who lived tormented by a terrible hunger for eternity and for being made eternal. He who longs never to die, and believes he will never die in spirit, does so because he deserves it. Or rather, only he longs for personal eternity who already carries it within him. The only one who does not long passionately for his own immortality, with a passion that overpowers all reason, is the one who does not deserve it; and because he does not deserve it, he does not long for it. And it is no injustice not to give him what he does not know how to desire, for ask, and it will be given you. Perhaps each will be given what he desired. And perhaps that sin against the Holy Spirit, for which, according to the Gospel, there is no forgiveness, is nothing other than not desiring God, not longing to be made eternal.

10.86 "As your spirit is, so is your searching; you will find what you desire, and that is to be a Christian," *as is your sort of mind—so is your sort of search: you'll find—what you desire, and that's to be a Christian*—said R. Browning (*Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day*, VII).

10.87 Dante, in his Inferno, condemns the Epicureans, those who did not believe in another life, to something more terrible than not having it: the consciousness that they do not have it. And he does this in plastic form, making them remain for all eternity shut up inside their tombs, without light, without air, without fire, without movement, without life (*Inferno*, X, 10–15).

10.88 What cruelty is there in denying someone what he did not desire, or could not desire? Gentle Virgil, in the sixth book of his *Aeneid* (426–429), makes us hear the voices and plaintive wailing of the infants weeping at the entrance to hell—continuo auditae voces, vagitus et ingens
infantumque animae flentes in limine primo—unhappy ones who had scarcely entered life or known its sweetness, and whom a black day snatched from their mothers' breasts and plunged into bitter mourning—quos dulcis vitae exsortes et ab ubere raptos
abstulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo. But what life did they lose, if they did not know it or long for it? Or is it that in reality they did not long for it?

10.89 Here it may be said that others longed for it on their behalf: that their parents wanted them to be eternal, so as to delight in them later in glory. And so we enter a new field of imaginings, that of the solidarity and representativeness of eternal salvation.

10.90 There are many, in fact, who imagine the human race as one being, a collective individual bound together in solidarity, in which each member represents, or may come to represent, the whole collectivity. And they imagine salvation as something collective too. Merit is something collective, and so is guilt; and so is redemption. Either all are saved or no one is saved, according to this way of feeling and imagining. Redemption is total and mutual; each man is a Christ to his neighbor.

10.91 And is there not perhaps a glimmer of this in the popular Catholic belief in the blessed souls in Purgatory, in the suffrages the living offer for them, for their dead, and in the merits they apply to them? This sense of the transmission of merits, whether to the living or to the dead, is common in popular Catholic piety.

10.92 Nor must we forget that the idea of an immortality restricted to a number of elect has appeared many times in the history of human religious thought. These are spirits representative of the rest, who in a certain way include the rest within them-

selves. It is an idea of pagan lineage—for such were the heroes and demigods—and it sometimes shields itself behind the saying that many are called but few are chosen.

10.93 In these very days, while I was busy preparing this essay, the third edition of Charles Bonnefon's *Dialogue sur la vie et sur la mort* (*Dialogue on Life and Death*) came into my hands. It is a book in which imaginings like those I have been setting out find concentrated and suggestive expression. The soul cannot live without the body, nor the body without the soul, Bonnefon tells us, and so neither death nor birth really exists. Strictly speaking there is neither body nor soul, neither birth nor death—all of these are abstractions or appearances—but only a thinking life, of which we form part, and which can neither be born nor die. This leads him to deny human individuality, asserting that no one can say "I am," but rather "we are," or better still, "it is in us." It is humanity, the species, that thinks and loves in us. And as bodies are transmitted, so are souls. "The living thought or thinking life that we are will immediately find itself again in a form analogous to the one that was our origin, corresponding to our being in the fertilized womb of a woman." Each of us, then, has lived before and will live again, though he may not know it. "If humanity is gradually rising above itself, who is to say that at the moment of the death of the last man, who will contain all the others within himself, it will not have attained the higher humanity as it exists somewhere else, in heaven?... Bound together in solidarity, we shall all little by little gather the fruits of our efforts." According to this way of imagining and feeling, since no one is born, no one dies. Rather, each soul has never ceased to struggle, and has many times plunged into the midst of the human fray "ever since the type of embryo corresponding to that same consciousness was represented in the succession of human phenomena." Of course, since Bonnefon begins by denying personal individuality, he leaves out our real longing, which is to save it. But since, on the other hand, he, Bonnefon, is a personal individual and feels that longing, he resorts to the distinction between the called and the chosen, and to the notion of rep-

resentative spirits, and grants this representative individual immortality to a number of men. Of these elect he says that they "will be a little more necessary to God than we ourselves." And he ends this grandiose dream by saying that "from ascent to ascent it is not impossible that we may reach supreme bliss, and that our life may merge into the perfect Life as the drop of water into the sea. We shall understand then—he goes on—that everything was necessary, that each philosophy and each religion had its hour of truth, that through our wanderings and errors, and in the darkest moments of our history, we glimpsed the lighthouse, and that we were all predestined to share in the Eternal Light. And if the God whom we shall find again possesses a body—and we cannot conceive of a living God who does not have one—we shall be one of his conscious cells, together with the myriad races sprung up on the myriad suns. If this dream came true, an ocean of love would beat upon our shores, and the end of every life would be to add a drop of water to its infinity." And what is this cosmic dream of Bonnefon's but the plastic form of the Pauline apocatastasis?

10.94 Yes, this dream, of old Christian lineage, is at bottom nothing other than the Pauline anakephalaiosis. It is the fusion of all men in Man, in the whole of Humanity made Person, which is Christ; and with men, of everything else; and then the subjection of all of it to God, so that God, Consciousness, may be all in all. This presupposes a collective redemption and a society in the beyond.

10.95 In the middle of the eighteenth century two Pietists of Protestant origin, Johann Jakob Moser and Friedrich Christoph Oetinger, gave fresh force and value to the Pauline anakephalaiosis. Moser declared that his religion did not consist in holding certain doctrines to be true and living virtuously in accordance with them, but in being united again with God through Christ;[21] to which corresponds the knowledge, growing until the end of life, of one's own sins and of God's mercy and patience; the alter-

21 Johann Jakob Moser (1701–1785), jurist, and Friedrich Christoph Oetinger (1702–1782), theologian, both Pietists from Württemberg.

ation of one's whole natural disposition; the acquiring of the reconciliation founded on Christ's death; the enjoyment of peace with God in the abiding witness of the Holy Spirit to the forgiveness of sins; conduct after the pattern of Christ, which springs only from faith; drawing near to God and having converse with him; readiness to die in grace; and the hope of the judgment that grants blessedness in the near enjoyment of God and in *converse with all the saints*. (Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus* [History of Pietism], III, § 43.) Converse with all the saints: that is, eternal human society. Oetinger, for his part, regards eternal happiness not as the vision of God in his infinity but—basing himself on the Epistle to the Ephesians—as the contemplation of God in the harmony of the creature with Christ. Converse with all the saints was, according to him, essential to the content of eternal happiness. It was the realization of the kingdom of God, which thus turns out to be the kingdom of Man. And in setting out these doctrines of the two Pietists, Ritschl confesses (work cited, III, § 46) that through them both witnesses won for Protestantism something as valuable as the theological method of Spener, another Pietist.

10.96 We see, then, that ever since Saint Paul the inmost Christian mystical longing has been to give the universe a human—that is, a divine—purpose. It has been to save human consciousness, and to save it by making a person of the whole of humanity. To this corresponds the anakephalaiosis, the recapitulation in Christ of all things, everything on earth and in heaven, the visible and the invisible. To this corresponds, too, the apocatastasis, the return of all things to God, to consciousness, so that God may be all in all. And is not God's being all in all perhaps this: that everything should acquire consciousness, that everything which has passed away should rise again in it, and that everything which has been in time should be made eternal? And among it all, every individual consciousness—those that have been, those that are and those that will be—just as they appeared, appear and will appear, in society and solidarity.

10.97 But does not this resurrection into consciousness of everything that ever was necessarily bring with it a fusion of the identical, an amalgamation of the similar? When the human race becomes a true society in Christ, a communion of saints, the kingdom of God, is it not that the deceptive and even sinful individual differences are erased? And that of each man who ever was there remains only what was essential to him in the perfect society? Might it not perhaps turn out, on Bonnefon's supposition, that this consciousness which lived in the twentieth century in this corner of this earth would feel itself the same as certain others that lived in other centuries, and perhaps on other earths?

10.98 And what might not an effective and real union be—a substantial and intimate union, soul to soul, of all who have been! "If any two creatures became one, they would do more than the world has done." *If any two creatures grew into one / They would do more than the world has done* pronounced Browning (*The Flight of the Duchess*). And Christ left us his word that where two are gathered together in his name, there he is.

10.99 Glory, then, according to many, is society, a more perfect society than that of this world; it is human society made person. And there are those who believe that all human progress conspires to make our species a collective being with true consciousness—is not an individual human organism perhaps a kind of federation of cells?—and that when it has fully acquired that consciousness, all who ever were will rise again in it.

10.100 Glory, many think, is society. As no one lives in isolation, no one can survive in isolation either. No one can enjoy God in heaven who sees his brother suffering in hell, for guilt and merit were shared. We think with the thoughts of others, and with their feelings we feel. To see God, when God is all in all, is to see everything in God and to live in God with everything.

10.101 This grandiose dream of final human solidarity is the Pauline anakephalaiosis and apocatastasis. We Christians, said the Apostle (1 Cor. 12:27), are the body of Christ, members of it,

flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones (Eph. 5:30), branches of the vine.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE SELF

Would we give up our own consciousness to the Divine Consciousness? Unamuno cannot.

10.102 But in this final solidarization, in this true and supreme *christification* of all creatures, what becomes of each individual consciousness? What becomes of me, of this poor fragile I, this I that is a slave of time and space? Reason tells me this I is a mere passing accident; yet it is to save it that I live and suffer and hope and believe. If the human purpose of the Universe is saved —if in the end it is saved—if consciousness is saved, would I resign myself to sacrificing this poor I of mine, through which, and only through which, I know that purpose and that consciousness?

10.103 And here we are at the very height of the tragedy, at its knot, facing the prospect of this supreme religious sacrifice: the sacrifice of one's own individual consciousness on the altar of the perfect Human Consciousness, of the Divine Consciousness.

10.104 But is there such a tragedy? If we came to see this anakephalaiosis clearly, if we came to understand and feel that we are going to enrich Christ, would we hesitate for a moment to give ourselves wholly to him? Would the little stream that enters the sea, and feels the bitterness of the ocean's salt in the sweetness of its waters, turn back toward its source? Would it wish to return to the cloud that was born of the sea? Is it not a joy to feel oneself absorbed?

10.105 And yet...

10.106 Yes, in spite of everything, the tragedy reaches its climax here.

10.107 And the soul, my soul at least, longs for something else: not absorption, not quietude, not peace, not extinction, but an eternal approaching without ever arriving, an endless longing, an eternal hope eternally renewed and never wholly fulfilled.

And with it an eternal lack of something, and an eternal suffering. A suffering, a pain, thanks to which one grows without ceasing in consciousness and in longing. Do not put over the gate of Glory what Dante put over the gate of Hell: *Lasciate ogni speranza!* [Abandon all hope!] Do not kill time! Our life is a hope that is ceaselessly turning into memory, and memory in turn begets hope. Let us live! Eternity as an eternal present, without memory and without hope, is death. That is how ideas are, but that is not how men live. That is how ideas are in the God-Idea; but men cannot live like that in the living God, in the God-Man.

10.108 An eternal Purgatory, then, rather than a Glory; an eternal ascent. If all suffering, however pure and spiritualized we suppose it to be, and all yearning disappear, what keeps the blessed alive? If they do not suffer for God there, how do they love him? And if even there, in Glory, as they see God little by little and ever more closely without ever wholly reaching him, there did not always remain something for them to know and long for, did not always remain a sediment of uncertainty, how would they keep from falling asleep?

10.109 Or, in short, if nothing of the soul's inner tragedy remains there, what kind of life is that? Is there perhaps any greater joy than to remember misery—and to remember it is to feel it—in the time of happiness? Does not the man who has freed himself from prison miss it? Does he not miss those longings of his for freedom?

10.110 Mythological dreams! it will be said. Nor have we presented them as anything else. But does not the mythological dream contain its truth? Are not dream and myth perhaps revelations of an ineffable truth, an irrational truth, a truth that cannot be proved?

10.111 Mythology! Perhaps; but we must mythologize about the other life, as in Plato's time. We have just seen what happens when we try to give concrete, conceivable—that is, rational—form to our primary, primordial and fundamental longing for an eternal life conscious of itself and of its personal individuality. Aesthetic, logical and ethical absurdities multiply, and there

is no way of conceiving the beatific vision and the apocatastasis without contradictions and incongruities.

10.112 And yet!...

10.113 And yet, yes, we must long for it, however absurd it may seem to us; more than that, we must believe in it, in one way or another, in order to live. In order to live, mind you, not in order to understand the Universe. We must believe in it, and to believe in it is to be religious. Christianity, the only religion that we Europeans of the twentieth century can truly feel, is, as Kierkegaard said, a desperate way out (*Afsluttende uvidenskabelig Efterskrift* [Concluding Unscientific Postscript], II, I, chap. I). It is a way out that is reached only through the martyrdom of faith, which is, according to the same tragic thinker, the crucifixion of reason.

10.114 Not without reason did one who had the right to say it speak of the madness of the cross. Madness, no doubt, madness. And the Yankee humorist Oliver Wendell Holmes was not altogether off the mark when he had one of the characters in his witty conversations say that he thought better of those who were shut up in an asylum for religious monomania than of those who professed the same religious principles and went about at large without going mad. But is it not that these too really live, thank God, in madness?[22] Are there not gentle madnesses which not only allow us to live alongside our neighbors without harm to society, but actually help us to do so, giving us, as they do, a meaning and purpose for life and for society itself?

10.115 And after all, what is madness, and how are we to distinguish it from reason without placing ourselves outside both, which is impossible for us?

10.116 Madness, perhaps, and great madness, to seek to penetrate the mystery of the beyond; madness to seek to set our imaginings, pregnant with inner contradiction, above what sound reason dictates to us. And sound reason tells us that nothing should be built without foundations, and that to fill the void of

22 Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. (1809–1894), American physician and writer; the "conversations" are *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* and its sequels.

the unknown with fantasies is a task not merely idle but destructive. And yet...

10.117 We must believe in the other life, in the eternal life beyond the grave, and in an individual and personal life. It must be a life in which each one of us feels his consciousness, and feels it united, without being merged, with all the other consciousnesses in the Supreme Consciousness, in God. We must believe in that other life in order to be able to live this one, and bear it, and give it meaning and purpose. And perhaps we must believe in that other life in order to deserve it, to attain it; or perhaps he who does not long for it above reason, and if need be even against reason, neither deserves it nor attains it.

10.118 And above all, we must feel and act as if an endless continuation of our earthly life awaited us after death; and if it is nothingness that awaits us, we must not make that a justice, as *Obermann* puts it.[23]

10.119 This leads us, as if by the hand, to examine the practical or ethical aspect of our one and only problem.

23 The phrase is quoted in full as the epigraph of the next chapter.

XI. The Practical Problem

El problema práctico
An ethics of struggle: act so as to deserve not to die, and so that annihilation would be an injustice.

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[11] L'homme est périssable.—Il se peut; mais périssons en résistant, et, si le néant nous est réservé, ne faisons pas que ce soit une justice. [Man is perishable.—That may be; but let us perish resisting, and if nothingness is reserved for us, let us not make that a justice.] / Sénancour: *Obermann*, letter XC.

