

Interpretations at War: Kant, the Jew, the German

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AS WILL SOON BECOME easily apparent, the choices I have made for this paper bear a *necessary* relation to *this very place*: the university, an Israeli institution of Jerusalem. They bear a necessary relation to *this very moment*: the terrible violence marking once again the history of this land and pitting against each other all those who believe they have the right to inhabit it.

Why is this relation a *necessary* one?

Like other papers, mine will consist of a set of interpretive hypotheses on the subject, precisely, of the institutions of interpretation. Consequently it will stand, certainly and *de facto*, in a relation with an *institutional context*, the one which is determined today, here, now, by a university, a State, an army, a police force, religious authorities, languages, peoples, and nations. But this *de facto* also calls for interpretation and responsibility. I therefore did not think I should accept the fact of this situation passively. I have chosen to treat a subject which would allow me, while touching directly on the themes stated in the agenda of this conference (The Institutions of Interpretation), to ask at least indirectly, and as carefully as possible, some questions about what is going on here now. But although between the discourse I am about to hold forth and the current violence, here and now, the mediations required are numerous, complicated, and difficult to interpret, although these mediations call for as much patience as caution on our part, I shall not use them as a pretext to wait and remain silent before that which demands *immediate* response and responsibility.

I had already communicated my anxiety to the organizers of this meeting. I had expressed to them my wish to participate in a conference where Arab and Palestinian colleagues would be officially invited and effectively involved. The organizers of this meeting, Professors Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser, shared my concern. I thank them for the understanding they have shown in this regard. With all the gravity this requires, I wish to state right now my solidarity with all those, in this land, who advocate an end to violence,

condemn the crimes of terrorism and of military and police repression, and advocate the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories as well as the recognition of the Palestinians' right to choose their own representatives to negotiations now more indispensable than ever. This cannot be accomplished without unceasing, well-informed, courageous reflection. This reflection should lead to new or not-necessarily-new interpretations of what—three years ago, while this conference was being planned here—I had proposed to call the “institutions of interpretation.” But that same reflection should also lead us to interpret that dominant institution which is the State, here the Israeli State (whose existence, it goes without saying, must henceforth be recognized by all and definitively guaranteed), along with its prehistory, the conditions of its recent founding, and the constitutional, legal, political foundations of its present functioning, the forms and limits of its *self-interpretation*, and so forth.

As is evident by my presence right here, this declaration is inspired not only by my concern for justice and by my friendship toward both the Palestinians and the Israelis. It is meant also as an expression of respect for a certain image of Israel and as an expression of hope for its future.

I am not saying this, of course, in order to tailor my purpose artificially to some external circumstance. The call for such a historical reflection, anxiety-laden as it might appear, courageous as it must be, seems to me to be inscribed in the most strictly determining context of our meeting. It constitutes in my view its very sense—and its urgency.

I

Taking for granted familiarity with the advance text which defined the most general horizon of this paper,¹ let me state without further introduction the reasons which induce me to compare and contrast, in a manner still partial and preliminary, two German Jewish thinkers, in a highly determined politico-institutional context.

(1) Hermann Cohen and Franz Rosenzweig both assumed their Jewishness radically, although in opposite ways.

(2) Neither one of them was a Zionist, and Rosenzweig was even frankly hostile, so it seems, to the project of an Israeli state.

(3) Both having privileged the reference to Kant, both took a certain distance from Kant—a different sort of distance in each case.

(4) Although they belonged to different generations, they did share something of their time. Rosenzweig followed Cohen's teaching. He declared his admiration for the grand master of neo-Kantianism in a text that I shall quote shortly. He then moved away from Cohen, even turned against him, at least as far as his thinking about and relation to Judaism were concerned. He produced a critical reading of *Deutschtum and Judentum*, that text by Cohen that we shall begin to analyze in a moment.

(5) Two different generations, two different situations, indeed; and yet the two texts that will serve us as a guideline are more or less contemporaneous. Both date, as to the publication of the one and the preparation and "composition" of the other, from the war of 1914. Both are caught up and rooted in that war: in a war, one might say, which neither of the two thinkers has survived—not, in any case, to the extent of reaching the next stage alive, the next stage being the moment when Nazism casts over that whole adventure, over what I would call the Jewish-German psyche of the war of 1914, a revealing and at the same time a deforming light. The future-in-the-past may lead to retrospective distortions, and it may also tear down veils. Cohen died at the end of the war, in 1918, three years after the publication of *Deutschtum und Judentum*. Rosenzweig was struck with aphasia, then total paralysis from 1922 on, by a disease which was to cause his death seven years later in December 1929.

By way of introduction to this context, let us first read a tribute rendered by Rosenzweig to Cohen upon the latter's death in 1918. Noticeable at once is a certain mistrust towards this highly respected, great academic, this master of neo-Kantianism who had already left such a deep mark on German philosophy during the half-century separating two Franco-German wars (1870–1920). It is too often forgotten, when one is interested in Husserl and Heidegger, that this neo-Kantian sequence has largely determined the context *in* which, that is to say also *against* which, Husserl's phenomenology, later the phenomenological ontology of the early Heidegger (who, besides, succeeded Cohen in his Marburg chair—and this also marks an institutional context in the strictest sense), in a way arose: against neo-Kantianism and in another relation to Kant.

Rosenzweig recalls his initial distrust towards this great academic philosopher whose authority, in Jewish and non-Jewish circles, stemmed from a respectable professorial image which, having radiated its light from the University of Marburg, continued to do so from Berlin, where Cohen taught, in 1913, at another institution, the Institute of Judaism. The work published by Cohen during

those years bears an extremely Kantian title (in fact it is like the book of a Jewish Kant on religion within the limits of simple reason: *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums*) and was to have a certain influence on Rosenzweig. Rosenzweig had begun attending Cohen's lectures in 1913 with a limited, or rather a distrustful, interest. This distrust is directed first at a sort of institutional entity, "the marketplace of German academic philosophy":

I have attended Hermann Cohen's lectures only during the years when he was in Berlin. Apart from some occasional works on Jewish theology, I had read practically nothing by him. These few readings, which have left me with a dull impression without moving me and mostly with a growing distrust, gradually becoming systematic, towards everything on the marketplace of German academic philosophy that succeeded in mustering a handful of admirers, had dissuaded me from seeking better acquaintance with him. So I had no special expectations when in November 1913 I went to attend his course, driven not by keen interest but by mere curiosity.²

Distrust gave way to delighted astonishment. Certain points of the encomium recall or anticipate the experience that some have described of the encounter with Heidegger's teaching during the years immediately following the war. All of this tells something of his cultural context and his relation to academic philosophy. It is, then, a typical reaction, one whose typicality appears interesting here, for it amounts to saying, At last, here is a philosopher who is no longer a professional from academia: he thinks in front of us, he speaks to us of what is at stake in existence, he reminds us of the abysmal risk of thought or existence. Rosenzweig speaks of the sense of the abyss (*Abgrund*) in order to describe this experience. One expected a professor, and here is a man walking the edge of a precipice, a flesh-and-blood man, a man who does not forget his body. This *aura* surrounds the teaching of his successor, Heidegger, too, from its beginnings in the lectures of his early years. In those lectures he speaks of the university, he calls for a thought that, within the university, would be a thought of existence and not an abstract and comfortable, ultimately irresponsible exercise. And this is just Rosenzweig's language: where he expected to see a professor *in cathedra*, he discovers a man, a unique man sensitive to the uniqueness of each existence, a man and a body over the abyss:

I then had an uncommon surprise. Being used to encounter in chairs of philosophy intelligent people of fine, sharp, elevated, profound mind . . . I then met a philosopher. Instead of tightrope-walkers, showing off their more or less audacious, clever or graceful tricks on the high wire of

thought, I saw a man. There was nothing there of that disconcerting vacuity or of that useless character which seemed to me to encumber nearly all the academic philosophical proceedings of the period, and which forced everyone to keep wondering why such and such an individual among all others, why just this one went in for philosophy rather than something else. With Cohen, the question no longer arose, and there was an unflinching sense that he, for one, could do nothing but philosophy, that he was inhabited by that precious force which the powerful word compels to manifest itself. That which, led astray by what the present had to offer, I gave up looking for long since except in the Great Dead, that learned and rigorous mind that knows how to meditate over the abyss, of a world still plunged in the confusion of a reality threatened by chaos, that is what I all of a sudden met in Cohen, face to face, incarnated in a living speech. ("Un hommage")³

What is thus being revealed to Rosenzweig? A Jew, nothing less than the essence of the Jew, but also of the German Jew. And one cannot very well tell whether he is more purely Jewish because he is a German Jew or essentially Jewish and on top of that, by some accident or otherwise, also a German Jew. The ambiguity is remarkable; for it is with this German Jew, with a particular way of being a German Jew, Jewish *and* German (I shall return to one of Rosenzweig's letters which says, "Let us then be Germans and Jews. Both at the same time, without worrying about the *and*, without talking about it a great deal, but really both"), that Rosenzweig, like Scholem and Buber in a different way, will eventually break, despite the respect that Cohen still inspired, this great figure of rationalist German Judaism, liberal and non-Zionist if not assimilationist, this Jewish *and* German thinker.

For the moment, we can pay attention to the most salient features of this encomium of a German Jew by Rosenzweig. In the following paragraph we distinguish at least three.

A. As Scholem was to do later in a now famous letter addressed to him,⁴ Rosenzweig associates rather strangely and in just such a biblical manner the figure of the abyss with that of volcanic fire. Boiling over, eruption, gushing forth out of untold depths, mixture of water and fire, but especially the convulsive rhythm of the flow of lava—such is Cohen's speech.

B. Convulsion, the convulsive tremor which marks the rhythm of volcanic production and scans the jet or projection of lava, the ejaculation of liquid fire, is also the tempo of discontinuous rhetoric, and that too is Cohen's speech. In it Rosenzweig recognizes that caesura in rhetorical composition, the aphoristic quality of a speech that cares nothing for composition or is composed of an irregular

series of aphoristic interruptions. But he recognizes it primarily as a property of *Jewish* speech—an interpretation for which, as I do throughout, I leave him the responsibility.

This interruption, this interruptive quality in which Rosenzweig sees something essentially Jewish, calls for at least two comments.

(1) It ought to mark, as a circuit breaker might, the essence of the conjunction “and,” which not only defines the relation of the Jew to the German (“Let us be Jewish *and* German”) but also determines the Jewish in the German: ruptivity, a dissociative and irruptive power. The volcano is irruption, but irruption is that which the coming of an event initiates, rupture and hence interruption in the totalizing synthesis. We know that Rosenzweig’s thought is characterized first and foremost *both* by this thought of the “and” *and* by that within it which dislocates any totalizing synthesis. It does not forbid any in-gathering [*rassemblement*] but interrupts in-gathering by the *syn* of the synthesis or of the system, notably in the form of the State. The “and” of “Jewish and German” is perhaps a “*syn*” or a “*with*” but without an identifying or a totalizing synthesis. It carries disjunction as much as it does conjunction. It is this “lack of transition” which Rosenzweig believes to have noticed in Cohen and of which he will say that “nothing is more Jewish.” This has to do primarily with Cohen’s manner of speaking and teaching: lack of transition also, he notes, hence of mediation between thought and feeling, the coldest thought and the most passionate feeling. This “logic” is as paradoxical as that of the “and.” The lack of transition signifies omission of the middle term and everything that plays the role of mediation in a dialectic, whether by this word one means the process of being and absolute knowledge or of the art of language. But his nonmediation may translate itself into two apparently contradictory effects: on the one hand, discontinuity—the abrupt juxtaposition of two heterogenous elements, the relationless relation between two terms with no continuity, no analogy, no resemblance, not susceptible to any genealogical or deductive derivation; but on the other hand, and for the very same reason, the lack of transition produces a sort of immediate continuity which joins one to the other, the same to the same and to the nonsame, the other to the other.

(2) This disjunctive conjunction, this “lack of transition,” is a way of connecting without connection in rhetoric and in argumentation, for instance philosophical argumentation: “a single word or a very short sentence of five or six words,” he says. An aphoristic seriality, in short. Now is it not nearly at the same time as he writes this

about Cohen in 1918 that Rosenzweig himself, in an eruptive manner, like a series of brief volcanic tremors, writes *The Star of Redemption* on postcards, so it is said, while serving at the front? In any case, the conjunctive-disjunctive texture of this book clearly exhibits this rhythm: lack of transition, continuity and discontinuity, a style which is rather alien to that of the classic presentation of the philosophical system or treatise, an argumentation, a rhetoric and connecting devices unlike those which dominate the history of Western philosophy. This history, this philosophy, these canons, are quite familiar to Rosenzweig. He must have reasoned with them, then broken with them somehow, and not only to the extent of not becoming an academic.