[11.1] Several times in the wandering course of these essays I have defined, in spite of my horror of definitions, my own position on the problem I have been examining. But I know there will never fail to be some dissatisfied reader, brought up in one dogmatism or another, who will say to himself: "This man does not make up his mind, he wavers; now he seems to affirm one thing, and then its opposite; he is full of contradictions; I cannot pigeonhole him; what is he?" Just that: one who affirms opposites, a man of contradiction and strife, as Job said of himself; one who says one thing with his heart and the opposite with his head, and who makes this struggle his life. Nothing could be clearer—not even the water that runs from the snow on the peaks.

[11.2] I shall be told that this position is untenable. I shall be told that we need a foundation on which to build our action and our works, that it is not possible to live in contradictions, that unity and clarity are essential conditions of life and of thought, and that thought must be unified. And we are always back where we

started. For it is precisely inner contradiction that unifies my life and gives it its practical reason for being.

11.3 Or rather, it is the conflict itself, the passionate uncertainty itself, that unifies my action and makes me live and work.

11.4 We think in order to live, I have said; but perhaps it would be more accurate to say that we think because we live, and that the form of our thought answers to the form of our life. Once more I must repeat that our ethical and philosophical doctrines in general are usually nothing but the *a posteriori* justification of our conduct, of our acts. Our doctrines are usually the means we seek to explain and justify our own way of acting, to others and to ourselves. And note: not only to others, but to ourselves. Man, who strictly speaking does not know why he does what he does and not something else, feels the need to account for his reason for acting, and so he forges one. What we believe to be the motives of our conduct are usually nothing but pretexts. The very reason one man believes impels him to take care of himself so as to prolong his life is the one that, in another man's belief, leads him to shoot himself.

11.5 It cannot be denied, however, that reasonings and ideas do influence human acts, and sometimes even determine them by a process like that of suggestion in a hypnotized person. This is because of the tendency that every idea has to resolve itself into action, for an idea is nothing but an act begun or aborted. This notion is what led Fouillée to his idea-forces. But ordinarily they are forces that we adapt to others that are more intimate and much less conscious.[1]

UNCERTAINTY AS A BASIS FOR MORALITY

Doubt and struggle, not dogma, can ground conduct; the moral proof is how one lives.

11.6 But leaving all this aside for now, I want to establish that uncertainty, doubt, the perpetual struggle with the mystery of

1 Alfred Fouillée (1838–1912), French philosopher, developed the theory of *idées-forces*, ideas that tend to realize themselves in action.

our final destiny, mental despair and the lack of any solid and stable dogmatic foundation can be a basis for morality.

11.7 Whoever bases, or believes he bases, his conduct—inward or outward, of feeling or of action—on a dogma or theoretical principle that he considers incontrovertible runs the risk of becoming a fanatic. Moreover, on the day that dogma is broken or loosened, his morality goes slack. If the ground he believes firm gives way, he trembles before the earthquake, for we are not all the ideal Stoic whom the ruins of the shattered world strike undismayed. Fortunately, what lies beneath his ideas will save him. For if anyone tells you that the reason he does not swindle his closest friend or sleep with his friend's wife is that he fears hell, you may be sure that if he stopped believing in hell he would not do it either, and would then invent some other explanation.[2] And this is to the honor of the human race.

11.8 But one who believes he is sailing, perhaps without a course, on a raft that rocks and can be swamped, need not be dismayed that the raft moves under his feet and threatens to sink. Such a man believes he acts not because he holds his principle of action to be true, but in order to make it true, to prove its truth to himself, to create his own spiritual world.

11.9 My conduct must be the best proof, the moral proof, of my supreme longing; and if, within the ultimate and irremediable uncertainty, I do not manage to convince myself of the truth of what I hope for, it is because my conduct is not pure enough. Virtue, then, is not based on dogma; dogma is based on virtue, and it is the martyr who makes the faith more than the faith makes the martyr. There is no security and rest—such as can be had in this life, which is essentially insecure and wearying—except in conduct that is passionately good.

11.10 It is conduct, practice, that serves as the proof of doctrine, of theory. "If any man will do his will—the will of him who sent me, says Jesus—he shall know whether the doctrine is of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17). And there is the well-

2 An allusion to Horace, *Odes* III.3: "si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient ruinae" [if the world should break and fall, its ruins will strike him undismayed].

known saying of Pascal: begin by taking holy water, and you will end up believing. Along the same line, Johann Jakob Moser, the Pietist, held that no atheist or naturalist has the right to consider the Christian religion unfounded until he has tried keeping its precepts and commandments (see Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus,* book VII, 43).

11.11 What is our truth of the heart, our anti-rational truth? The immortality of the human soul, the truth of the endless persistence of our consciousness, the truth of the human purpose of the Universe. And what is its moral proof? We can formulate it thus: act so that you deserve eternity in your own judgment and in the judgment of others, so that you make yourself irreplaceable, so that you do not deserve to die. Or perhaps thus: act as if you were to die tomorrow, but so as to survive and make yourself eternal. The end of morality is to give the Universe a human, personal purpose; to discover the purpose it has—if it has one—and to discover it by acting.

11.12 More than a century ago, in 1804, Sénancour—the deepest and most intense of the spiritual sons of the patriarch Rousseau, the most tragic of the French men of feeling, Pascal not excepted—wrote, in Letter XC of that immense monody his *Obermann*, the words that stand as the motto at the head of this chapter: "Man is perishable. That may be; but let us perish resisting, and if it is nothingness that awaits us, let us not make that a justice." Change this sentence from its negative form into the positive, and say: "And if it is nothingness that awaits us, let us make that an injustice," and you will have the firmest basis of action for anyone who cannot or will not be a dogmatist.

11.13 What is irreligious, what is demonic, what makes us incapable of action or leaves us without any ideal defense against our evil tendencies, is the pessimism that Goethe puts into the mouth of Mephistopheles when he makes him say: "Everything that comes into being deserves to perish" *(denn alles was entsteht ist wert dass es zugrunde geht).* This is the pessimism that we men call evil—not that other pessimism which, faced with the fear that everything will in the end be annihilated, con-

sists in deploring it and fighting against that fear. Mephistopheles asserts that everything that comes into being deserves to perish, to be annihilated, but not that it does perish or is annihilated; and we assert that everything that comes into being deserves to be raised up, to be made eternal, even if none of it achieves this. The moral position is the opposite one.[3]

11.14 Yes, everything deserves to be made eternal, absolutely everything, even evil itself, for what we call evil would, by being made eternal, lose its badness in losing its temporality. For the essence of evil lies in its temporality, in its not being directed to an ultimate and permanent end.

11.15 And it would perhaps not be out of place to say something here about that distinction—one of the most muddled there is—between what is usually called pessimism and optimism, a confusion no smaller than the one that reigns in distinguishing individualism from socialism. One can hardly make out any longer what this business of pessimism is.

11.16 Only today I read in *The Nation* (the issue of July 6, 1912) an editorial titled "A Dramatic Hell" *(A dramatic Inferno),* about an English translation of works by Strindberg, and it opens with these judicious observations: "If there were in the world a sincere and total pessimism, it would of necessity be silent. Despair that finds a voice is a social mood; it is the cry of anguish that one brother sends out to another as they both go stumbling through a valley of shadows peopled with comrades. In its anguish it bears witness that there is something good in life, for it presumes sympathy…[4] Real anguish, sincere despair, is mute and blind; it writes no books and feels no impulse to burden an intolerable universe with a monument more lasting than bronze." There is no doubt a sophism in this judgment, for the man who is truly in pain weeps and even cries out, though he is alone and no one hears him, to relieve himself—though this may perhaps come from social habit. But does the lion alone in the

3 From Goethe's *Faust*, Part One, the first study scene, where Mephistopheles introduces himself as "the spirit that always denies."

4 August Strindberg (1849–1912), Swedish dramatist.

desert not roar if it has a toothache? This aside, however, the core of truth in these reflections cannot be denied. A pessimism that protests and defends itself cannot be said to be real pessimism. And strictly speaking, the pessimism that acknowledges that nothing ought to perish even though everything perishes is certainly not pessimism; the one that declares that everything ought to perish even though nothing perishes is. Pessimism, moreover, takes on various values. There is a eudaemonistic or economic pessimism, the one that denies happiness; there is an ethical pessimism, the one that denies the triumph of moral good; and there is a religious pessimism, the one that despairs of the human purpose of the Universe, of the individual soul's being saved for eternity.

11.17 All deserve to be saved, but, as I said in my previous chapter, the one who above all and before all deserves immortality is the one who desires it passionately, even against reason. An English writer who has taken up prophecy—not a rare thing in his country—Wells, tells us in his book *Anticipations* that "active and capable men of every kind of religious profession today tend in practice to leave the question of immortality entirely out of account" *(to disregard... altogether)*. And that is because the religious professions of the active and capable men Wells refers to are usually no more than a lie, and their lives are a lie if they try to base them on religion.[5] But perhaps, at bottom, what Wells asserts is not as true as he and others imagine. These active and capable men live in the bosom of a society steeped in Christian principles, under institutions and social feelings that Christianity forged, and faith in the immortality of the soul is in their souls like an underground river, neither seen nor heard, whose waters nonetheless water the roots of these men's actions and purposes.

11.18 It must be confessed that there is, strictly speaking, no more solid foundation for morality than the foundation of Catholic morality. The end of man is eternal happiness, which con-

5 H. G. Wells (1866–1946), English novelist; *Anticipations* (1901) is his forecast of the coming century.

sists in the vision and enjoyment of God for ever and ever. Where it goes wrong, though, is in its search for the means leading to that end. For to make the attainment of eternal happiness depend on whether or not one believes that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, and not from the Father alone, or that Jesus was God, and all that about the hypostatic union, or even on whether there is a God at all, turns out, if one thinks about it even a little, to be a monstrosity. A human God—the only one we can conceive—would never reject one who could not believe in him with his head. And it is not in his head but in his heart that the impious man says there is no God, that is, that he does not want there to be one. If the attainment of eternal happiness could be tied to any belief, it would be to belief in that very happiness and in its being possible.

11.19 And what shall we say of that other saying of the emperor of pedants, that we have not come into the world to be happy but to do our duty? *(Wir sind nicht auf der Welt, um glücklich zu sein, sondern um unsere Schuldigkeit zu tun.)* If we are in the world *for* something—*um etwas*—where can that *for* come from, if not from the very depths of our will, which asks for happiness and not duty as its ultimate end? And if one wants to give that *for* some other value, an objective value, as any Sadducee pedant would say, then it must be recognized that objective reality, the reality that would remain even if humanity disappeared, is as indifferent to our duty as to our happiness, and cares as little for our morality as for our felicity. I am not aware that Jupiter, Uranus or Sirius let their course be altered by our doing or not doing our duty, any more than by our being happy or not.

11.20 These considerations will no doubt strike those pedants as ridiculously vulgar, the superficiality of a dilettante. (The intellectual world is divided into two classes: dilettantes on one side and pedants on the other.) What can we do about it! Modern man is the one who resigns himself to the truth and to not knowing culture as a whole—and if not, see what Windelband says on this point in his study of the fate of Hölderlin *(Praeludien,* I). Yes, those men of culture resign themselves, but there remain a few

of us poor little savages who cannot resign ourselves. We do not resign ourselves to the idea of having to disappear one day, and the critique of the great Pedant does not console us.[6]

11.21 The most sensible thing, at most, is what Galileo Galilei said: "Someone will perhaps say that the pain of losing one's life is the bitterest of all, but I will say that it is less than the others; for whoever is stripped of life is at the same time deprived of the power to complain not only of that loss but of any other." A saying of a humor—whether conscious or unconscious on Galileo's part I do not know—but tragic.

11.22 And going back, I say that if the attainment of eternal happiness could be tied to any belief, it would be to belief in the possibility of its coming true. But strictly speaking, not even to that. The reasonable man says in his head, "There is no other life after this one," but only the impious man says it in his heart. And even this impious man, who is perhaps nothing but a man in despair—is a human God going to condemn him for his despair? He has misfortune enough in it.

11.23 But in any case, let us take the Calderonian motto from his *La vida es sueño* (*Life Is a Dream*): that I am dreaming, and I wish

to do good, for doing good
is not lost even in dreams,[7]

11.24 Is it really not lost? Did Calderón know that?

11.25 And he added: Let us turn to the eternal,
which is living fame,
where good fortune never sleeps
and greatness never rests.

11.26 Did Calderón really know that?

6 Wilhelm Windelband (1848–1915), German neo-Kantian philosopher; Friedrich Hölderlin (1770–1843), German poet. The "great Pedant" is presumably Kant, author of the *Critiques*.

7 Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1600–1681), Spanish dramatist; the lines are spoken by Segismundo in *Life Is a Dream* (1635).

11.27 Calderón had faith, robust Catholic faith; but for one who cannot have it, who cannot believe what Don Pedro Calderón de la Barca believed, there always remains Obermann's saying.

11.28 Let us make nothingness, if it is what awaits us, an injustice; let us fight against destiny, even without hope of victory; let us fight against it quixotically.

MAKING ONESELF IRREPLACEABLE

Each must act so that others will feel he ought not to have died.

11.29 And one fights against it not only by longing for the irrational, but by acting so as to make ourselves irreplaceable, stamping our mark and cipher on others; by acting on our neighbors so as to dominate them, giving ourselves to them, in order to make ourselves eternal as far as possible.

11.30 Our greatest effort must be to make ourselves irreplaceable, to make a practical truth of the theoretical fact—if this "theoretical fact" is not a contradiction *in adiecto* [in terms]—that each one of us is unique and irreplaceable, that no one else can fill the gap we leave when we die.

11.31 Each man is, in fact, unique and irreplaceable; there cannot be another I; each one of us—our soul, not our life—is worth the whole Universe. And I say the spirit and not life because the ridiculously excessive value placed on human life by those who, not really believing in the spirit—that is, in their personal immortality—declaim against war and against the death penalty, for example, is a value they give it precisely because they do not truly believe in the spirit, which life is there to serve. For life is of use only insofar as it serves its lord and master, the spirit; and if the master perishes with the handmaid, neither is worth much.

11.32 And to act so that our annihilation would be an injustice, so that our brothers, our children and our brothers' children and their children acknowledge that we ought not to have died, is something within everyone's reach.

11.33 At the bottom of the doctrine of Christian redemption lies this: that passion and death were suffered by the one man—that is, Man, the Son of Man, or the Son of God—who in his innocence did not deserve to die; and that this divine propitiatory victim died in order to rise again and to raise us up, to free us from death by applying his merits to us and showing us the way of life. And the Christ who gave himself wholly to his brothers in humanity, keeping nothing back for himself, is the model for action.

THE RELIGION OF ONE'S TRADE

Work at one's civil trade, done for love of God, is the true imitation of Christ.

11.34 All of us—that is, each one of us—can and must set out to give of ourselves all that we can give, and more than we can give: to exceed ourselves, to surpass ourselves, to make ourselves irreplaceable, to give ourselves to others so as to gather ourselves back from them. And each in his own trade, in his civil vocation. The word *oficio*, trade or office—Latin *officium*—means obligation, duty, but in the concrete, and that is what it must always mean in practice. Perhaps what matters is not so much seeking the vocation one believes suits and fits one best, as making a vocation of the work in which chance, or Providence, or our own will has placed us.

11.35 Perhaps the greatest service Luther rendered to Christian civilization was to establish the religious value of one's own civil profession, breaking the medieval monastic notion of the religious vocation—a notion wrapped in the darkness of passion and imagination, and the begetter of terrible tragedies of life. If one were to go into the cloisters and inquire what the vocation amounts to of poor men whom their parents' selfishness shut up as little children in a novice's cell, and who suddenly wake up to the life of the world—if they ever do wake up! Or of those who deceived themselves through a labor of self-suggestion. And Luther, who saw it at close quarters and suffered it, could under-

stand and did feel the religious value of the civil profession, which binds no one by perpetual vows.