(3) The tribute is not rendered to the writing but to the speech; it is addressed not to an author of books but to a man, a particular existence in which thought and feeling are one. The author left Rosenzweig cold and distrustful, the living speech surprises and excites him. This speech is enchanted as well as enchanting, and the rhythm-inflected motion of the body involves the hands as much as the voice. We know what attention Rosenzweig paid to phonic rhythm, especially Rosenzweig the translator, and not only in translating the Bible.

By what enchantment was this man's speech inhabited? His speech rather than his writings, which a certain distance tarnished somewhat. His speech gave the impression of a volcano smouldering under a smooth surface; as it would sometimes be weaving its web, placing itself squarely in the rigorous treatment of some problem, while the audience saw the flow of thoughts stream under the powerful brow, Cohen's personality would at a certain moment erupt like lightning, suddenly and without transition, unexpectedly and unpredictably. An attitude struck infrequently, a gesture of the hand—although he spoke with hardly a gesture, in fact it was necessary not to take one's eyes off him—a single word or a very brief sentence of five or six words and the sluggish flow would expand to the dimensions of an overflowing sea, the light of a world brought back to life from the bottom of the human heart would gush out of the web of thought. It is precisely the total immediacy of these eruptions which endowed them with a decisive power. This perfectly spontaneous boiling over of a pathos emerging out of underground sources, the close coexistence of the coldest thought and the most passionate feeling—*surely there is nothing more Jewish than this lack of transition*. In fact this German, this German Jew of such a straight, such a free, such an elevated conscience [or consciousness—tr.], was undoubtedly, in the deepest attachments of his soul, much more Jewish and purely so than all those who today claim with evident nostalgia that they are purely Jewish. (“Un hommage”; my italics.)

The last paragraph seems rather odd. I would underline its allusion to the system. The encomium emphasizes primarily Cohen's *uniqueness* and *solitariness*: he is *the only one* today, *the only one* of his generation to do this or that, he stands apart from the "crowd" and from "the crowd of his contemporaries."

What is he the only one to do? First, not to dissociate feeling and intellect. Thus he confronts the great problems of concrete humanity, of life and death. But since he never dissociates—that is his greatness and his uniqueness—he is the only one to propose a system. What does this mean? To propose a system is not merely to promise one, as has so often been done in the history of philosophy, it is to provide it. Cohen has a system, Rosenzweig seems to say. Not only does he have it, he provides it, he delivers what he promised, what others have promised without keeping their promise, or what others have provided without ever having had it. Cohen provides what he has, he has what he provides, and what he has and provides is the system. The system is his generosity, the sign of an overabundance which did not content itself with promising or having but was able to produce, to provide, in this case to teach.

Now, let us not forget, the author of *The Star of Redemption* directed his entire thought against or rather beyond the system—in any case, against or beyond systemic totality, especially in its Hegelian form. He cannot, therefore, simply praise a thinker for having promised, produced, or provided a system. The system may even well be that which cannot be provided, that which forbids the possibility of a gift, reappropriating it in advance and in a circular manner. The highest praise that he himself can confer, the most generous gift, is to have thought, to have allowed thinking *beyond* the system. Whether it is true or false, this at any rate is what he dedicates to Cohen's memory. But also to the Jew. For in this move beyond the system Rosenzweig believes he can recognize the Jew, someone who is not just the rationalist philosopher, the neo-Kantian of the Jewish religion of the Enlightenment, of the (Jewish) religion within the limits of simple reason, but the man of piety.

It is precisely there that his scientific personality is rooted and this is what distinguishes him from the crowd of his contemporaries. He was undoubtedly the only one of his generation, and even of the following one, not to have pushed aside with a falsely knowledgeable air the basic questions which humanity has always asked itself and which turn around the problems of life and death, the only one to have not given in to the weakness of wrapping them up in a tangled skein of feelings and intellectualism; on the contrary, he has met them in their fullest extent and true sense. It is therefore

impossible that there should have been mere chance in the fact that there too he was *the only one*, among those who during the past few decades continued to accord philosophy a scientific autonomy, *not only to promise a system but really to provide one*. It is precisely the fact that he did not avoid the essential thing which allowed him not to shirk the age-old obligation of the question of totality. He was able from the start, without having learnt it at all, to approach ultimate problems, that which, *beyond the system* led him, finally, during his last theological period, to an immediate confrontation with such questions. It is only then, in this septuagenarian, that the most profoundly child-like characteristic of this great soul made its appearance, "child-like" in the sense of the Marienbad Elegy: "therefore you are all, you are unsurpassable." And in fact, he was basically altogether simple. He was a pious man. ("Un hommage", my italics.)

This posthumous homage allowed us to glimpse the relation without relation (but in many respects exemplary for what interests us here) that existed between these two German Jews, neither of whom knew Nazism, neither of whom was a Zionist, but both of whom had undoubtedly so much to tell us, whether they knew it or not, about what was to follow after their death.

II

A few years before his death, in the middle of the war, the man whom Rosenzweig describes as a "child-like septuagenarian" writes a text entitled *Deutschtum und Judentum*.⁵ Following its publication in 1915, this essay was reprinted three times within a year. It became a sort of best seller in its class (ten thousand copies) and in 1924, in Berlin, was taken up again, with a preface by Rosenzweig, in volume 2 of the *Judische Schriften*. Another text by Cohen bears the same title and takes up the same arguments in a less polemical and a less political manner in 1916. As has often been pointed out, and the fact is well known, the concern with defining the relation between Germany and Judaism did not originate in this period. An enormous literature, which dealt also with the problems of emancipation, assimilation, conversion, and Zionism, had been devoted to it.

This text has been described as "*maudit*" (this is the word that the French translator, Marc B. de Launay, risks within quotation marks at the outset of his presentation in *Pardes* 5/1987). Professing a sort of German hypernationalism, alleging a Jewish-German symbiosis occasionally defined in terms which collide with common sense, it is addressed primarily to American Jews. Once convinced, Amer-

ican Jews ought to exercise the strongest pressure in order to prevent the United States from entering the war in support of England and especially of France, which, by forming an alliance with tzarist barbarianism, betrayed the ideals of the French Revolution. These ideals would be better represented by Kantianism and by German socialism (and let us not forget that Cohen is socialist). This text may well be "*maudit*"; condemned by Rosenzweig, Scholem, Buber, and many Zionists, it nevertheless does represent, in a form both learned and at times extravagant, well-worked-out, and excessive, something then typical of a certain Jewish-German intelligentsia, that very same class that would end up either in exile (often precisely in America) or in the camps some twenty-five years later (like Hermann's wife, for example, Martha Cohen, who died in Theresienstadt at the age of eighty-two). It is because he represents, in a manner so remarkably worked out, a certain type of militant patriotism in the Jewish-German community, it is also because to this end he mobilizes the Kantian reference, indeed the socialist, national, and neo-Kantian reference, that he seemed to me to deserve a special attention, a strategically motivated attention, in our context. At that period, during the First World War and probably the years immediately following it, the militant patriotism of Scheler or Husserl, for instance, belongs, all differences considered, to the same configuration. Such at least is the hypothesis.