11.36 Everything the Apostle tells us about the vocations of Christians in chapter 4 of his Epistle to the Ephesians must be carried over into civil life, since among us today the Christian—whether he knows it or not, and whether he wants it or not—is the citizen; and in the situation in which the Apostle exclaimed, "I am a Roman citizen!" each of us, even the atheists, would exclaim: I am a Christian! And this requires us to *civilize* Christianity, that is, to make it civil by de-ecclesiasticizing it. That was Luther's task, even though he, for his part, went on to make a church.[8]

11.37 *The right man in the right place,* says an English maxim: the man who fits, in the place that fits him. To which one may reply: cobbler, stick to your last! Who knows the place that best suits a man and for which he is most fit? Does he know it better than others? Do others know it better than he does? Who measures capacities and aptitudes? The religious course, no doubt, is to try to make our vocation of the place in which we find ourselves, and only as a last resort to exchange it for another.

11.38 This problem of one's own vocation is perhaps the gravest and deepest social problem, the one that lies at the base of all the others. What is called, par excellence, the social question is perhaps less a problem of the distribution of wealth, of the products of labor, than a problem of the distribution of vocations, of ways of producing. It is not aptitude—which is almost impossible to ascertain without first putting it to the test, and is not well defined in each man, since for most trades a man is not born but made—it is not special aptitude, but social, political and ritual reasons that have determined each person's trade. In some times and countries, religious castes and heredity; in others, guilds and corporations; later, the machine; necessity almost always, freedom almost never. And the tragedy of it reaches its height in those pandering trades in which one earns one's living by selling one's soul, in which the worker labors

8 Paul's appeal to his Roman citizenship is in Acts 22:25–28.

conscious not merely of the uselessness but of the social perversity of his work, making the poison that will slowly kill him, or perhaps the weapon with which his children will be murdered. This, and not the question of wages, is the gravest problem.

11.39 Never in my life shall I forget a scene I once witnessed on the estuary at Bilbao, my native town. On its banks, in a shipyard, a workman was hammering at something or other, and doing it listlessly, like someone who has no strength or is only there to give a pretext for his wage, when suddenly a woman's cry was heard: "Help!" A child had fallen into the estuary. And in a moment that man was transformed: with admirable energy, speed and coolness he threw off his clothes and plunged into the water to save the little one.

11.40 What perhaps makes the agrarian socialist movement less fierce is that the farmhand, although he earns no more and lives no better than the industrial worker or the miner, has a clearer consciousness of the social value of his work. Sowing wheat is not the same as digging diamonds out of the earth.

11.41 And perhaps the greatest social progress consists in a certain lack of differentiation in work, in the ease of leaving one kind of work to take up another—not necessarily more lucrative, but nobler, for there are nobler and less noble kinds of work. But it happens with sad frequency that neither the man who holds a profession and does not leave it troubles to make a religious vocation of it, nor does the man who leaves it and goes looking for another do so with any religious purpose.

11.42 And do you not know of cases in which a man, on the grounds that the professional body to which he belongs and in which he works is badly organized and does not function as it should, evades the strict fulfillment of his duty on the pretext of some higher duty? Do they not call such fulfilment "going by the book," and speak of bureaucracy and the pharisaism of officials? And this is sometimes as if an intelligent and very studious officer, who has become aware of the deficiencies of his country's military organization and has reported them to his superi-

ors and perhaps to the public—doing his duty in that—were to refuse, in the field, to carry out an operation he was ordered to perform, because he judged it to have very little chance of success, or perhaps to be certain to fail as long as those deficiencies were not corrected. He would deserve to be shot. And as for pharisaism...

11.43 And there always remains a way of obeying while commanding, a way of carrying out the operation one judges absurd while correcting its absurdity, even if only by one's own death. Whenever, in my bureaucratic functions, I have come across some legal provision that had fallen into disuse because of its evident absurdity, I have always made a point of applying it. There is nothing worse than a loaded pistol left in a corner and never used: a child comes along, starts playing with it, and kills his father. Laws in disuse are the most terrible of laws, when the disuse comes from the badness of the law.

11.44 And these are not vague generalities, least of all in our country. For while some people around here go looking for I know not what ideal—that is, fictitious—duties and responsibilities, they themselves do not put their whole soul into the immediate, concrete work they live by; and the rest, the vast majority, do their job only for what is commonly called *cumplir—para cumplir,* "for form's sake," a terribly immoral phrase—to get by, to go through the motions, to give their pay, whether in money or in anything else, a pretext rather than a just title.

11.45 Here you have a shoemaker who lives by making shoes, and who makes them with just the care needed to keep his customers and not lose them. That other shoemaker lives on a somewhat higher spiritual plane, for he has pride in his craft, and out of pique or a sense of honor strives to be reckoned the best shoemaker in the city or the kingdom, even though this brings him neither more customers nor more profit, only more renown and prestige. But there is a still higher degree of moral perfection in the craft of shoemaking: to strive to become, for one's customers, the unique and irreplaceable shoemaker, the one who makes their footwear in such a way that they will miss

him when he dies on them—"dies *on them*," and not merely "dies"—and they, his customers, will feel he ought not to have died. And this because he made their shoes with the thought of sparing them all discomfort, so that care for their feet should not keep them from having leisure for the contemplation of the highest truths; he made their shoes out of love for them and out of love for God in them; he made them out of religiousness.

11.46 I have chosen this example on purpose, though it may seem pedestrian to you. It is because the sense—not merely ethical but religious—of our respective shoemaking is at a very low ebb.

11.47 Workers join together, form cooperatives and resistance societies, and fight very justly and nobly for the betterment of their class; but these associations do not seem to have much influence on the morality of the trade. They have succeeded in forcing employers to take on only those workers whom the relevant workers' society designates in each case, and no others; but they care very little about the technical selection of those designated. There are times when the employer can hardly reject an incompetent man for his incompetence, because his fellow workers defend it. And when they work, they often do so only for form's sake, to give a pretext for their wages—when they do not deliberately work badly to harm the boss, for there are cases of that.

11.48 In apparent justification of all this, it may be said that the employers for their part, a hundred times more to blame than their workers, do not care a whit about paying more to the man who works better, or about promoting the general and technical education of the worker, and still less about the intrinsic quality of the product. The improvement of the product, which in itself —apart from reasons of industrial and commercial competition —ought to be the principal thing, for the good of consumers, out of charity, is not the principal thing for employers or for workers; and that is because neither the one nor the other feels his social trade religiously. Neither wants to be irreplaceable. An evil made worse by that unfortunate form of anonymous indus-

trial companies and enterprises, the joint-stock company, in which, along with the personal signature, one loses even that vanity of giving it good credit which takes the place of the longing to make oneself eternal. With concrete individuality, the foundation of all religion, the religiousness of the trade disappears.[9]

11.49 And what is said of employers and workers applies even more to all who devote themselves to the liberal professions, and to public officials. There is hardly a servant of the State who feels the religiousness of his official, public work. Nothing is murkier, nothing more confused among us, than the sense of our duties toward the State—a sense obliterated still further by the Catholic Church, which, where the State is concerned, is in strict truth anarchist. Among its ministers it is not rare to find men who defend the moral lawfulness of dodging the excise and of smuggling, as if the one who dodges the excise or smuggles, disobeying the legally constituted authority that forbids it, did not sin against the fourth commandment of the law of God, which, in commanding us to honor father and mother, commands us to obey that legal authority in whatever it orders that is not contrary to the law of God—and imposing those taxes is not.

11.50 There are many who, regarding work as a punishment because of the words "you shall eat bread by the sweat of your brow," value the work of one's civil trade only in its economic and political aspect, and at most in its aesthetic aspect. For such people—among whom the Jesuits above all are found—there are two kinds of business: the lower, passing business of earning our living, of earning bread for ourselves and our children honestly (and we know how elastic honesty is), and the great business of our salvation, of winning eternal glory. That lower or worldly work need only be carried on insofar as, without deceit or serious harm to our neighbors, it allows us to live decently according to our social rank, but in such a way as to leave us as

9 In Spanish a joint-stock company is a *sociedad anónima*, literally an "anonymous society"; Unamuno plays on the word.

much free time as possible to attend to the other, great business. And there are those who, rising a little above this conception of the work of our civil trade—an economic rather than an ethical one—arrive at an aesthetic conception and feeling of it, which comes down to gaining luster and renown in our trade, and even to making of it art for art's sake, for beauty. But we must rise higher still, to an ethical sense of our civil trade that derives and descends from our religious sense, from our hunger to be made eternal. For each one to work at his own civil trade with his eyes on God, for love of God—which is to say, for love of our being made eternal—is to make that work a religious work.

11.51 That text, "you shall eat bread by the sweat of your brow," does not mean that God condemned man to work, but to the toil of it. To work itself he could not have condemned him, for work is the only practical consolation for having been born. And the proof, for a Christian, that he did not condemn him to work itself lies in the fact that when he placed him in Paradise, before the fall, while he was still in his state of innocence, Scripture says that he put him there to keep it and to till it (Genesis 2:15). And in fact, how was he to pass the time in Paradise if he did not work it? And is not the beatific vision itself perhaps a kind of work?

11.52 And even if work were our punishment, we ought to strive to make of it, of the punishment itself, our consolation and our redemption; and if we are to embrace some cross, there is none better for each of us than the cross of the work of his own civil trade. For Christ did not tell us "take up my cross and follow me," but "take up your cross and follow me": each his own, for the Savior's cross he alone bears. Therefore the imitation of Christ does not consist in that monastic ideal which shines forth in the book that goes by the popular name of *Kempis*—an ideal applicable only to a very limited number of people, and therefore anti-Christian. To imitate Christ is for each of us to take up his cross, the cross of his own civil trade, as Christ took up his, the cross of his own trade, which was civil as well as religious; and to embrace it and carry it with eyes fixed on God, striving to

make a true prayer of the acts proper to that trade. By making shoes, and through making them, one can win glory, if the shoemaker strives to be, as a shoemaker, perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.

11.53 Fourier, the socialist dreamer, already dreamed of making work attractive in his phalansteries through the free choice of vocations and by other means. The only means is freedom. The attraction of games of chance, which are work—what does it depend on, if not on one's freely submitting to the freedom of Nature, that is, to chance? But let us not lose ourselves in a comparison between work and sport.[10]

THE MORALITY OF MUTUAL IMPOSITION

We must seal others with our spirit and receive theirs; true charity wakes the sleeper.

11.54 And the feeling of making ourselves irreplaceable, of not deserving death, of making our annihilation, if it awaits us, an injustice, must lead us not only to carry out our own trade religiously, for love of God and of our eternity and our being made eternal, but to carry it out passionately—tragically, if you like. It must lead us to strive to seal others with our seal, to perpetuate ourselves in them and in their children by dominating them, to leave our cipher imperishable on everything. The most fruitful morality is the morality of mutual imposition.

11.55 First of all, change into positive commandments those the Old Law bequeathed to us in negative form. So where we were told, "You shall not lie!" understand that it tells us, "You shall always tell the truth, in season and out of season!"—even though it is each of us, and not others, who must judge in each case whether it is in season. And where we were told, "You shall not kill!" understand: "You shall give life and increase it!" And where it says, "You shall not steal!" that it says: "You shall increase the public wealth!" And where it says, "You shall not

10 Charles Fourier (1772–1837), French utopian socialist, planned communities called phalansteries.

commit adultery!" this: "You shall give your land and heaven healthy, strong and good children!" And so with all the rest.

11.56 He who does not lose his life shall not gain it. Give yourself, then, to others—but in order to give yourself to them, first dominate them. For one cannot dominate without being dominated. Each one feeds on the flesh of the one he devours. To dominate one's neighbor one must know him and love him. It is by trying to impose my ideas on him that I receive his. To love one's neighbor is to want him to be like me, to be another I; that is, it is for me to want to be him. It is to want to erase the dividing line between him and me, to abolish evil. My effort to impose myself on another, to be and live in him and by him, to make him mine—which is the same as making myself his—is what gives religious meaning to the collectivity, to human solidarity.

11.57 The feeling of solidarity starts from myself. Since I am society, I need to make myself master of human society; since I am a social product, I must socialize myself; and from myself I go to God—who is I projected onto the All—and from God to each of my neighbors.

11.58 My first impulse is to protest against the inquisitor and to prefer to him the merchant who comes to sell me his wares. But if, withdrawn into myself, I think it over, I shall see that the inquisitor, when he means well, treats me as a man, as an end in myself, for if he troubles me it is out of the charitable desire to save my soul; while the other regards me only as a customer, as a means, and his indulgence and tolerance are at bottom nothing but the most absolute indifference to my destiny. There is much more humanity in the inquisitor.

11.59 Just as there is usually much more humanity in war than in peace. Non-resistance to evil implies resistance to good; and even apart from defense, the offensive itself is perhaps the most divine thing in the human. War is a school of brotherhood and a bond of love. It is war that, through clash and mutual aggression, has brought peoples into contact and made them know and love one another. The purest and most fruitful embrace of love that men give one another is the one the victor and the van-

quished give each other on the battlefield. And even the purified hatred that springs from war is fruitful. War is, in its strictest sense, the sanctification of homicide; Cain is redeemed as a general of armies. And if Cain had not killed his brother Abel, he might perhaps have died at Abel's hands. God revealed himself above all in war; he began as the God of armies; and one of the greatest services of the cross is that, on the sword, it guards the hand that wields it.[11]

11.60 Cain the fratricide was the founder of the State, say the State's enemies. And this must be accepted and turned to the glory of the State, the child of war. Civilization began on the day when one man, subjugating another and forcing him to work for both, was free to devote himself to the contemplation of the world and to set his subject to work on luxuries. It was slavery that allowed Plato to speculate on the ideal republic, and it was war that brought slavery. Not for nothing is Athena the goddess of war and of knowledge. But must these truths, so obvious, be repeated yet again—truths ignored a thousand times, which a thousand times are born again?

11.61 The supreme precept that arises from the love of God, and the basis of all morality, is this: give yourself entirely; give your spirit so as to save it, to make it eternal. Such is the sacrifice of life.

11.62 And to give oneself means—I must repeat it—to impose oneself. True religious morality is at bottom aggressive, invasive.

11.63 The individual as individual, the wretched individual who lives as the prisoner of the instinct of self-preservation and of the senses, wants only to preserve himself, and all his craving is that others should not enter his sphere, should not disturb him, should not break in on his sloth; in exchange for which, or to set an example and a rule, he renounces entering into others himself, breaking in on their sloth, disturbing them, taking possession of them. "Do not do to another what you would not want for yourself" he translates thus: I don't meddle with others; let oth-

11 The *cruz* (cross) of a sword is its crossguard, which protects the hand.

ers not meddle with me. And he shrinks and shrivels and perishes in this spiritual avarice and in this repellent morality of anarchic individualism: each for himself. And since no one is himself, he can hardly be for himself.

11.64 But as soon as the individual feels himself within society, he feels himself within God. The instinct of perpetuation kindles him with love of God and with a dominating charity. He seeks to perpetuate himself in others, to make his spirit perennial, to make it eternal, to unnail God, and his only longing is to set the seal of his spirit on other spirits and to receive their seal in return. It is that he has shaken off spiritual sloth and avarice.

11.65 Sloth, it is said, is the mother of all vices. And sloth does indeed engender the two vices, avarice and envy, which are in turn the source of all the rest. Sloth is the weight within us of matter, inert by its nature. This sloth tells us that it is trying to preserve us by saving, but in reality it is only trying to diminish us, to annihilate us.

11.66 Man has either a surplus of matter or a surplus of spirit. Or rather, he feels either hunger for spirit, that is, for eternity, or hunger for matter, which is resignation to being annihilated. When he has a surplus of spirit and hungers for more of it, he pours it out and spills it beyond himself, and in spilling it he finds it increased by what comes from others. On the contrary, when, miserly with himself, he withdraws into himself thinking to preserve himself better, he ends by losing everything. What happens to him is what happened to the man who received a single talent: he buried it so as not to lose it, and was left without it. For to him who has, more will be given; but from him who has only a little, even that little will be taken away.

11.67 Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect, we were told. This terrible precept must be our supreme rule of conduct —terrible, because the infinite perfection of the Father is beyond our reach. Whoever does not aspire to the impossible will hardly do anything feasible that is worth the trouble. We must aspire to the impossible, to absolute and infinite perfection, and say to

the Father: Father, I cannot: help my powerlessness! And he will do it in us.

11.68 And to be perfect is to be everything. It is to be myself and to be all the others, to be humanity, to be the universe. There is no other way to be everything else but to give oneself to everything, and when all is in all, all will be in each one of us. Apocatastasis is more than a mystical dream: it is a rule of action, a beacon for high deeds.

11.69 Hence the morality that is invasive, dominating, aggressive—inquisitorial, if you like. For true charity is invasive. It consists in putting my spirit into other spirits, in giving them my suffering as food and consolation for their sufferings, in awakening their unrest with my unrest, in sharpening their hunger for God with my hunger for him. Charity is not rocking our brothers and lulling them to sleep in the inertia and drowsiness of matter, but waking them into the anxiety and torment of the spirit.

11.70 To the fourteen works of mercy that we were taught in the Catechism of Christian Doctrine, one more ought at times to be added: to wake the sleeper. At times at least, and certainly when the sleeper is sleeping on the edge of an abyss, waking him is far more merciful than burying him after he has died—for let the dead bury their dead. Well has it been said that "whoever loves you well will make you weep," and charity often makes one weep. "Love that does not mortify does not deserve so divine a name," said the ardent Portuguese apostle Fray Thomé de Jesús (*Trabalhos de Jesús*, part one), the author of this ejaculatory prayer: "O infinite fire, O eternal love, you weep if you have nowhere to set ablaze and spread yourself, and many hearts to burn!" Whoever loves his neighbor burns his neighbor's heart, and the heart, like green wood, groans and oozes tears as it burns.[12]

12 Tomé de Jesus (c. 1529–1582), Portuguese Augustinian friar, wrote *Trabalhos de Jesus* (The Sufferings of Jesus) while a captive in Morocco.

11.71 And doing this is generosity, one of the two mother virtues that arise when inertia, sloth, is overcome. Most of our miseries come from spiritual avarice.

11.72 The remedy for suffering—which is, as we said, the collision of consciousness with unconsciousness—is not to sink into the latter but to rise to the former and suffer more. What is bad in suffering is cured by more suffering, by higher suffering. You must not take opium; you must put vinegar and salt in the wound of the soul, for when you fall asleep and no longer feel the suffering, it is because you are not. And one must be. So do not close your eyes to the anguishing Sphinx. Look her in the face, and let her seize you and chew you in her mouth of a hundred thousand poisonous teeth, and swallow you. You will see what sweetness, once she has swallowed you, what delicious suffering.

11.73 And in practice one arrives at this through the morality of mutual imposition. Men must try to impose themselves on one another, to give one another their spirits, to set their seal on one another's souls.

11.74 It gives one something to think about, that Christian morality should have been called a slave morality—and by whom? By the anarchists! It is anarchism that is a slave morality, for only the slave sings the praises of anarchic freedom. Anarchism? No!—*panarchism*. Not that "neither God nor master," but all gods and all masters, all striving to become divine, to become immortal. And to that end, dominating others.[13]

11.75 And there are so many ways of dominating! At times this law of life is fulfilled even passively, or at least apparently so. Adapting to one's surroundings, imitating, putting oneself in another's place—sympathy, in short—besides being a manifestation of the unity of the species, is a way of expanding oneself, of being another. Being defeated, or at least appearing defeated, is often winning; taking what is another's is a way of living in him.

11.76 When I say dominate, I do not mean in the manner of the tiger. The fox dominates too, by cunning; and the hare by flee-

ing; and the viper by its venom; and the mosquito by its smallness; and the squid by its ink, with which it darkens its surroundings and escapes. And let no one be scandalized at this, for the very Father of all, who gave the tiger ferocity, claws and jaws, gave the fox cunning, the hare swift legs, the viper venom, the mosquito smallness and the squid ink. Nobility or ignobility does not lie in the weapons one uses, for each species, and even each individual, has its own. It lies in how one uses them, and above all in the end for which one wields them.

11.77 And among the weapons of victory there are also patience and resignation—passionate ones, full of activity and inner longings. Recall that stupendous sonnet by the great fighter, the great Puritan disturber John Milton, Cromwell's follower and the singer of Satan. Finding himself blind, and considering his light spent and useless in him that talent which it is death to hide, he hears Patience tell him: "God needs neither man's work nor his gifts; those who best bear his gentle yoke serve him best; his state is kingly; there are thousands who rush forth at his signal and run without rest over lands and seas, but those also serve him who do nothing but stand and wait."[14]

11.78 *They also serve who only stand and wait.* Yes, they also serve him who only stand waiting for him—but only when they wait for him passionately, hungrily, full of longing for immortality in him.

11.79 And one must impose oneself, even if only through patience. "My glass is small, but I drink from my glass," said a selfish poet, from a nation of misers. No: everyone drinks from my glass; I want everyone to drink from it. I give it to them, and my glass grows with the number of those who drink from it, and all of them, as they put their lips to it, leave something of their spirit there. And I drink from the glasses of others too, while they drink from mine. For the more I belong to myself, and the

13 "Neither God nor master" (*Ni Dieu ni maître*) was an anarchist slogan, taken from the French revolutionary Auguste Blanqui.

14 Milton's sonnet "When I consider how my light is spent" (c. 1655), on his blindness.

more I am myself, the more I belong to others. From the fullness of myself I pour myself out to my brothers, and as I pour myself out to them, they enter into me.[15]

11.80 "Be perfect as your Father," we were told, and our Father is perfect because he is He, and is each of his children, who live and are and move in him. The end of perfection is that we all be one (John 17:21), all one body in Christ (Romans 12:5), and that in the end, all things having been subjected to the Son, the Son himself should in turn be subjected to him who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all. And this is to make the Universe consciousness: to make Nature a society, and a human society. And then we will be able to call God Father without reservation.

11.81 I know that those who say ethics is a science will say that all I have been setting out is nothing but rhetoric. But each has his own language and his own passion. That is, whoever has one; and whoever has no passion gains nothing from having science.

11.82 The men of ethical science call the passion expressed in this rhetoric egotism. And this egotism is the only true remedy for egoism, for spiritual avarice, for the vice of preserving and saving oneself instead of trying to make oneself perennial by giving oneself.

AGAINST THE MONASTIC IDEAL

Salvation is collective, so withdrawal from the world cannot be the way to it.

11.83 "Do not be, and you will be able to do more than all that is," said our Fray Juan de los Ángeles in one of his *Diálogos de la conquista del reino de Dios* (Dial. III, 8). But what does this "do not be" mean? Might it not mean, paradoxically, as often happens with the mystics, the opposite of what it says taken literally and on a first reading? Is not the whole morality of submission and quiet-

15 Alfred de Musset: "Mon verre n'est pas grand, mais je bois dans mon verre" (*La Coupe et les lèvres*, 1832).

ism an immense paradox—or rather, a great tragic contradiction? Is not monastic morality, purely monastic morality, an absurdity? By monastic morality I mean here that of the solitary Carthusian, of the hermit who flees the world—perhaps taking it with him—to live alone, by himself, with a God who is likewise alone and solitary. I do not mean that of the inquisitorial Dominican who roams Provence to burn the hearts of Albigensians.

11.84 "Let God do it all!" someone will say. But if man folds his arms, God goes to sleep.

11.85 This Carthusian morality, and the other, scientific morality that they draw from ethical science—oh, ethics as a science! rational and rationalist ethics! pedantry of pedantries, and all is pedantry!—that is what may truly be egoism and coldness of heart.

11.86 There are those who claim to isolate themselves with God in order the better to save themselves, the better to redeem themselves. But redemption must be collective, since guilt is. "The religious is the determination of totality, and everything outside this is deception of the senses, which is why the greatest criminal is, at bottom, innocent, and a good-hearted man, a saint." So says Kierkegaard (*Afsluttende*, etc., II, ii, ch. IV, sect. II, A.)

11.87 Besides, can one make sense of wanting to win the other life, the eternal one, by renouncing this temporal one? If the other life is anything, it must be a continuation of this one, and our longing imagines it only as a continuation of this one, more or less purified. And if that is so, then as this life in time is, so will the life of eternity be.

11.88 "This world and the other are like two wives of one husband: if you please the one, you move the other to envy," says an Arab thinker quoted by Windelband (*Das Heilige* [The Holy], in vol. II of *Präludien*). But such a thought could only have sprung from someone who had not managed to resolve the tragic conflict between his spirit and the world in a fruitful struggle, in a practical contradiction. "Thy kingdom come," Christ taught us to ask of his Father, and not "let us go to thy kingdom." Accord-

ing to the early Christian beliefs, eternal life was to be fulfilled on this very earth, as a continuation of life on it. We were made men and not angels so that we should seek our happiness through life. The Christ of Christian faith did not become an angel; he became man, taking a real and actual body, not the appearance of one, in order to redeem us. And according to that same faith, the angels, even the most exalted, adore the Virgin, supreme symbol of earthly Humanity. The angelic ideal, then, is not a Christian ideal, and it is certainly not a human one, nor can it be. An angel, moreover, is something neuter, without sex and without country.

11.89 We cannot feel the other life, eternal life—I have said it several times already—as a life of angelic contemplation; it must be a life of action. Goethe said that "man must believe in immortality; he has a right to it, in keeping with his nature." And he went on: "The conviction of our continuance springs for me from the concept of activity. If I work without respite until my end, Nature is obliged—*so ist die Natur verpflichtet*—to provide me with another form of existence, since my present spirit can bear no more."[16] Change Nature to God, and you will have a thought that is still Christian. The first fathers of the Church did not believe that the immortality of the soul was a natural gift—that is, something rational—but a divine gift of grace. And what is of grace is usually, at bottom, of justice, since justice is divine and gratuitous, not natural. And Goethe added: "I would not know what to do with an eternal happiness if it did not offer me new tasks and new difficulties to overcome." So it is: contemplative idleness is not happiness.

11.90 But might there not be some justification for the eremitic, Carthusian morality, the morality of the Thebaid? Might it not be said that these exceptional types must be preserved to serve as an eternal model for the rest? Do men not breed racehorses, useless for any other practical purpose, which nonetheless keep the blood pure and sire excellent draft and saddle horses? Is

16 From Johann Peter Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe* (entry for February 4, 1829).

there not, perhaps, an ethical luxury, no less justifiable than the other kind? But on the other hand, is this not, at bottom, aesthetics and not morality, and much less religion? Might not the contemplative monastic ideal of the Middle Ages be aesthetic, and not religious, not even ethical?[17] And in the end, those of these solitaries who have told us of their colloquies alone with God have done an eternalizing work: they have entered into the souls of others. For that alone—for having been able to give us an Eckhart, a Suso, a Tauler, a Ruysbroeck, a John of the Cross, a Catherine of Siena, an Angela of Foligno, a Teresa of Jesus—the cloister is justified.

11.91 But our Spanish Orders are above all these: the Order of Preachers, which Domingo de Guzmán founded for the aggressive work of rooting out heresy; the Society of Jesus, a militia in the midst of the world—and that says it all; the Order of the Pious Schools, for the equally invasive work of teaching... True, I will be told that the reform of Carmel, a contemplative Order, which Teresa of Jesus undertook, was also a Spanish work. Yes, Spanish it was, and what it sought was freedom.[18]

11.92 It was the yearning for freedom—for inner freedom, indeed—that in those turbulent times of the Inquisition led chosen souls to the cloister. They imprisoned themselves in order to be freer. "Is it not a lovely thing that a poor nun of Saint Joseph's can come to be mistress of the whole earth and the elements?" says Saint Teresa in her *Life*. It was the Pauline yearning for freedom, for shaking off the external law, which was very harsh and, as Master Fray Luis de León said, very pig-headed in those days.[19]

11.93 But did they achieve freedom that way? It is very doubtful that they did, and today it is impossible. For true freedom is not that of shaking off the external law; freedom is consciousness of

17 The Thebaid, the desert region of Upper Egypt where the early Christian hermits lived.

18 Domingo de Guzmán is Saint Dominic; the Pious Schools (Piarists) were founded by the Spaniard Joseph Calasanz.

19 Luis de León (1527–1591), Augustinian poet and scholar at Salamanca, imprisoned for years by the Inquisition.

the law. The free man is not the one who shakes off the law, but the one who makes himself its master. Freedom must be sought in the midst of the world, which is where the law lives, and with the law, guilt, its daughter. What one must be freed from is guilt, which is collective.

11.94 Instead of renouncing the world in order to dominate it—and who does not know the collective instinct for domination of the religious Orders whose individual members renounce the world?—what ought to be done is to dominate the world in order to be able to renounce it. Not to seek poverty and submission, but to seek wealth in order to use it to increase human consciousness, and to seek power in order to use it to the same end.

11.95 It is a curious thing that friars and anarchists should fight each other, when at bottom they profess the same morality and are so closely related. In fact, anarchism amounts to a kind of atheist monasticism, and is more a religious doctrine than an ethical or socio-economic one. The one side starts from the premise that man is born bad, in original sin, and that grace later makes him good, if it does; the other, that he is born good and society later perverts him. And in the end it comes to the same thing, for in both the individual is set against society, as if he preceded it and were therefore to outlive it. And both moralities are moralities of the cloister.

11.96 The fact that guilt is collective must not serve for shaking my guilt off onto others, but for taking upon myself the guilt of others, of everyone. Not for diffusing my guilt and drowning it in the total guilt, but for making the total guilt mine; not for estranging my guilt from me, but for turning inward and making my own, taking it into myself, the guilt of all. And each of us must help to cure it, to make up for what others fail to do. That society is guilty aggravates the guilt of each. "'Someone has to do it, but why should it be me?' is the phrase that the well-meaning weak keep repeating. 'Someone has to do it; why not me?' is the cry of a serious servant of man who faces a serious danger head-on. Between these two sayings lie whole centuries of

moral evolution." So said Mrs. Annie Besant in her autobiography. So said the theosophist.[20]

11.97 That society is guilty aggravates the guilt of each, and the more one feels the guilt, the guiltier one is. Christ, the innocent one, since he knew the intensity of guilt better than anyone, was in a certain sense the most guilty. In him the divinity of humanity came to consciousness, and with it humanity's guiltiness. Not a few people are moved to laughter when they read of very great saints who, for very small faults—faults that make a man of the world smile—held themselves to be the greatest of sinners. But the intensity of guilt is not measured by the external act; it is measured by one's consciousness of it. What causes one person the sharpest pain barely gives another a slight tickle. In a saint, moral conscience may reach such fullness and sharpness that the slightest sin torments him with more remorse than the greatest criminal feels for his crime. Guilt lies in being conscious of it: it is in the one who judges, and insofar as he judges. When someone commits a harmful act believing in good faith that he is doing a virtuous deed, we cannot hold him morally guilty; and when another believes that an indifferent, or perhaps beneficial, action is bad, and carries it out, he is guilty. The act passes, the intention remains, and what is bad about a bad act is that it corrupts the intention. By doing wrong knowingly one predisposes oneself to go on doing it, and consciousness grows dark. Doing evil is not the same as being evil. Evil darkens consciousness—not only moral conscience but consciousness in general, psychic consciousness. For whatever exalts and widens consciousness is good, and whatever depresses and diminishes it is bad.