This strategy also dictates to us a principle of selective reading in a text which deals with the whole history of the Greek, Jewish, and Christian West, the whole history of philosophy, literature, and the arts, all of Jewish and German culture, politics, law, morality, religion, the categorical imperative and messianism, the State and the nation, the army or school, and university education. By granting a privilege to the Kantian core of this text, we shall radiate around several Kantian or neo-Kantian cells. Neo-Kantianism in this case may mean two things: sometimes Kantianism as adopted and adapted, tailored or appropriated, sometimes a critique of the Kantian critique in Kant's name, Kantianism as a matter of right and inspiration which claims to be opposed to Kantianism of fact or to go beyond it. Kant against Kant, or Kant without Kant.

Let us go directly, by way of a beginning, to the clearest proposition, the firmest and, for us, the most interesting one: the close, deep internal kinship (*die innerste Verwandtschaft*) between Judaism and Kantianism. That is to say also between Judaism and the historical culmination (*geschichtliche Höhepunkt*) of idealism as the essence of German philosophy, namely the Kantian moment, the inner sanctum (*innerste Heiligtum*) which Kantianism is, with its

fundamental concepts (the autonomy of universal law, liberty, and duty). It is that same Kant of whom Adorno will say, in "Replying to the Question: Who is German?" that he is the best "witness" of the German tradition or the German mind.⁶ How then is this proposition maintained (especially §§ 6 to 12)? What placing-in-perspective, in other words, what historical contextualization is it which claims to justify such an interpretation?

It is first of all, within a comparative logic which has its own history and its own institutions, the argument of the *tertium comparationis*. In hazarding a comparison (*Vergleichung*) between different peoples or the spirit of different peoples (*Volkgeister*), one must avoid error and provide a legitimation for such a science of the spirit (*Geisteswissenschaft*). To this end one must make sure that the two terms had entertained an intimate relation, an intrinsic alliance (*innerliche Verbindung*) with a third term (*tertium comparationis*). The third term, in this case, is nothing other than Hellenism, most particularly Greek philosophy. Both Jewish and German idiosyncrasies have had fruitful, internal relations with Greek philosophy. Far from being placed in opposition to the Jewish, according to an old habit, the Greek is interpreted rather as consubstantial with the Jewish idiom, which presumably received from the Greek a new force and a new imprint (*Aufprägung*). This is not merely a relation of mixture, identity, or reciprocity (the "Jewgreek is Greekjew" in *Ulysses*). Cohen invokes here the great figure of Philo Judaeus. The exile of Judaism to Alexandria brought the destiny of Israel up to a worldwide level. It universalized it, cosmopolitanized it somehow in its world mission (*Weltmission*) without putting its foundations in question. This cosmopolitical moment has become essential to Judaism. Philo is supposed to have been Plato's Jewish heir who, through the logos, the new "holy spirit" (*heilige Geist*), paved the way for Christianity. The logos, which in effect acts as a mediator in Philo's philosophy, becomes the mediator (*Mittler*) between God and man, between God and the world. Undoubtedly Philo is not Jewish insofar as he is a Platonist. But this disciple of Plato's (and discipline here has an institutional character) dominates a Judeo-Alexandrian current which reconciles Hellenism and Judaism through the mediation of the logos and the holy spirit. This influence was not only speculative but also institutional. It marked the entire social life of the Jews. With respect to Alexandrian Judaism, Philo is supposed to have been not just a member, much less a "mentor" (as de Launay, reluctant to overburden the text, translates it with discretion), but a "*Mitglieder*"—a member in effect, and especially a *Führer*—a guide and a leader. To translate *Führer* as "mentor" is to

wish to spare this German hypernationalist text a disturbing connotation (might the Jews, too, have a *Führer*?), but it is also to neglect that which can be so current in the use of the word *Führer* in the German language.

The Neoplatonic logos then puts the seal on the Judeo-Hellenic alliance. It is also that without which the Church, the institution of Christianity, if not Christianity itself, is unthinkable. Now, by the same stroke, within the element of the logos and of Christianity, Greece becomes the fundamental source (*Grundquelle*) of Germanity. Whether they know it or not, willy-nilly, the Germans are Jews. At any rate it would be impossible to uproot Judaism from their genealogy. Whatever the violence or the artificiality of the syllogism, it would tend to whisper the following, which Cohen evidently does not say, at least not in these terms: there is in the German unconscious, that is to say deep inside the German spirit, a proposition which cannot be uprooted, destroyed, or denied, a German *cogito*—“*ergo sumus* all German Jews.” Cohen, for his part, assumes quite literally the middle term of the syllogism, the Christian logos which will serve as mediator between Judaism and Germanity, between the Jewish spirit and the German spirit.

This, once again, may be conscious or unconscious. This hypothesis of unconsciousness—which we would need in order to evoke a psyche that surely must have worked, to the point of genocide, as an ultimate murderous denial of origin, of resemblance and of a dark history of a crucified father or mediator—one cannot say that it is excluded by Cohen, even though he does not use the word “unconscious.” This word matters little here, since Cohen refers to a fundamental historical force (*Grundkraft*) which can never “run out or dry up” and to something which “never ceases to keep alive the original force by which it is imbued throughout the history of a nation.” It is, says Cohen in fact, “what must have repeatedly occurred (*ereignen*) within the relation between Germanity and Judaism, even if this relation was mediated by Christianity *at the turning points which profoundly marked the history of the German spirit.*” Cohen underlines this last part of the sentence: “*an inneren Wendepunkten in der Geschichte des deutschen Geistes ereignen*” (§2). A strong sentence and an odd one: it says that there is a German spirit, that this spirit has or is a history marked by events, decisive events, which constitute turns or turning points. At each turning point, each curve, each turn or bent of the German mind, an originary “force,” namely the Jewish genealogy or lineage, must have played a marking role. The German comes to terms (*auseinandersetzt*) with the Jew at each decisive turn of his history, in history as history of the spirit, and, in an