IS VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE?

Virtue, like faith, comes from passion, not from ethical science.

11.98 And here perhaps there is room for the question that Socrates, according to Plato, already raised: whether virtue is

knowledge, science. Which amounts to asking whether virtue is rational.[21]

11.99 The ethicists—those who hold that morality is a science, those who on reading all these digressions will say: rhetoric, rhetoric, rhetoric!—will believe, it seems to me, that virtue is acquired through science, through rational study, and even that mathematics helps us to be better. I do not know. But I feel that virtue, like religiousness, like the longing never to die—and at bottom it is all the same thing—is acquired rather through passion.

11.100 "But what is passion?" I will be asked. I do not know. Or rather, I know it very well, because I feel it, and feeling it, I do not need to define it for myself. More than that: I fear that if I come to define it, I will stop feeling it and having it. Passion is like suffering, and like suffering, it creates its object. It is easier for fire to find fuel than for fuel to find fire.

11.101 This will surely look like empty talk and sophistry; I know it well. And I will also be told that there is a science of passion, and a passion for science, and that it is in the moral sphere that reason and life are united.

11.102 I do not know, I do not know, I do not know... And perhaps at bottom, though more murkily, I am saying the same thing that they say—the adversaries I invent for myself so as to have someone to fight—only they say it more clearly, more definitely and more rationally. I do not know, I do not know... But what they say chills me and sounds to me like emotional emptiness.

11.103 And to come back to the same point: is virtue knowledge? Is knowledge virtue? For they are two different things. Virtue may be a knowledge, the knowledge of how to conduct oneself well, without every other knowledge being virtue for that reason. Machiavelli's is knowledge; and it cannot be said that his

20 Annie Besant (1847–1933), English freethinker and socialist who became a leader of the Theosophical Society.

21 Spanish *ciencia* means both "science" and "knowledge," and Unamuno moves between the two senses in what follows.

virtú [prowess, virtue] is always moral virtue. It is well known, besides, that the most intelligent and the most educated are not the best.

11.104 No, no, no: physiology does not teach us to digest, nor logic to reason, nor aesthetics to feel beauty or to express it, nor ethics to be good. And we are lucky if it does not teach us to be hypocrites; for pedantry, whether of logic, of aesthetics or of ethics, is at bottom nothing but hypocrisy.

11.105 Perhaps reason teaches certain bourgeois virtues, but it makes neither heroes nor saints. For a saint is one who does good not for the sake of the good itself, but for God, for the sake of being made eternal.

11.106 Perhaps, on the other hand, culture—that is, Culture, oh, culture!—being above all the work of philosophers and men of science, was made neither by heroes nor by saints! For the saints cared very little for the progress of human culture; they cared rather for the salvation of the individual souls of those they lived among. What does our Saint John of the Cross, for example, signify in the history of human culture—that incandescent little friar, as he has been called culturally (and I do not know whether cultivatedly)—next to Descartes?

11.107 All those saints, afire with religious charity toward their neighbors, hungry for their own eternalization and for that of others, who went about burning other people's hearts—inquisitors, perhaps—all those saints, what have they done for the progress of the science of ethics? Did any of them invent the categorical imperative, as the old bachelor of Königsberg invented it, who, if he was not a saint, deserved to be one?[22]

11.108 One day the son of a great professor of ethics—of a man who scarcely ever had that imperative off his lips—complained to me that he lived in a desolating dryness of spirit, in an inner void. And I had to tell him: "The thing is, my friend, that your father had an underground river in his spirit, a fresh current of old childhood beliefs, of hopes of the beyond. When he thought

22 The old bachelor of Königsberg is Kant, who never married and spent his whole life in that city.

he was nourishing his soul with that imperative, or with something like it, he was in reality nourishing it with those waters of childhood. And to you he has given the flower of his spirit, perhaps—his rational doctrines of morality—but not the root, not what lies underground, not the irrational."

11.109 Why did Krausism take root here in Spain, and not Hegelianism or Kantism, when these systems are much more profound, rationally and philosophically, than the former? Because the one was brought to us with its roots. The philosophical thought of a people or of an age is like its flower: it is what is outside and on top. But that flower, or fruit if you prefer, draws its sap from the roots of the plant, and the roots, which are inside and underground, are religious feeling.[23] The philosophical thought of Kant, the supreme flower of the mental evolution of the Germanic people, has its roots in the religious feeling of Luther. It is not possible for Kantism, above all in its practical part, to take root and bear flowers and fruit among peoples that had not gone through the Reformation, and perhaps could not go through it. Kantism is Protestant, and we Spaniards are fundamentally Catholic. And if Krause put down some roots here—more than is believed, and not so fleeting as is supposed—it is because Krause had pietist roots. Pietism, as Ritschl showed in his history of it (*Geschichte der Pietismus*), has specifically Catholic roots, and signifies in large part the invasion, or rather the persistence, of Catholic mysticism within Protestant rationalism. And this explains why even a good many Catholic thinkers here became Krausists.

A SPANISH TRAGIC SENSE

The tragic sense of life is Spanish and Catholic, and its figure is Don Quixote.

11.110 And since we Spaniards are Catholics, whether we know it or not, whether we want to be or not, and even though some of

us may pride ourselves on being rationalists or atheists, perhaps our deepest work of culture—and, what is worth more than culture, of religiousness, if indeed they are not the same thing—is to try to become clearly aware of this subconscious, social or popular Catholicism of ours. And that is what I have tried to do in this work.

11.111 What I call the tragic sense of life in men and in peoples is, at least, our tragic sense of life, that of Spaniards and of the Spanish people, as it is reflected in my consciousness, which is a Spanish consciousness, made in Spain. And this tragic sense of life is the very Catholic sense of life, for Catholicism, and much more so popular Catholicism, is tragic. The people abhor comedy. When Pilate—the fine gentleman, the man of distinction, the aesthete, the rationalist if you like—wants to give the people comedy and presents Christ to them in mockery, saying: Behold the man!, they riot and cry: Crucify him! crucify him! They do not want comedy, but tragedy. And what Dante, the great Catholic, called a divine comedy is the most tragic tragedy ever written.

11.112 And since in these essays I have wanted to show the soul of a Spaniard, and in it the Spanish soul, I have been sparing with quotations from Spanish writers, while lavishing—perhaps to excess—quotations from those of other countries. The fact is that all human souls are sisters.

11.113 And there is a figure, a comically tragic figure, a figure in which one sees all that is deeply tragic in the human comedy: the figure of Our Lord Don Quixote, the Spanish Christ, in whom the immortal soul of this people of mine is summed up and enclosed. Perhaps the passion and death of the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance is the passion and death of the Spanish people. Its death and its resurrection. And there is a Quixotic philosophy, and even a Quixotic metaphysics, and a Quixotic logic and ethics too, and a Quixotic religiousness—Spanish Cath-

23 The thought of the German philosopher Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781–1832), brought to Spain by Julián Sanz del Río, shaped a whole generation of nineteenth-century Spanish liberals and educators.

olic religiousness. This is the philosophy, the logic, the ethics, the religiousness that I have tried in this work to sketch, and to suggest rather than to develop. To develop them rationally—no; Quixotic madness does not allow scientific logic.

11.114 And now, before concluding and taking leave of my readers, it remains for me to speak of the role that is reserved for Don Quixote in the modern European tragicomedy.

11.115 We shall see it in one last essay.

Conclusion: Don Quixote in the Contemporary European Tragicomedy

Conclusión. Don Quijote en la tragicomedia europea contemporánea
Spain, Europe and science; Quixotism as a philosophy and a religion.

[C] A voice crying in the wilderness! / Isaiah 40:3.

[C.1] I must now bring these essays to an end—for the present, at least—since they threaten to turn into a never-ending story. They have gone from my hands to the printer's in something close to improvisation, drawn from notes gathered over years, and as I wrote each essay I did not have before me the ones that preceded it. And so they will go out full of inner contradictions—apparent ones at least—like life, and like myself.

[C.2] My sin, if any, has been to adorn them excessively with other people's quotations, many of which will seem to have been dragged in somewhat forcibly. But I will explain that another time.

[C.3] Very few years after Our Lord Don Quixote had roamed through Spain, Jakob Boehme told us (*Aurora*, chapter XI, § 75) that he was not writing a story others had told him: he himself had to be in the battle, and in great combat within it, where he often had to be defeated like all men. Further on (§ 83) he adds that even though he must make himself a spectacle for the world and the devil, he still has hope in God for the future life, and in God he means to risk his life and not resist the Spirit. Amen.

And I too, like this Quixote of German thought, do not want to resist the Spirit.[1]

C.4 And that is why I raise my voice, which will cry in the wilderness. I raise it from this University of Salamanca, which arrogantly called itself *omnium scientiarium princeps* [first of all the sciences], which Carlyle called a fortress of ignorance, and which a French man of letters recently called a phantom University. I raise it from this Spain, "land of dreams that become realities, defender of Europe, home of the chivalric ideal"—as Mr. Archer M. Huntington, a poet, wrote to me in a letter not long ago—from this Spain, head of the Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth century. And how they hold that against her![2]

C.5 In the fourth of these essays I spoke to you of the essence of Catholicism. And the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Revolution have contributed to *de-essentializing* it—that is, to de-Catholicizing Europe—by replacing that ideal of an eternal life beyond this world with the ideal of progress, of reason, of science. Or rather of Science, with a capital letter. And the latest thing, what is most in fashion today, is culture.

C.6 In the second half of the past nineteenth century, an unphilosophical and technicist age, dominated by myopic specialism and by historical materialism, this ideal was translated into a work not so much of scientific popularization as of scientific vulgarization—or rather pseudoscientific—which found its outlet in cheap and sectarian democratic book series. Science thus sought to make itself popular, as if it were science that had to come down to the people and serve their passions, and not the people who must rise to it, and through it higher still, to new and deeper longings.

C.7 All this led Brunetière to proclaim the bankruptcy of science, and that science, or whatever it was, did indeed go bankrupt. And since it gave no satisfaction, people went on seeking happiness, without finding it in wealth, or in knowledge, or in

1 *Aurora* (1612) was Boehme's first book.

2 Archer M. Huntington (1870–1955), American Hispanist and poet, founder of the Hispanic Society of America.

power, or in pleasure; nor in resignation, nor in a good moral conscience, nor in culture. And pessimism came.

FAUST AND THE MALADY OF THE CENTURY

Modern Europe, like Faust, has traded its soul for Helen, the culture of the Renaissance.

C.8 Progressivism did not satisfy either. Progress—what for? Man was not content with the rational; the *Kulturkampf* was not enough for him. He wanted to give life a final finality, for what I call final finality is the true ὄντως ὄν [that which truly is]. And the famous *maladie du siècle* [sickness of the century], which is heralded in Rousseau and which Sénancour's *Obermann* shows more clearly than anyone, was and is nothing other than the loss of faith in the immortality of the soul, in the human finality of the Universe.[3]

C.9 Its symbol, its true symbol, is a creature of fiction: Dr. Faustus.

C.10 This immortal Dr. Faustus, who appears to us as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century, in 1604, as the work of the Renaissance and the Reformation, through the ministry of Christopher Marlowe, is already the same one Goethe would rediscover, though in certain respects more spontaneous and fresher. And beside him appears Mephistophilis, whom Faustus asks: "What good will my soul do your lord?" And he answers: "Enlarge his kingdom." "And is that the reason he tempts us so?" the Doctor asks again, and the evil spirit replies: "*solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris* [it is a comfort to the wretched to have had companions in suffering]," which, badly translated into our Spanish, we say as: the misfortune of many is the consolation of fools. "Where we are, there is hell, and where hell is, there we must always be," Mephistophilis adds; to which Faustus replies that he believes such a hell to be a fable, and asks him who made the world. And this tragic Doctor, tortured by our torture,

3 The *Kulturkampf* ("culture struggle") was Bismarck's campaign against the Catholic Church in Germany in the 1870s.

ends by finding Helen, who is none other—though Marlowe perhaps did not suspect it—than the reborn Culture of the Renaissance. There is a scene in Marlowe's *Faustus* that is worth the whole second part of Goethe's *Faust*. Faustus says to Helen: "Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss"—and he kisses her. "Her lips suck out my soul; see how it flees! Come, Helen, come; give me back my soul! Here I want to stay, for heaven is in these lips, and all that is not Helen is dross."

C.11 Give me back my soul! That is the cry of Faustus, the Doctor, when, having kissed Helen, he is about to be lost forever. For the original Faustus has no innocent Margaret to save him. This business of salvation was Goethe's invention. And who does not know his Faust, our Faust? He studied Philosophy, Law, Medicine, even Theology, and saw only that we can know nothing. He wanted to flee to the open country—*hinaus ins weite Land!* [out into the wide land!]—and ran into Mephistopheles, part of that power which always wills evil and always does good. And Mephistopheles led him into the arms of Margaret, of the simple people. Faust, the learned man, ruined her; but thanks to her, since she gave herself up for him, he is saved, redeemed by the believing people with their simple faith. But there came that second part, because that other Faust was the anecdotal Faust and not Goethe's categorical one. He gave himself over once more to Culture, to Helen, and begot Euphorion on her, and it all ends with that business of the eternal-feminine amid mystical choruses. Poor Euphorion![4]

C.12 And is this Helen the wife of fair-haired Menelaus, the one Paris carried off, who caused the Trojan War, and of whom the Trojan elders said that no one should be indignant that men fought over a woman whose face was so terribly like the immortal goddesses? I believe, rather, that this Helen of Faustus was another: the one who accompanied Simon Magus, and who, he

4 In *Faust*, Part Two, Euphorion, the son of Faust and Helen, dies falling like Icarus.

said, was the divine intelligence. And Faustus can say to her: give me back my soul![5]

C.13 For Helen, with her kisses, draws out our soul. And what we want and need is soul—a soul with bulk and substance.

C.14 But then came the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Revolution, bringing us Helen—or rather driven by her—and now they talk to us of Culture and of Europe.

WHAT IS EUROPE?

Unamuno mocks Europeanizers and defends Spain against the new inquisition of science.

C.15 Europe! This primitive and immediately geographical notion has been turned for us, as if by magic, into an almost metaphysical category. Who today, in Spain at least, knows what Europe is? All I know is that it is a *shibboleth* (see my *Tres Ensayos* [Three Essays]). And when I set about scrutinizing what our Europeanizers call Europe, it sometimes seems to me that much of the periphery is left out of it—Spain, of course, England, Italy, Scandinavia, Russia...—and that it comes down to the center, to Franco-Germany, with its annexes and dependencies.

C.16 All this, I say, was brought to us by the Renaissance and the Reformation, twin brothers who lived in apparent civil war. The Italian men of the Renaissance, Socinians every one of them, and the humanists, with Erasmus at their head, took that friar Luther for a barbarian. Yet Luther drew his impetus from the cloister, as Bruno and Campanella drew theirs. But that barbarian was their twin brother; in fighting them, he was fighting at their side against the common enemy. All this the Renaissance and the Reformation brought us, and then the Revolution, their daughter. And they also brought us a new Inquisition: that

5 Simon Magus, the Samaritan magician of Acts 8, was said to travel with a woman named Helen whom he called the first Thought of God.

of science or culture, whose weapons are ridicule and contempt for those who do not surrender to its orthodoxy.[6]

C.17 When Galileo sent the Grand Duke of Tuscany his treatise on the motion of the Earth, he told him that it is right to obey and believe the decisions of one's superiors, and that he regarded that treatise "as a poem, or else a dream, and as such let Your Highness receive it." At other times he calls it a "chimera" and a "mathematical caprice." And so I too, in these essays, present as poetry, dream, chimera or mystical caprice what springs from deepest within me. I do it out of fear as well—why not confess it?—of the Inquisition, but of today's Inquisition, the scientific one. And I say with Galileo: *Eppur si muove!* [And yet it moves!] But is it only out of that fear? Ah, no! For there is another, more tragic Inquisition: the one that a modern, cultured, European man—as I am, whether I like it or not—carries within himself. There is a more terrible ridicule: the ridicule of oneself before oneself and toward oneself. It is my reason that mocks my faith and despises it.

C.18 And this is where I must take refuge in my Lord Don Quixote, to learn from him how to face ridicule and overcome it—and a ridicule that perhaps—who knows?—he never knew.

C.19 Yes, yes, how could my reason not smile at these pseudo-philosophical, would-be mystical, dilettantish constructions, in which there is everything except patient study, objectivity and method... scientific ones? And yet... *Eppur si muove!*

C.20 *Eppur si muove*, yes! And I take refuge in dilettantism, in what a pedant would call *demi-mondaine* [half-respectable] philosophy, against specialist pedantry, against the philosophy of professional philosophers. And who knows... Progress usually comes from the barbarian, and nothing is more stagnant than the philosophy of philosophers and the theology of theologians.

C.21 And they talk to us of Europe! The civilization of Tibet runs parallel to ours. It has made, and still makes, men live who

6 Giordano Bruno and Tommaso Campanella were Dominican friars turned philosophers.

vanish just as we do. And above all civilizations there still floats Ecclesiastes, with its "the wise man dies just like the fool" (II, 3).

C.22 Among our common people there goes round an admirable reply to the ordinary question "How are things?" or "How's it going?" It is the one that answers: "One lives!..." And in fact that is how it is: one lives, we live as much as anyone else. And what more can one ask? And who does not remember the folk verse? "Every time I stop to think—that I will have to die,—I spread my cloak upon the ground—and cannot sleep enough." But not sleep, no: dream. Dream life, since life is a dream.

C.23 Among us Spaniards the saying that the thing is to pass the time—that is, to kill time—has also become proverbial in a very short while. And in fact we make time in order to kill it. But there is something that has always concerned us as much as passing the time, or more—a formula that marks an aesthetic position—and that is winning eternity, the formula of the religious position. The fact is that we leap from the aesthetic and the economic to the religious, over the logical and the ethical; from art to religion.

C.24 One of our young novelists, Ramón Pérez de Ayala, in his recent novel *La pata de la raposa* [The Fox's Paw], tells us that the idea of death is the trap, and the spirit is the fox, that is, the cunning virtue with which to elude the snares of fate. He adds: "Caught in the trap, weak men and weak peoples lie on the ground...; strong spirits and strong peoples receive in danger a clear-sighted stupor, suddenly lay bare the immeasurable beauty of life and, renouncing forever their first agility and madness, come out of the trap with their muscles tensed for action and with the powers of the soul increased a hundredfold in impetus, power and efficacy." But let us see: weak men..., weak peoples..., strong spirits..., strong peoples..., what is all that?[7] I do not know. What I think I know is that some individuals and peoples have not yet truly thought about death and immortality—they have not felt them—and that others have

7 Ramón Pérez de Ayala (1880–1962), Asturian novelist and critic; *La pata de la raposa* appeared in 1912.

stopped thinking about them, or rather have stopped feeling them. And it is not, I think, anything for men and peoples who have not passed through the religious age to be proud of.

C.25 All that about the immeasurable beauty of life is very fine in writing. And there are indeed those who resign themselves and accept life just as it is, and even those who want to persuade us that the trap is no problem. But Calderón already said (*Gustos y disgustos no son más que imaginación* [Likes and Dislikes Are Only Imagination], act I, scene 4) that "It is no consolation in misfortune—it is one more misfortune besides—to try to persuade the one who suffers them—that they are not misfortunes." And besides, "only a heart speaks to a heart," according to Fray Diego de Estella (*Vanidad del mundo* [The Vanity of the World], ch. XXI).[8]

"LET THEM DO THE INVENTING!"

Unamuno defends his paradox and urges Spain to make itself ridiculous like Don Quixote.

C.26 Not long ago someone pretended to be scandalized by something I said in answer to those who reproached us Spaniards for our incapacity for science. I pointed out that electric light shines here, and the locomotive runs here, just as well as where they were invented, and that we use logarithms just as they do in the country where they were devised; and then I said: "let them do the inventing!" It is a paradoxical expression, and I do not renounce it. We Spaniards ought to take to heart much of the wise advice that Count Joseph de Maistre addressed to the Russians, our fellows, in his admirable letters to Count Razumovsky on public education in Russia. He told him that a nation should not think any less of itself for not being made for science; that the Romans had no understanding of the arts and never had a mathematician, which did not stop them from playing their part. And there is all he added about that crowd of false and proud half-learned men, idolaters of foreign tastes, fashions and

8 Diego de Estella (1524–1578), Spanish Franciscan ascetic writer.

languages, always ready to tear down whatever they despise—which is everything.[9]

C.27 That we have no scientific spirit? And what of it, if we have some spirit? And does anyone know whether the one we have is compatible with that other one or not?

C.28 But when I said "let them do the inventing!" I did not mean that we must be content with a passive role, no. They to the science we shall make use of; we to what is ours. It is not enough to defend oneself; one must attack.

C.29 But attack with good judgment and caution. Reason must be our weapon. It is the weapon even of the madman. Our sublime madman, our model, Don Quixote, smashed with two sword-strokes that sort of half-visor he had fitted to his morion. Then "he made it over again, putting some iron bars inside it, in such a way that he was satisfied with its strength, and, not wishing to make any further trial of it, he deemed and held it to be a most excellent visored helmet." And with it on his head he made himself immortal. That is, he made himself ridiculous. For it was by making himself ridiculous that Don Quixote achieved his immortality.

C.30 And there are so many ways of making oneself ridiculous...! Cournot (*Traité de l'enchaînement des idées fondamentales*, etc., § 510) said: "One must speak neither to princes nor to peoples of their chances of death: princes punish this rashness with disgrace; the public takes its revenge with ridicule." So it is, and that is why they say one must live with the age. *Corrumpere et corrumpi saeculum vocatur* [To corrupt and to be corrupted is called the way of the age] (Tacitus, *Germania*, 19).

C.31 One must know how to make oneself ridiculous, and not only before others but before ourselves. All the more so now, when there is so much chatter about the consciousness of our backwardness compared with other cultured peoples; now, when a handful of scatterbrains who do not know our own history—a history still to be made, once we have first unmade what Protestant calumny has woven around it—say that we have had

9 De Maistre spent years in St. Petersburg as the King of Sardinia's envoy.

no science, no art, no philosophy, no Renaissance (that one we could perhaps have done without), nothing at all.

C.32 Carducci, who spoke of the *contorcimenti dell'affannosa grandiosità spagnola* [contortions of breathless Spanish grandiosity], left it in writing (in *Mosche cocchiere*) that "even Spain, which never had any hegemony of thought, had its Cervantes." But did Cervantes appear here on his own, isolated, without roots, without trunk, without support? Still, it is understandable that an Italian rationalist should say that Spain *non ebbe egemonia mai di pensiero* [never had hegemony of thought], when he remembers that it was Spain that reacted against the Renaissance in his homeland. And what of it? Was the Counter-Reformation not something—and something hegemonic in the cultural order? Spain led it, and it in fact began with the sack of Rome, a providential punishment upon the city of the pagan Popes of the pagan Renaissance.[10] Let us leave aside for now whether the Counter-Reformation was bad or good. But were Loyola and the Council of Trent not something hegemonic? Before the Council, Christianity and paganism—or better, immortalism and mortalism—lay together in Italy in unspeakable embrace and concubinage, even in the souls of some Popes. What was true in philosophy was not true in theology, and everything was settled with the formula *salva la fe* [saving the faith]. Afterwards, no longer. Afterwards came the frank and open struggle between reason and faith, science and religion. And to have brought this about, thanks above all to Spanish stubbornness—was that not hegemonic?

C.33 Without the Counter-Reformation, the Reformation would not have followed the course it did; without the former, the latter, lacking the support of Pietism, might have perished in the pedestrian rationality of the *Aufklärung*, the Enlightenment. Without Charles I, without Philip II, our great Philip, would everything have been the same?[11]

10 Rome was sacked in 1527 by the troops of the Emperor Charles V.

11 Charles I of Spain is the Emperor Charles V (reigned 1516–1556); Philip II, his son, reigned 1556–1598.

C.34 Negative work, someone will say. What is that? What is the negative? What is the positive? In time—the line that always runs in the same direction, from past to future—where is the zero that marks the boundary between the positive and the negative? Spain, this land said to be one of knights and rogues—and all of them rogues—has been the great slandered one of History precisely for having led the Counter-Reformation. And because her pride has kept her from going out into the public square, to the fair of vanities, to justify herself.

C.35 Let us leave aside her eight centuries of struggle against the Moors, defending Europe from Islam; her work of internal unification; her discovery of America and the Indies—which was done by Spain and Portugal, and not by Columbus and da Gama. Let us leave that and more, and that is not leaving little. Is it nothing cultural to create twenty nations without keeping anything back for oneself, and to beget, as the conquistador begot, free men upon poor Indian servant women? Beyond this, in the order of thought, is our mysticism nothing? Perhaps one day the peoples whose souls Helen snatches away with her kisses will have to come back to it, to look for their soul.

C.36 But of course: Culture is made up of ideas and of ideas alone, and man is nothing but its instrument. Man for the idea, and not the idea for man; the body for the shadow. The end of man is to make science, to catalog the Universe so as to hand it back to God in good order, as I wrote some years ago in my novel *Amor y pedagogía* [Love and Pedagogy]. Man is not, it seems, even an idea. And in the end the human race will succumb at the foot of the libraries—whole forests felled to make the paper stored in them—, museums, machines, factories, laboratories... in order to bequeath them... to whom? For God will not receive them.

C.37 That horrid literature of "regeneration," almost all of it humbug, which the loss of our last American colonies gave rise to, brought in the pedantry of talking about persevering and silent work—shouting about it, of course, shouting about silence. It talked of prudence, exactitude, moderation, strength of spirit, sound judgment, equanimity, the social virtues—above

all those of us who most lack them. Almost all of us Spaniards fell into that ridiculous literature, some more, some less. There was the case of that arch-Spaniard Joaquín Costa, one of the least European spirits we have had, coming out with the idea of Europeanizing us and setting about *playing the Cid*, while he proclaimed that the Cid's tomb must be locked with seven keys and... that we must conquer Africa.[12] And I cried "Death to Don Quixote!" And from that blasphemy, which meant the very opposite of what it said—that is how things were with us then—sprang my *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho* [Life of Don Quixote and Sancho] and my cult of Quixotism as a national religion.

A PHILOSOPHY IN LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

Spanish philosophy lives in its literature, mysticism and language, not in systems.

C.38 I wrote that book to rethink the *Quixote* against the Cervantists and the scholars, to make a work of life out of what was, and still is for most people, a dead letter. What do I care what Cervantes meant or did not mean to put there, and what he really put there? What is alive is what I discover there, whether Cervantes put it there or not: what I put in it, and put over it, and put under it, and what we all put there. In that book I tried to track down our philosophy.

C.39 For I am more and more convinced that our philosophy, Spanish philosophy, is liquid and diffused in our literature, in our life, in our action, in our mysticism above all, and not in philosophical systems. It is concrete. And is there not, for example, as much philosophy in Goethe as in Hegel, or more? The verses of Jorge Manrique, the Romancero, the *Quixote*, *La vida es sueño* [Life Is a Dream], the *Subida al Monte Carmelo* [Ascent of Mount Carmel] imply an intuition of the world and a conception of life, *Weltanschauung und Lebensansicht* [world-view

12 Regenerationism: the reform movement that followed Spain's defeat by the United States in 1898. Joaquín Costa (1846–1911) coined the slogan of locking the tomb of the Cid, Spain's medieval warrior hero, with seven keys.

and view of life]. It was hard for this philosophy of ours to be formulated in the second half of the nineteenth century, an unphilosophical, positivist, technicist age, an age of pure history and natural sciences, at bottom materialist and pessimistic.[13]

C.40 Our language itself, like every cultured language, carries a philosophy implicit within it.

C.41 A language, in fact, is a potential philosophy. Platonism is the Greek language discoursing in Plato, developing its age-old metaphors; Scholasticism is the philosophy of the dead Latin of the Middle Ages struggling with the vernacular languages. In Descartes it is the French language that discourses, German in Kant and in Hegel, and English in Hume and in Stuart Mill. The fact is that the logical starting point of all philosophical speculation is not the self, nor is it representation—*Vorstellung*—or the world as it presents itself immediately to the senses. It is mediate or historical representation, humanly elaborated, as it is given to us chiefly in the language through which we know the world; not psychic representation but pneumatic. Each one of us, in order to think, starts—knowing it or not, and whether he likes it or not—from what has been thought by others who preceded him and surround him. Thought is an inheritance. Kant thought in German, and into German he translated Hume and Rousseau, who thought in English and in French respectively. And Spinoza—did he not think in Judaeo-Portuguese, hemmed in by Dutch and struggling with it?

C.42 Thought rests on prejudices, and prejudices are carried in language. Bacon rightly ascribed to language not a few of the errors of the *idola fori* [idols of the marketplace]. But can one philosophize in pure algebra, or even in Esperanto? One has only to read Avenarius's book, his critique of pure experience—*reine Erfahrung*—of this prehuman, that is, inhuman experience, to see where that can lead. And Avenarius himself, who had to

13 Jorge Manrique's fifteenth-century *Coplas* on his father's death; the Romancero, the body of Spanish ballads; Calderón's play; and Saint John of the Cross's mystical treatise.

invent a language for himself, invented it on the basis of the Latin tradition, with roots that carry in their metaphorical force a whole content of impure experience, of human social experience.

C.43 All philosophy, then, is at bottom philology. And philology, with its great and fruitful law of analogical formations, gives its share to chance, to the irrational, to the absolutely incommensurable. History is not mathematics, and neither is philosophy. And how many philosophical ideas are owed, strictly speaking, to something like rhyme, to the need to fit in a rhyming word! In Kant himself there is no little of this, of aesthetic symmetry—of rhyme.

C.44 Representation, then, like language, like reason itself—which is nothing but inner language—is a social and racial product; and the race, the blood of the spirit, is the language, as Oliver Wendell Holmes, the Yankee, said long ago, and as I have repeated many times.

C.45 Our Western philosophy came to maturity, reached consciousness of itself, in Athens, with Socrates; and it reached this consciousness through dialogue, social conversation. And it is deeply significant that the doctrine of innate ideas, of the objective and normative value of ideas—of what later, in Scholasticism, was called realism—should have been formulated in dialogues. And those ideas, which are reality, are names, as nominalism taught. Not that they are nothing more than names, *flatus vocis* [a breath of the voice], but that they are nothing less than names. It is language that gives us reality, and not as a mere vehicle of it but as its true flesh, of which all the rest, mute or inarticulate representation, is only the skeleton. And so logic operates upon aesthetics; the concept operates upon expression, upon the word, and not upon raw perception.

C.46 And this holds even for love. Love does not discover itself until it speaks, until it says: I love you! With very deep intuition, Stendhal, in his novel *La Chartreuse de Parme* [The Charterhouse of Parma], has Count Mosca—furious with jealousy, and thinking of the love he believes binds the Duchess of Sanseverina to her

nephew Fabrizio—say to himself: "I must calm down; if I use rough manners, the duchess is capable, out of sheer wounded vanity, of following him to Belgirate, and there, during the journey, chance may bring a word that will give a name to what they feel for each other, and afterwards, in an instant, all the consequences."