exemplary manner, as history of the German spirit. In coming to terms with the Jew, the German comes to terms with himself since he carries and reflects Judaism within himself: not in his blood but in his soul. Or in his spirit. Not in his blood, for this genealogy is not a natural but an institutional, cultural, spiritual, and psychic one. Assuming that in this argumentation race may be reduced to biogenico-naturalist schemas (let us keep in mind Rosenzweig's enigmatic thought of the blood), the question of racism is neither raised nor undoubtedly necessary. On the other hand, at least in this moment of the syllogism, Cohen seems already to appeal to a theory of the Jewish-German psyche: psyche, because the genealogy which somehow twins the Jew and the German, culminating in Kant, is not at all a natural, physical, genetic genealogy. Rather it comes down by way of the association of the religious and the philosophical, by way of that interlingual contract which consigns the Judeo-Hellenic heritage in line with the essential mediation of the logos to the form of an absolute logocentrism. What is in question is indeed a psyche, since that association is not natural but rather sealed within the whole semantic family of the logos: reason, discourse or speech, gathering, and so forth. Furthermore, it is indeed a psyche which is in question, not only a mirror, but a soul which holds the spirit, the holy spirit, without necessarily implying consciousness or representative knowledge. Cohen speaks of a force which acts at the great turning points of the history of the German spirit, but a force of which the Jewish or German "subjects" need not be conscious. Hence the need for a pedagogy, for a didactic analysis concerning that which alternates between sleeping and waking in that logocentered psyche.

We have barely begun our reading of this strange text. We have at least the sense of a text worked through by intuitions or by symptoms, by sensitivity to decisive symptoms later rationalized, interpreted often forcibly, artificially, in a naively ingenious manner, but then still according to schemas or gestures whose extravagance, indeed delirium, may well be saying something quite essential. One question might then be the following: in order to *render an account* (*logon didonai*, a Greek and Platonic formula invoked by Cohen on the next page) of the Jewish-German phenomenon (and who will deny the existence of such a "phenomenon?") in its often delirious forms, is it possible not to involve logic, the logos, in this delirium? Can one dispense with entering into it in order to give an account of it? How to avoid sliding into this psyche and its phantasy life in trying to explain, describe and speak of it? Is not *everything* artificial or in any case non-natural in what we are here calling psyche?

Let us try to make this series of questions more accessible by way of two distinct propositions pertaining to two different levels.

First Proposition

Perhaps it is unimportant to decide whether Cohen takes his story seriously or not, whether he believes in it or not. Undoubtedly he did seriously believe in it, but the question, precisely, is perhaps not there, as long as it remains concerned with the trivial determination of what such belief or such seriousness can be. If one were to prove to Cohen that all this is delirious, he might always say: but, after all, who told you that this was the "objective" truth and that I believe in it as in something objectifiable? I explain the German spirit, within the Jewish-German psyche which constitutes it. If, with the entire Judeo-Graeco-Christian underpinning which structures it, this psyche looks delirious to you, if it gives rise to some delirium, to all types of violence, to the highs (*Höhepunkten*) and the lows, the depressions, the crises, the historical turning points, the expulsions, the murders or the suicides, the reappropriations by emancipation or by genocide, well then, I am just telling you what this thing you call delirium is made of. And my discourse must appear delirious because it reflects a psyche which is itself a reflexive delirium. Whether I, a German Jew, believe in it or not, is an uninteresting or an irrelevant question. Whether or not my discourse is implicated in its object, that is a (positive or negative) sign which makes no difference for the interest of its content. Since we are dealing with something like the German spirit or the Judeo-Graeco-Christian psyche, we are not here involved in a plain instance of the scientific "subject-object" relation, as if my own discourse (which is also a discourse on the origin of the value of objectivity and a history of reason) ought to submit to the requirements of objectivity. You have the right to consider my discourse as a symptom of the madness it describes—this makes no difference for its value, its relevance as a *true symptom*, in some sense. If it is a symptom of what it describes, it is perhaps all the more revealing of the unconscious truth of which it speaks or—and this amounts to the same thing—which speaks through it. In this region, the symptom is knowledge, knowledge is a symptom. Between the two there would no longer be a borderline such as a particular rationalism—objectivistic, positivistic, or scientific—would like to impose, with as much artificiality as violence. And the artificiality of this violence cannot

come about except through institutions. There is nothing natural in it, by definition. This kind of rationalism has no understanding of the spirit or the psyche; it does not see that they cannot be made into an object. The object itself is caught in a structure of interpretation and institution, of “artificial” reflection, what we also call a psyche. Most notably, this form of rationalism (which we shall not confuse with reason itself or reason in general and will nonetheless interpret in the name of a certain reason, by no means in favor of some irrationalism) is amnesia itself, with regard to its own genealogy, that very same genealogy, Cohen might say, that we are describing here: all of philosophy, reason or the logos in its demand for rendering an account (*logon didonai*), indeed the principle of reason itself. Far from possibly becoming, Cohen might say further, the object of rational knowledge as a symptom of an alleged delirium, it is my discourse that renders an account of so-called objective knowledge. That is why a symptom may be true, true of a truth which it says and which is no longer of the order of positive objectivity. A little further on, in an even more hallucinated or hallucinating moment of his interpretation, Cohen writes: “Maimonides is, within Medieval Judaism, the symptom of Protestantism” (§9). The word translated as “symptom” is precisely *Wahrzeichen*.

Second Proposition

This region, in which the symptom has a chance of being truth, of speaking as the truth, is not one we can consider as merely a region among others. It is the one I am talking about, Cohen might say, and properly speaking, both for me and for those to whom I address myself, it is not a region. It is nothing less than the logos, that which is in the beginning and which holds together speech and reason. The logos speaks *of and by itself* [*de lui-même*]. *By itself*, that is to say spontaneously, on its own account, as a principle; for one need not render an account of that which is a principle and answers for itself. Of itself, for through my mouth, the logos truly speaks of the logos, of itself. Any claim to objective knowledge that one might wish to place in opposition to it is still nothing but a “logical” manifestation of it.

This “logic,” then, remains rather strong. For it is less a “logic” than the ambition to talk about logic, to say the truth about the origin of logic, namely the logos. There is perhaps a “meta-logic,” there is no meta-logos.