C.47 So it is: all that was made was made by the word, and in the beginning was the word.[14]

C.48 Thought, reason—that is, living language—is an inheritance, and the solitary of Ibn Tufayl, the Arab philosopher from Guadix, is as absurd as the self of Descartes. The concrete and real truth, not the methodical and ideal one, is: *homo sum ergo cogito* [I am a man, therefore I think]. To feel oneself a man is more immediate than to think. But on the other hand History, the process of culture, finds its perfection and full effectiveness only in the individual; the end of History and of Humanity is each one of us, each man, each individual. *Homo sum, ergo cogito; cogito ut sim Michael de Unamuno* [I am a man, therefore I think; I think in order to be Miguel de Unamuno]. The individual is the end of the Universe.[15]

C.49 And this matter of the individual being the end of the Universe is something we Spaniards feel very well. Did not Martin A. S. Hume (*The Spanish People*) speak of the Spaniard's introspective individuality, and did I not comment on it in an essay published in the review *La España Moderna*[16]?

C.50 And it is perhaps this very introspective individualism that has not allowed strictly philosophical, or rather metaphysical, systems to spring up here. And this in spite of Suárez, whose formal subtleties do not deserve that name.[17]

14 An echo of the opening of Saint John's Gospel (John 1:1–3).

15 Ibn Tufayl (c. 1105–1185), author of *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, the tale of a man who, raised alone on an island, reasons his way to the truth.

16 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. "El individualismo español" [Spanish Individualism], in volume 171, dated 1 March 1903.

17 Francisco Suárez (1548–1617), Spanish Jesuit, the leading late Scholastic philosopher.

C.51 Our metaphysics, if anything, has been metanthropics, and our thinkers philologists, or rather humanists, in the broadest sense.

C.52 Benedetto Croce (*Estetica*, bibliographical appendix) said accurately of Menéndez y Pelayo that he inclined toward metaphysical idealism but seemed to want to take in something of the other systems, even of the empirical theories. For that reason, in Croce's view, his work—Croce was referring to his *Historia de las ideas estéticas de España* [History of Aesthetic Ideas in Spain]—suffered from a certain uncertainty as to the author's own theoretical standpoint. Menéndez y Pelayo, in his exaltation as a Spanish humanist who would not renounce the Renaissance, invented "Vivism," the philosophy of Luis Vives—and perhaps for no other reason than that Vives, like himself, was an eclectic Spaniard of the Renaissance.[18] The fact is that Menéndez y Pelayo, whose philosophy was certainly all uncertainty, was educated in Barcelona, in the timidities of Scottish philosophy translated into the Catalan spirit. That was the groveling philosophy of *common sense*, which would not commit itself and was all compromise, and which Balmes represented so well. So he always fled from every robust inner struggle, and forged his conscience out of compromises.[19]

C.53 Closer to the mark, in my view, was Ángel Ganivet, all divination and instinct, when he proclaimed Senecanism as ours: the philosophy—without originality of thought, but of the greatest originality of accent and tone—of that pagan Stoic from Córdoba whom not a few Christians took for one of their own. His accent was a Spanish accent, Latin-African, not Hellenic. Echoes of it are heard in that other—also so much ours—Tertullian, who believed God and the soul to be corporeal, solid, and

18 Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo (1856–1912), Spain's great literary historian; Juan Luis Vives (1493–1540), Valencian humanist and friend of Erasmus.

19 The Scottish "common sense" school of Thomas Reid was influential in nineteenth-century Barcelona.

who was something like a Quixote of Christian thought in the second century.[20]

THE QUIXOTIC PHILOSOPHY

The hero of Spanish thought is Don Quixote, who fought for spirit and faced ridicule.

C.54 But where we must perhaps go to look for the hero of our thought is not to any philosopher who lived in flesh and bone, but to a being of fiction and of action, more real than all the philosophers put together: to Don Quixote. For there is a philosophical Quixotism, no doubt, but there is also a Quixotic philosophy. Is it not, at bottom, the philosophy of the conquistadors, of the Counter-Reformers, of Loyola, and above all—now in the order of abstract thought, but thought that is felt—of our mystics? What was the mysticism of Saint John of the Cross but a knight-errantry of feeling turned to the divine?

C.55 And Don Quixote's cannot strictly be called idealism; he did not fight for ideas. It was spiritualism: he fought for spirit.

C.56 Turn Don Quixote to religious speculation—as he himself once dreamed of doing, when he came upon those carved images in relief that some peasants were carrying for the altarpiece of their village[21]—and to the meditation of eternal truths. See him climb Mount Carmel through the dark night of the soul, to watch from up there, from the summit, the rising of the sun that never sets. See him, like the eagle that accompanies Saint John on Patmos, look it in the face and scrutinize its spots, leaving the owl that accompanies Athena on Olympus—the goddess with *glaucous* eyes, that is, owl's eyes, who sees in the dark but is dazzled by the light of noon—to search among the shadows with its eyes for prey for its young.

C.57 And speculative or meditative Quixotism is, like the practical kind, madness—a madness born of the madness of the

20 Ángel Ganivet (1865–1898), author of *Idearium español*. Seneca was born in Córdoba; Tertullian was from Carthage.

cross. And that is why reason despises it. Philosophy, at bottom, abhors Christianity, and the gentle Marcus Aurelius proved it well.[22]

C.58 The tragedy of Christ, the divine tragedy, is that of the cross. Pilate, the skeptic, the man of culture, tried to turn it by mockery into a farce, and devised that charade of the king with a reed for a scepter and a crown of thorns, saying: Behold the man! But the people, more human than he, the people that seeks tragedy, cried out: Crucify him, crucify him! And the other tragedy, the human, intra-human tragedy, is that of Don Quixote with his face lathered with soap so that the Duke and Duchess's servants might laugh at him—and the Duke and Duchess themselves, as servile as their servants. "Behold the madman!" they must have said to themselves. And the comic, irrational tragedy is the passion suffered through mockery and contempt.[23]

C.59 The highest heroism for an individual, as for a people, is to know how to face ridicule; better still, to know how to make oneself ridiculous and not be cowed by it.

C.60 That tragic Portuguese suicide, Antero de Quental, whose weighty sonnets I have already told you about, grieving for his country in the immediate aftermath of the English *ultimatum* to it in 1890, wrote[24]: "An English statesman of the last century, who was also, as it happens, a perceptive observer and a philosopher, Horace Walpole, said that life is a tragedy for those who feel and a comedy for those who think. Very well; if we are to end tragically, we Portuguese, *who feel*, let us far prefer that terrible but noble destiny to the one reserved—and perhaps in a not very distant future—for England, which *thinks and calculates*: the

21 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. See chapter LVIII of the Second Part of *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*, and the same chapter of my *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho*.
22 Christians were persecuted under the Stoic emperor Marcus Aurelius (reigned AD 161–180).
23 The lathering of Don Quixote's face at the ducal palace is in *Don Quixote*, Part II, chapter 32.
24 UNAMUNO'S NOTE. In a pamphlet that was to have been published on the occasion of the *ultimatum*, the manuscript of which is in the possession of the Conde do Ameal. This fragment was published in no. 3 of the Portuguese review *A Aguia*, March 1912.

destiny of ending miserably and comically."[25] Let us leave aside the claim that England thinks and calculates, as implying that she does not feel—there is an injustice in it, explained by the occasion on which it was written. And let us leave aside the claim that the Portuguese feel, implying that they hardly think or calculate, for our Atlantic brothers have always been distinguished by a certain sentimental pedantry. Let us keep the substance of the terrible idea, which is this: some, those who put thought above feeling—I would say reason above faith—die comically, and those who put faith above reason die tragically. For it is the mockers who die comically, and God laughs at them afterwards; and to the mocked belongs the tragedy, the noble part.

C.61 And, following in Don Quixote's footsteps, we must go out in search of mockery.

C.62 And shall we be told again that there has been no Spanish philosophy in the technical sense of the word? And I say: what is that sense? What does philosophy mean? Windelband, the historian of philosophy, in his essay on what philosophy is (*Was ist Philosophie?* [What Is Philosophy?], in the first volume of his *Präludien*), tells us that "the history of the name of philosophy is the history of the cultural significance of science." And he adds: "When scientific thought becomes independent as an impulse to know for the sake of knowing, it takes the name of philosophy; when afterwards unified science divides into its branches, philosophy is the general knowledge of the world that embraces the others. As soon as scientific thought is lowered again to a means of moral or religious contemplation, philosophy is transformed into an art of living or into a formulation of religious beliefs. And as soon as scientific life frees itself again, philosophy recovers its character of independent knowledge of the world; and once it begins to renounce the solution of this problem, it turns into a theory of science itself." Here is a brief characterization of the history of philosophy from Thales to Kant, passing through medieval Scholasticism, in which philosophy attempted to give

25 The British Ultimatum of 1890 forced Portugal to give up its claim to the lands between Angola and Mozambique.

religious beliefs a foundation. But is there perhaps no room for another office of philosophy—namely, that it should be reflection upon the tragic sense of life itself, as we have studied it: the formulation of the struggle between reason and faith, between science and religion, and the reflective keeping-up of that struggle?

C.63 Windelband then says: "By philosophy in the systematic, not the historical, sense I understand nothing other than the critical science of universally valid values (*allgemeingültigen Werten*)." But what values are more universally valid than that of the human will, wanting before all and above all the personal, individual and concrete immortality of the soul—that is, the human finality of the Universe—and that of human reason, denying the rationality and even the possibility of that longing? What values are more universally valid than the rational or mathematical value and the volitional or teleological value of the Universe, in conflict with each other?

C.64 For Windelband, as for the Kantians and Neo-Kantians in general, there are only three normative categories, three universal norms: the true or false, the beautiful or ugly, and the morally good or bad. Philosophy is reduced to logic, aesthetics and ethics, according to whether it studies science, art or morality. Another category is left out: that of the pleasing and the unpleasing—or the agreeable and the disagreeable—that is, the hedonic. The hedonic, according to them, cannot claim universal validity; it cannot be normative. "Whoever lays upon philosophy—writes Windelband—the burden of deciding the question of optimism and pessimism, whoever asks it to pass judgment on whether the world is more apt to produce pain than pleasure or the reverse, that person, if he behaves as more than a dilettante, is laboring at the phantom of an absolute determination in a field where no reasonable man has ever sought one." We must see, however, whether this is as clear as it seems—assuming that I am a reasonable man and do not behave as nothing

more than a dilettante, which would be the abomination of desolation.[26]

RELIGION AS TRANSCENDENT ECONOMICS

Religion seeks the salvation of the individual, the value that logic, aesthetics and ethics leave out.

C.65 With very deep insight, Benedetto Croce, in his philosophy of the spirit, set aesthetics as the science of expression beside logic as the science of the pure concept, and divided the philosophy of the practical into two branches: economics and ethics. He recognizes, in fact, the existence of a practical degree of the spirit that is merely economic, directed to the particular, with no concern for the universal. Iago or Napoleon are types of perfection, of economic genius, in this degree, and it lies outside morality. And every man passes through it, because first of all he must want to be himself, as an individual. Without this degree morality could not be explained, just as without aesthetics logic has no meaning. And the discovery of the normative value of the economic degree, which seeks the hedonic, had to come from an Italian, from a disciple of Machiavelli, who speculated so honestly about *virtù*, practical efficacy, which is not exactly moral virtue.

C.66 But this economic degree is, at bottom, nothing but the first stirring of the religious one. The religious is the transcendental economic or hedonic. Religion is a transcendental economics or hedonics. What man seeks in religion, in religious faith, is to save his own individuality, to make it eternal, which is achieved neither by science, nor by art, nor by morality. Neither science, nor art, nor morality demands God of us; what demands God of us is religion. And with a stroke of real genius our Jesuits speak of the great business of our salvation. Business, yes, business: something of an economic, hedonistic kind, though transcendent. And we do not need God to teach us the

26 "The abomination of desolation": a biblical phrase (Daniel 11:31; Matthew 24:15).

truth of things, or their beauty, or to secure morality for us with penalties and punishments, but to save us, so that he does not let us die utterly. And this singular longing, because it belongs to all normal men and to each of them—those who are abnormal through barbarism or through super-culture do not count—is universal and normative.

C.67 Religion, then, is a transcendent—or, if you like, metaphysical—economics. For man the Universe has, besides its logical, aesthetic and ethical values, an economic value as well, which, made thus universal and normative, is the religious value. For us it is not only a matter of truth, beauty and goodness; it is also, and above all, a matter of the salvation of the individual, of perpetuation, which those norms do not procure for us. So-called political economy teaches us the most suitable, most economical way of satisfying our needs, whether they are rational or not, ugly or beautiful, moral or immoral—a good economic deal may be a swindle, or something that in the long run leads us to death. And the supreme human *need* is the need not to die, to enjoy forever the fullness of one's own individual limitation. For if Catholic Eucharistic doctrine teaches that the substance of the body of Jesus Christ is wholly in the consecrated host and wholly in each part of it, that means that God is wholly in the whole Universe and wholly in each of the individuals that make it up. And this is, at bottom, a principle that is neither logical, nor aesthetic, nor ethical, but transcendent economic, or religious. And with this norm philosophy can judge of optimism and pessimism. *If the human soul is immortal, the world is economically or hedonistically good; and if it is not, it is bad.* And the sense that pessimism and optimism give to the categories of good and bad is not an ethical sense but an economic or hedonistic one. Good is what satisfies our vital longing, and bad is what does not satisfy it.

C.68 Philosophy, then, is also the science of the tragedy of life, reflection upon the tragic sense of it. And an essay in this philosophy, with its inevitable inner contradictions or antinomies, is what I have aimed at in these essays. And the reader must not

overlook that I have been operating on myself; that this has been a work of self-surgery, with no anesthetic but the work itself. The joy of operating on myself ennobled the pain of being operated on.

C.69 And as for my other claim—that this is Spanish philosophy, perhaps *the* Spanish philosophy; that if an Italian discovered the normative and universal value of the economic degree, it should be a Spaniard who declares that this degree is nothing but the beginning of the religious one, and that the essence of our religion, of our Spanish Catholicism, lies precisely in its being neither a science, nor an art, nor a morality, but an economy in the mode of the eternal, that is, of the divine—that this is what is Spanish, I say, I leave to another work, a historical one, at least the attempt to justify it. But for now, and even leaving aside explicit and external tradition, the kind shown us in historical documents, am I not a Spaniard—and a Spaniard who has hardly ever left Spain—and therefore a product of Spanish tradition? Of the living tradition, the one handed down in feelings and ideas that dream, and not in texts that sleep?

C.70 In the soul of my people, philosophy appears to me as the expression of an inner tragedy analogous to the tragedy of Don Quixote's soul: the expression of a struggle between what the world is, as the reason of science shows it to us, and what we want it to be, as the faith of our religion tells us. And in this philosophy lies the secret of what is often said, that at bottom we are irreducible to *Kultura*—that is, that we do not resign ourselves to it. No, Don Quixote does not resign himself either to the world or to its truth, either to science or logic, or to art or aesthetics, or to morality or ethics.[27]

C.71 "The thing is, with all this," I have been told more than once and by more than one person, "you would in any case only succeed in pushing people into the maddest Catholicism." And I have been accused of being a reactionary, and even a Jesuit. So be it! And what of it?

27 *Kultura*: Unamuno's mock-German spelling of *cultura*, aimed at German *Kultur* and its Spanish admirers.

C.72 Yes, I know, I know that it is madness to want to turn the waters of the river back to their source, and that it is the vulgar who seek the remedy for their ills in the past. But I also know that everyone who fights for any ideal whatever, even if it seems to belong to the past, pushes the world toward the future, and that the only reactionaries are those who are comfortable in the present. Every supposed restoration of the past is making future; and if that past is a dream, something poorly known... so much the better. As always, one marches toward the future; whoever walks is heading there, even if he marches backwards. And who knows whether this is not better!..