III

We have deliberately stuck to the initial *sylogism* of this discourse. It is indeed a sort of syllogism: being by [*auprès de*] itself, the being with (*syn*) itself of the logos which gathers and gathers itself [*rassemble et se rassemble*] in order to speak of itself. The originary syllogism of the logos itself when it produces its own logic. How and through what mediations can this originary syllogism lead one to conclude of the greatness of the German army, the necessity of mandatory military service, the duty of the Jews throughout the world to recognize Germany as their real homeland [*patrie*] and to prevent America from allying itself with England, with Russia, and with France, which betrayed its own revolution? We are only at the beginning and we begin, as is befitting, by the logos. But before going any further, and in order to understand the necessity of going further, we must perhaps worry ourselves with what, at first glance, looks like a sort of flaw in this deduction of the Judeo-German psyche. If the starting point for its constitution is the Greek logos, if the logos is its principal mediator allied with both Alexandrian Judaism and Christianity, a Christianity that has as much need of the Greek as of the Jew, then where has the German gone in all this story? How goes it with the German? Does he add anything essential to this plot? With this kind of logic, why not talk of the *same* psyche wherever Hellenism, Judaism, and Christianity existed? Given the wealth of that culture, but also the instances of historical violence to which it gave rise, why not be interested in a Judeo-Spanish psyche? Why not accord *it* a decisive role in the history of the West? I am not even speaking of a Jewish-Arab psyche, which seems to be excluded from the very principle of this powerful fable.

Although Cohen does not ask this essential question as such and in these terms, one can say that his argumentation does implicitly take it on. The point is to prove that not only is the German moment of this syllogism essential and necessary, but that there is no other Judeo-X psyche (Spanish, Italian, French—still less Arab, that is, non-Christian) which measures up to this syllogism. Briefly, there can be no Judeo-Moslem or Judeo-Catholic (Spanish, French, or Italian) psyche. The psyche we are talking about is not even Judeo-Christian in general; it is strictly Judeo-Protestant—that is to say, thanks to Luther, Judeo-German.

This, for at least two reasons.

The first is easy to formulate; it concerns a German tradition which survives as far as Heidegger: the German holds an absolutely

privileged relation to the Greek—descent, *mimesis*, and rivalry with all the consequent paradoxes. I have tried to approach one of these paradoxes in my reading of Heidegger.⁷ No other European people is supposed to share this competitive affinity with Greece. If the Greek tradition is safeguarded in a privileged manner within German culture and more specifically within German philosophy, then the syllogism implies the German spirit. Cohen emphasizes this already at the end of the first paragraph: “Now, as Christianity is unthinkable without the logos, Hellenism is one of its sources. *But thus, and with equal impact, Hellenism appears as one of the fundamental sources (Grundquelle) of Germanity.*”

The second reason concerns the deep and specific mainspring of this text, its rhetoric, the mechanics of proof and persuasion that happens to be at work in it, the one we are analyzing here while emphasizing the privileged reference to Kant. What happens to be at stake is nothing less than an interpretation of the sense of being. At a level and in a style that are not Heidegger’s—far from it—but that could call for some cautious analogies, Cohen intends an answer to the question of being. *He, too* (for the same may be said of Heidegger), does so through an interpretation of Platonism, an interpretation of the instituted interpretations of Platonism, of the Platonic logos, *eidōs*, and especially the *hypotheton*. This history of the interpretations gives a double privilege to the German spirit in its process of becoming, in the concatenation of its spiritual events, both philosophical and religious. It is on the one hand the privilege of German idealism, as a philosophy or, rather, as a moral consciousness of philosophy and science. It constitutes the ideal interpretation of Platonic idealism. It is on the other hand, and primarily, the Lutheran Reformation. The latter must be recognized as the religious form of the rationality that opposes the logos, the *eidōs* and especially the hypothesis to the dogma of ecclesiastical institution. One could consider the Reformation from this point of view as a critique of instituted truth, of the institutional dogmatism which freezes the interpretation of Scripture. This critique, in turn, can only, inevitably, give rise to institutions, and we could follow the progress of the Protestant motif in several modern hermeneutics. But this German Reformation would then be side by side with, on the side of, the *Aufklärung*—not opposite it. The French *Lumières*, which ought to be distinguished from the *Aufklärung* in this respect, were not able to oppose the Catholic Church. In allying itself with critical science, with the hypothesis, with doubt, with the history of knowledge, with the putting-in-question of institutional authorities,

and so on, "The Reformation placed the German spirit at the center of world history" (*Mit der Reformation tritt der deutsche Geist in den Mittelpunkt der Weltgeschichte*) (§7).

How does Cohen intend to prove this? The comparative method, when it comes to determining national spirits, appeals not only to the *tertium comparationis*. It is necessary for it to be interested also in the essential depth of each national spirit (*Nazionalgeist*), beyond extrinsic properties such as its political, social, moral determinations (in the sense of "mores": *sittliche Eigenschaften*), which are extrinsic properties. This depth manifests itself in spiritual culture: religion, art, philosophy. Pure science—for example, mathematics—is excluded from it since it is universal by essence. The reciprocal "influence" (*Einwirkung*) and "interaction" (*Wechselwirkung*) between Judaism and Germany will be analyzed in the element of this spiritual culture. Cohen begins neither by religion nor by art but by philosophy, which is "scientifically the most graspable" (*wissenschaftlich fassbarsten*). The question "Was ist deutsch?" which runs from Wagner to Nietzsche, Adorno, and so on, amounts here essentially to the question "What is German philosophy?" The simple, straightforward, unequivocal answer: the essence of German philosophy is idealism. "Was bedeutet aber Idealismus?" (But what does idealism mean?) The answer, as one may suspect, is more complicated than the question. It is this answer which assumes a historical displacement within what can safely be called an institution of interpretation, namely the dominant interpretation of Platonism. Idealism is no mere theory of ideas in contrast with the sensible or with matter, it is not an antisensualism or antimaterialism. Despite his maturity and his didactic precision, Plato did not determine the idea (*eidōs*) with complete clarity. If he asked the question of Being, of substance, of the eternal being [*l'étant éternel*], he used terms among which privilege was mistakenly given to those that referred to vision (*Schauen*) or to intuition (*Anschaung*) in accordance with the etymology of the word *eidōs*. The most fundamental determination, however, one which is to be found in Plato but has nevertheless been covered up and neglected throughout the renewals of Neoplatonism and the Renaissance, the one which founded idealism as a scientific project and a method, is the *hypothesis*, the concept of hypothesis. Without expanding on Plato's complicated discourse on the subject of the hypothesis and the anhypothetic, Cohen assumes rather bluntly the hypothesis, precisely, of an affiliation between the Platonic concept of the hypothesis and Kepler's astronomy or physics. Through Kepler, after him, German thought is supposed

to have given the authentically scientific idealism (which Platonism had not yet been) its full effectiveness.

The property of the German spirit plays itself in the interpretation of the sense of Being *or* the sense of the Idea. Heidegger linked (for example in his *Nietzsche*) the destiny of the German people also to the answerability [*responsabilité*] of this type of question. But one of the many radical differences between Cohen and Heidegger (his successor, let us not forget, in that institution, the University of Marburg), is that in the eyes of the former, *the interpretation of the Idea as Being is not German*, it is less German in any case than the interpretation of the Idea as hypothesis. This latter interpretation would be more "critical," it would suspend the naive ontology of the Idea in favor of its methodologico-scientific interpretation. For philosophical (that is, German) idealism must be a project of scientific philosophy: not science itself but philosophy as scientific (*wissenschaftlich*). Such is the answer to the question: "What meaning (*welche Bedeutung*) does it have for the characterization of the German spirit that the Idea should be known only as Being or as hypothesis?"

It is a subtle wrinkle. What is German is not science or the hypothesis. These, as we have seen, are universal. But the inaugural philosophical interpretation, the determination of the Idea as hypothesis, opening the problematic of scientific knowledge, *that* is supposed to be Platonic-German; *that* is the historical event which properly institutes and constitutes the German spirit in its exemplary mission, hence in its responsibility. If, as Cohen recognizes, science in its methodic hypothetic procedures is universal, if it is the "condition of all natural thought in human life, as in the historical conduct of peoples" (§5), the property of the German spirit and of philosophical idealism, which it has somehow marked, is to have *borne within itself* this universal possibility, to have made it come about by testifying for it. Here again lies its exemplarity.

It is thanks to this concept [the Platonic concept of the hypothesis] that Kepler developed his astronomy and his mechanics . . . it is through Kepler that German thought was able to make out of the authentically scientific *idealism*, founded upon the Idea as hypothesis, the moving force of science. . . . The sense of this introduction, which sets off from the hypothesis, will become clear later. Being is not grasped as an immediate datum—a prejudice on which sensualism is founded—but it is thought as a universal project, as a problem that scientific research must solve and whose reality it must prove. As a hypothesis, the idea is then by no means the solution of the problem, but only the exact definition of the problem itself. (§4)

What we have here, then, under the name of hypothesis, is indeed a determination of the idea as an opening to the infinite, an infinite task for "philosophy as a rigorous science" (this had already been for years the title of a famous text by Husserl) or else, Idea in the Kantian sense, an expression which was to guide Husserl too in diagnosing the crisis of European sciences and in defining the infinite task, but also in several other contexts, the most "teleologist" of his discourses.

Consequently, nor is it true *a priori* and in itself, still less is it the final truth; on the contrary, it must undergo the test of its own truth to be decided by this test alone.

That is why, in order to designate this method of the idea, Plato used another expression: that of *rendering account* (*Rechenschaftsablegung*) (*logon didonai*).

The idea (*idea*) is so far from being synonymous with the concept (*eidos = logos*) that it is only thanks to it and to the account it renders that the concept (*logos*) itself may be verified.

One understands now what depth this truly authentic interpretation of idealism reveals and guarantees to the deontological consciousness of scientific thought. . . . This procedure is the prejudicial condition of any authentic science and, therefore, of any philosophy, any scientific fecundity; but for all that, it is no less the condition of any natural thought in life in general, as in the historical conduct of peoples.

§6. This sober lucidity is the deep, true meaning of German idealism, which has always been the mark both of its science and its philosophy in their classic productions. From this fundamental feature of the scientific spirit we must now draw conclusions—by showing the validity of such a generalization—for the historical conduct as a whole and, more particularly, for the political conduct of the German people.

This movement leads, then, to Kant. Who is Kant? He is the holiest saint of the German spirit, the deepest, innermost inner sanctum of the German spirit (*in diesem innersten Heiligtum des deutschen Geistes*), but he is also the one who represents the innermost affinity (*die innerste Verwandtschaft*) with Judaism. This kinship is sealed in the most intimate depth and the most essential interiority. This seal is sacred, sacredness itself, the historical sacredness of the spirit. But if it is necessary here to insist on "*die innerste*," the innermost and most intimate, it is precisely because underlying this sacred alliance is interiority itself. This alliance is not simply internal like the spirit, it is concluded in the name of moral consciousness (*Gewissen*) as absolute interiority. It was surely made possible by the Greek third term or by the logocentered triangle of Graeco-Judeo-

Christianity; but it is at the moment of the Reformation that this Judeo-German kinship is born in being reborn [*en renaissance*]. It then experiences one of its many births, which, like German idealism, scan this teleological process, from Kepler to Nicholas of Cusa to Leibniz and finally to Kant. The Reformation, something irreducibly German in Cohen's eyes, places the German spirit "at the center of world history" (*in den Mittelpunkt der Weltgeschichte*). A rather indisputable proposition, if we accept a certain number of protocols, but one I shall not analyze here. In its spirit, this Reformation is presumably at bottom the faithful heiress of Platonic hypotheticism: respect for the hypothesis, cult of the doubt, suspicion towards dogma (and if you prefer also towards *doxa*) and towards institutions based on dogma, a culture of interpretation but of a *free* interpretation, one which, in its spirit, at least, tends to liberate itself from any institutional authority. The Reformation wants to render an account and justify (*logon didonai*). It holds nothing as established, it submits everything to an examination. To render an account of and to justify, the rendering of reason (*Rechenschaft*) and justification, this is the slogan (*Schlagwort*) of the Reformation. It is the exercise of the logos, of the *logon didonai*, or, in Latin, of the *ratio*, the *rationem reddere*. We might confront this schema with Heidegger's schema concerning a Principle of Reason which, after a period of incubation, finds the event of its formulation with Leibniz in order to dominate later on all of modernity. It so happens that Heidegger's text (*Der Satz vom Grund*) is also, among other things, a meditation on the institution of the modern university within the tenure [*mouvance*] of the Principle of Reason.