C.73 I feel that I have a medieval soul, and I fancy that *the* soul of my country is medieval: that it has passed, under compulsion, through the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Revolution, learning from them, yes, but without letting them touch its soul, keeping the spiritual inheritance of those times they call benighted. And Quixotism is nothing but the most desperate part of the struggle of the Middle Ages against the Renaissance, which came out of it.

C.74 And if some should accuse me of serving the cause of Catholic reaction, perhaps the others, the official Catholics... But in Spain these hardly notice anything at all, and busy themselves with nothing but their own dissensions and quarrels. And besides, what minds they have, poor things!

TO UNSETTLE EVERYONE

Unamuno's mission is to shake every faith and make everyone live restless and longing.

C.75 But the fact is that my work—I was going to say my mission—is to shatter the faith of the ones, and of the others, and of the third party: faith in affirmation, faith in negation and faith in abstention, and to do this out of faith in faith itself. It is to fight all those who resign themselves, whether to Catholicism, to rationalism or to agnosticism. It is to make them all live restless and full of longing.

C.76 Will this be effective? But did Don Quixote, perhaps, believe in the immediate, visible effect of his work? It is very doubtful. At least he did not, just in case, take his sword to his helmet a second time. And numerous passages of his story reveal that he did not really believe he would achieve, for the moment, his purpose of restoring knight-errantry. And what did it matter, if in this way he lived and made himself immortal? And he must have divined, and in fact did divine, another and higher effect of that work of his: the effect it would have on all who read his deeds in a devout spirit.[28]

C.77 Don Quixote made himself ridiculous. But did he perhaps know the most tragic ridicule, reflexive ridicule, the ridicule one cuts before oneself, in the eyes of one's own soul? Move Don Quixote's battlefield into his own soul. Set him fighting there to save the Middle Ages from the Renaissance, so as not to lose his childhood treasure. Make of him an inner Don Quixote—with his Sancho at his side, a Sancho who is also inner and also heroic—and then tell me about comic tragedy.

C.78 "And what has Don Quixote left behind?" you will say. And I will tell you that he has left himself, and that a man, a living and eternal man, is worth all theories and all philosophies. Other peoples have left us above all institutions, books; we have left souls. Saint Teresa is worth any institution, any *Critique of Pure Reason*.

C.79 The fact is that Don Quixote was converted. Yes—in order to die, poor man. But the other one, the real one, the one who stayed behind and lives among us, heartening us with his breath, that one was not converted. That one keeps urging us on to make ourselves ridiculous; that one must not die. And the other, the one who was converted in order to die, could be converted because he had been mad. It was his madness, and not his death or his conversion, that made him immortal, and earned him pardon for the crime of having been born. *Felix culpa!* [O happy fault!] Nor was he cured, either; he merely

28 In *Don Quixote* I.1 he tests his pasteboard visor with his sword and breaks it. He rebuilds it and, not wanting to test it again, takes it to be sound.

changed his madness. His death was his last knightly adventure: with it he took heaven by force, for heaven suffers violence.[29]

C.80 That Don Quixote died and went down into hell. He entered it with lance couched and set all the damned free, as he had freed the galley slaves, and he shut its gates. Taking down from them the inscription Dante had seen there, he put up one that said: "Long live hope!" And escorted by those he had freed, who laughed at him, he went off to heaven. And God laughed at him like a father, and this divine laughter filled his soul with eternal happiness.[30]

C.81 And the other Don Quixote stayed here, among us, fighting in desperation. Does his struggle not spring from despair? Why is it that among the words English has taken from our language, alongside *siesta*, *camarilla*, *guerrilla* and others, we find *desperado*, that is, a man in despair? This inner Quixote I was telling you of, conscious of his own tragic comicality—is he not a man in despair? A *desperado*, yes, like Pizarro and like Loyola. But "despair is mistress of the impossible," Salazar y Torres teaches us (in *Elegir al enemigo*, Act I). And it is from despair, and from despair alone, that heroic hope is born, absurd hope, mad hope. *Spero quia absurdum* [I hope because it is absurd] is what we ought to say, rather than *credo* [I believe].[31]

C.82 And Don Quixote, who was alone, sought still more solitude. He sought the wilds of the Peña Pobre, to give himself up there, alone and without witnesses, to greater follies in which to unburden his soul. But he was not so very alone, for Sancho went with him: Sancho the good, Sancho the believer, Sancho the simple. If, as some say, Don Quixote has died in Spain and Sancho remains, we are saved, for once his master is

29 "The crime of having been born" echoes Segismundo in Calderón's *Life Is a Dream*. *Felix culpa* comes from the Easter *Exsultet*, and "heaven suffers violence" from Matthew 11:12.

30 The inscription over Dante's gate of hell ends "Abandon all hope, you who enter" (*Inferno* 3.9). Don Quixote frees the galley slaves in Part I, ch. 22.

31 Agustín de Salazar y Torres (1636–1675) was a Spanish poet and dramatist. *Spero quia absurdum* turns around the saying *credo quia absurdum*, traditionally attributed to Tertullian.

dead Sancho will become a knight-errant. And in any case he is waiting for another mad knight to follow again.[32]

C.83 There is also a tragedy of Sancho. That Sancho, the other one, the one who went about with the Don Quixote who died, is not recorded to have died. Some believe, though, that he died stark mad, calling for the lance and believing that everything his master had abjured as lies on his bed of death and conversion had been true. But neither is it recorded that the bachelor Sansón Carrasco died, nor the priest, nor the barber, nor the duke and duchess, nor the canons. And it is with these that the heroic Sancho has to fight.[33]

C.84 Alone Don Quixote went, alone with Sancho, alone with his solitude. Shall we who love him not go alone as well, forging for ourselves a quixotic Spain that exists only in our imagination?

C.85 And we shall be asked again: what has Don Quixote left to *Kultura*? And I shall say: Quixotism—and that is no small thing! A whole method, a whole epistemology, a whole aesthetics, a whole logic, a whole ethics, and above all a whole religion. That is to say, a whole economy of the eternal and the divine, a whole hope in what is rationally absurd.

C.86 What did Don Quixote fight for? For Dulcinea, for glory, to live, to survive. Not for Iseult, who is the eternal flesh; not for Beatrice, who is theology; not for Margaret, who is the common people; not for Helen, who is culture. He fought for Dulcinea, and he won her, for she lives.[34]

C.87 And the greatest thing about him was that he was mocked and defeated, for it was by being defeated that he conquered. He dominated the world by giving it cause to laugh at him.

C.88 And today? Today he feels his own comicality and the vanity of his effort, as far as the temporal goes. He sees himself

32 The Peña Pobre is where Amadís of Gaul did penance for love. Don Quixote imitates him in the Sierra Morena (Part I, chs. 25–26).

33 Sansón Carrasco, a university graduate from Don Quixote's village, defeats him as the Knight of the White Moon and forces him to go home.

34 Iseult is Tristan's beloved and Beatrice is Dante's. Margaret (Gretchen) and Helen are Faust's loves in Goethe's *Faust*.

from outside—culture has taught him to objectify himself, that is, to estrange himself instead of withdrawing into himself—and seeing himself from outside, he laughs at himself, but bitterly. The most tragic character might perhaps be an inner Margutte who, like Pulci's, dies bursting with laughter, but with laughter at himself. *E riderá in eterno*—he will laugh eternally—said the angel Gabriel of Margutte. Do you not hear the laughter of God? [35]

C.89 Don Quixote the mortal, as he died, understood his own comicality and wept for his sins. But the immortal one understands it and rises above it, overcoming it without casting it off.

C.90 And Don Quixote does not surrender, because he is no pessimist, and he fights. He is no pessimist because pessimism is the child of vanity, a thing of fashion, pure *snobbism*. Don Quixote is neither vain nor conceited, nor modern with any sort of modernity—still less a modernist—and he does not understand what this business of *snob* means unless it is put to him in good Old Christian Spanish. Don Quixote is no pessimist because he does not understand what this *joie de vivre* [joy of living] is, and so he does not understand its opposite either. Nor does he understand futurist nonsense. In spite of Clavileño, he has not got as far as the airplane, which seems bent on taking not a few scatterbrains further from heaven.[36] Don Quixote has not reached the age of weariness with life. That weariness tends to show itself in the very characteristic topophobia of not a few modern minds, who spend their lives rushing at full speed from one place to another. They do so not out of love for the place they are going to but out of hatred for the one they come from, and so they flee from all of them. This is one of the forms of despair.

C.91 But Don Quixote now hears his own laughter, he hears the divine laughter. Since he is no pessimist, since he believes in

35 Margutte is a rogue in Luigi Pulci's comic epic *Morgante* (1483). He dies bursting with laughter at a monkey playing with his boots.

36 Unamuno plays on *hablar en cristiano*, "to speak plainly," and *cristiano viejo*, an Old Christian of supposedly unmixed lineage. Clavileño is the wooden horse on which Don Quixote and Sancho believe they fly through the sky (Part II, ch. 41).

eternal life, he has to fight. He charges against the modern scientific orthodoxy, with its inquisition, to bring in a new and impossible Middle Ages: dualistic, contradictory, passionate. Like a new Savonarola, the Italian Quixote of the late fifteenth century, he fights against this Modern Age that Machiavelli opened and that will end comically. He fights against the rationalism inherited from the eighteenth century. Peace of conscience, the reconciliation of reason and faith, is no longer possible, thanks be to a provident God. The world has to be as Don Quixote wants it, and inns have to be castles. He will fight with the world and will, to all appearances, be defeated, but he will conquer by making himself ridiculous.[37] And he will conquer himself by laughing at himself and making himself laughed at.

C.92 "Reason speaks and sense bites," said Petrarch. But reason bites too, and it bites at the very core of the heart. And more light does not bring more warmth. "Light, light, more light still!" Goethe is said to have said as he lay dying. No: warmth, warmth, more warmth still, for we are dying of cold and not of darkness. Night does not kill; frost kills. And we must set the enchanted princess free and destroy Master Peter's puppet show.[38]

C.93 And, my God, is there not pedantry in this too, in believing oneself mocked and playing the Quixote? The regenerate (*Opvakte*) want the ungodly world to mock them so as to be sure they are regenerate, since they are mocked, and to enjoy the advantage of being able to complain of the world's ungodliness, said Kierkegaard (*Afsluttende uvidenskabelig Efterskrift*, II Afsnit II, cap. 4, sectio II, B.)[39]

C.94 How can one escape one pedantry or another, one affectation or another, if natural man is nothing but a myth and we are all artificial?

C.95 Romanticism! Yes, perhaps that is partly the word. And it serves us more and better for its very imprecision. Against that,

37 Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498), a Dominican friar, preached reform in Florence and was burned for heresy.

38 In Part II, ch. 26, Don Quixote smashes Master Peter's puppet show to rescue the captive princess Melisendra.

against romanticism, rationalist and classicist pedantry has recently been unleashed, above all in France. Is it said that romanticism is itself another pedantry, sentimental pedantry? Perhaps. In this world a cultivated man is either a dilettante or a pedant: take your pick, then. Yes, perhaps René and Adolphe and Obermann and Lara were pedants... The point is to seek comfort in comfortlessness.[40]

C.96 Bergson's philosophy, which is a spiritualist restoration, at bottom mystical, medieval, quixotic, has been called a *demi-mondaine* philosophy. Take away the *demi*, and *mondaine* means worldly. Worldly, yes: for the world and not for philosophers, just as chemistry ought not to be for chemists alone. The world wants to be deceived—*mundus vult decipi*. It wants either the deception that comes before reason, which is poetry, or the deception that comes after it, which is religion. And Machiavelli said long ago that whoever wants to deceive will always find someone who will let himself be deceived. And blessed are those who play the dupe! A Frenchman, Jules de Gaultier, said that the privilege of his people was *n'être pas dupe*, not to play the dupe. A sad privilege![41]

C.97 Science does not give Don Quixote what he asks of it. "Then let him not ask it for that," they will say; "let him resign himself, let him accept life and truth as they are!" But he does not accept them that way, and he asks for signs, and Sancho, at his side, urges him on to ask. And it is not that Don Quixote fails to understand what is understood by the man who speaks to him in this way, the man who tries to resign himself and accept rational life and rational truth. No; it is that his real needs are greater. Pedantry? Who knows...!

C.98 And in this critical century Don Quixote, who has been infected with criticism too, has to charge against himself. He is a

39 *Opvakte*, literally "the awakened," was the Danish term for converts in the pietist revivals.

40 These are the heroes of Chateaubriand's *René*, Constant's *Adolphe*, Sénancour's *Obermann* and Byron's *Lara*.

41 Jules de Gaultier (1858–1942) was a French philosopher, known for his theory of "bovarysm."

victim of intellectualism and of sentimentalism, and the more spontaneous he tries to be, the more affected he looks. And the poor man wants to rationalize the irrational and irrationalize the rational. And he falls into the inner despair of the critical century, whose two greatest victims were Nietzsche and Tolstoy. And out of despair he enters into the heroic frenzy spoken of by that Quixote of thought who escaped from the cloister, Giordano Bruno. He becomes an awakener of sleeping souls (*dormitantium animorum excubitor*), as the ex-Dominican called himself. Bruno is the one who wrote: "Heroic love belongs to the superior natures that are called insane—*insane*—not because they do not know—*non sanno*—but because they over-know—*soprasanno*."[42]

C.99 But Bruno believed in the triumph of his doctrines. At least, at the foot of his statue in the Campo de' Fiori, facing the Vatican, they have inscribed that it is offered to him by the age he foresaw, *il secolo da lui divinato*. But our Don Quixote, the one come back to life, the inner one, the one conscious of his own comicality, does not believe that his doctrines will triumph in this world, because they are not of this world. And it is better that they should not triumph. And if they wanted to make Don Quixote king, he would withdraw alone to the mountain, fleeing the crowds who make kings and kill them. So Christ withdrew alone to the mountain when, after the miracle of the loaves and fishes, they wanted to proclaim him king.[43] He left the title of king for the top of the cross.

A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

Don Quixote's mission today is to cry in the wilderness; the book ends with a blessing.

C.100 What, then, is Don Quixote's new mission today, in this world? To cry out, to cry out in the wilderness. But the wilder-

42 Giordano Bruno (1548–1600), a former Dominican, was burned for heresy in Rome. His dialogue *De gli eroici furori* (*On the Heroic Frenzies*, 1585) is quoted here.
43 John 6:15, and "my kingdom is not of this world," John 18:36. The inscription on Bruno's statue (1889) reads, in Italian, "to Bruno, from the age he foresaw."

ness hears, even if men do not hear. One day it will turn into a resounding forest, and that solitary voice, settling in the wilderness like seed, will grow into a gigantic cedar. With its hundred thousand tongues that cedar will sing an eternal hosanna to the Lord of life and of death.

C.101 And now you, Bachelor Carrascos of Europeanizing regenerationism, young men who work in the European way, with method and criticism... scientifically: make wealth, make a nation, make art, make science, make ethics, make—or rather, above all, translate—*Kultura*. That way you will kill both life and death. For all the time any of it is going to last us...!

C.102 And with this—and high time too!—these essays on the tragic sense of life in men and in peoples come to an end, for now at least. Or at least these essays on the tragic sense of life in me—for I am a man—and in the soul of my people, as it is reflected in mine.

C.103 I hope, reader, that while our tragedy lasts we shall meet again, in some interval between the acts. And we shall recognize each other. And forgive me if I have troubled you more than was due and unavoidable, more than I intended when I took up my pen to distract you a little from your illusions. And may God deny you peace, and give you glory!

C.104 Salamanca, in the year of grace 1912.