What does Cohen say when he names the event of Protestantism? He speaks cautiously of the "historical spirit of Protestantism" (*der geschichtliche Geist des Protestantismus*). This spirit is not to be confused with the empirical history of factual events; it is a current, a force, a telos. It is so strong, internal, and undeniable that even the non-Protestants, the Catholics and the Jews, must recognize it. It is as if Cohen were saying to the latter: become Protestant enough to recognize, beyond the institutional dogma, scientifically, rationally, philosophically, by consulting nothing but your conscience, the very essence of Protestantism, of this Protestant spirit that you have already become. The hidden axiom of this provocation is not only the paradox of some logico-speculative perversity. It is also like a grand maneuver: that of philosophy, of the conversion to Protestantism, of conversion in general. If you recognize that Protestantism is basically the truth, the very demand for truth beyond instituted dogma, the demand for knowledge and freedom of interpretation

without institution, then you are already Protestant in submitting to this demand for truth; you are such whatever the religious and dogmatic institution to which you think you otherwise belong. It is because you were *already* Protestant (and this temporal modality is the entire question of truth) that you converted. And you converted secretly, even if ostensibly, dogmatically, institutionally, you are Catholic, Jewish, Moslem, Buddhist, or even atheist. Likewise, you are Kantian but also Jewish, Jewish and German, the Jew himself being, as we shall verify, a Protestant and the Protestant a Platonic Jew, if only you are a philosopher and have within you, conscientiously [*en conscience*], the demand for hypothesis, for truth, for science.

Before proceeding further, let us try to formalize one of the laws of this "logic," such logic as is at work in Cohen's interpretation. Cohen analyzes not only alliances, genealogies, marriages, spiritual minglings of blood, graftings, cuttings, derivations. He does not analyze some chemico-spiritual composition of the German, the Jew, or the Christian. No, he has a thesis, which is also a hypothesis, an underlying and a substantial thesis, the hypothesis of any possible thesis on the subject of any spiritual genealogy of peoples, of any possible alliance among the spirits of peoples. What is this absolute hypothesis, which may ultimately resemble Cohen's anhypothetic, all the more so as it involves morality and the Good, that is to say the *agathon* where Plato located the anhypothetic? It is that the general possibility of spiritual kinships, of this general *economy* of the spirit, hence of spiritual families (*oikonomia* here names the law, the law of the family *oikos* as the *law*, period), the possibility of this genealogy *without limit* does not merely find an example or an application in the Judeo-German or rather in the Judeo-Protestant case. Judeo-Protestant Platonism or logocentrism is the very event which makes possible this general economy, this spiritual hybridization as world genealogy. I say, indeed, *world logocentrism*. "Logocentrism" is not Cohen's word, but I believe I have justified its use. "World" because spiritual worldwideness [*mondialisation*] is supposed to have its origin in this Judeo-Protestant psyche which, in the name of the logos, of the spirit, of philosophy as idealism, hence of knowledge and scientificity, as moral "consciousness of philosophy and science" (*Gewissen der Philosophie und der Wissenschaft*), would have become the "center of the world."

The abstract form of these propositions should not mislead us. This is an economic formalization, of course, and Cohen's language, too, is a composite one: extremely concrete notations together with the boldest metaphysical shortcuts. But some may be tempted, like myself, to translate or theatricalize these theorems.

This might perhaps produce the following scenario, and some would say: “Indeed yes, this is what is going on: if the process of things becoming worldwide [*mondialisation*], if the homogenization of planetary culture involves techno-science, rationality, the principle of reason (and who can seriously deny this?), if the great family of *anthropos* is being gathered together thanks to this general hybridization—through the greatest instances of violence, no doubt, but irresistibly—and if it becomes unified and begins to gather itself and gather not as a genetic family but as a “spiritual” family, trusting in this set called science and the discourse of human rights, in the unity of techno-science and the ethico-juridico-political discourse of human rights, namely in its common, official, and dominant axiomatic, then humanity does indeed unify itself around a Platónico-Judeo-Protestant axis (and the Catholics are already Protestant, as we have seen, just like the Jews: they are all Neoplatonic Kantians). The Platónico-Judeo-Protestant axis is also the one around which revolves the Jewish-German psyche, heir, guardian, and responsible for the Platonic hypothesis, itself relayed by the principle of reason. This unification of *anthropos* in fact involves what is called European culture—now represented, in its indivisible unity, by the economic-technical-scientific-military power of the United States. Now if one considers the United States to be a society essentially dominated, in its spirit, by Judeo-Protestantism, not to mention even an American-Israeli axis, then—one might go on within the same hypothesis—Cohen’s hypothesis concerning the Platonic hypothesis and its lineage would not seem quite so mad. If it is mad, this is because it translates the “real” madness, the truth of real madness, this logocentric psychosis which presumably got hold of humanity over twenty-five centuries ago, confusing or articulating science, technique, philosophy, religion, art, and politics all together within the same set [*ensemble*].” End of fable—or truth of the truth.

But from what external location can one claim to pronounce upon this truth of the truth? This logocentrico-Judeo-Protestant truth? Here is the entire question of what some people call deconstruction: a seism which *happens* to this truth, without one being able truly to decide if it comes from inside or from outside, if it is happening now or has always been happening, or in what sense and to what extent the label “deconstruction in America,” currently so widespread, is a fable, a rhetorical convenience, a metonymy, or an allegory. Is not history, in its hardest reality, its most murderous aspect, also made of these displacements of figures?

It is clear what additional [*supplémentaire*] reason I had for putting an allusion to the United States of America into the mouth of my imaginary interlocutor, this man both so sensible and so mad, this

man without place who still inhabits, and already does so no longer, neither the old world nor the new world. This is because the hypothesis about hypothesis, Cohen's anhypothetical hypothesis, is surely addressed, as an open letter, to all of mankind—and it is as such that it reaches us now, right here (and what is our here-and-now made of? How could we keep it in parentheses?). But the anhypothetical hypothesis was first meant for America, for the American Jews at a certain precise moment, during a real war inside Europe, but only a possible one between Germany and the United States. Cohen wants to prevent this war. He wants to intervene in order to avert the confrontation between two brothers, in any case two members of the great Judeo-Protestant family. He has even two other hypotheses on this subject, perhaps a hypothesis and a certainty, perhaps even two certainties: (1) If the United States enters the war, Germany will lose (and indeed this is what has happened twice). (2) Pressure exercised by the American Jews can determine the American decision: they are powerful in the United States and their link to Judaism is still very strong. It all seems as though the First so-called World War up until 1917, then the Second so-called World War up until 1941, so long as the United States did not take part in them, remained secondary, local wars. Why is that? Not for quantitative or geographical reasons, but because they had not yet split up the spiritual world; they had not yet pitted one against the other the two great sons or brothers of the family, the two major members of the great Judeo-Protestant body in the world, the two lobes of the Jewish-German psyche or of its powerful Judeo-American-German prosthesis. This psyche, as psyche has always done, guards the spirit. When it breaks between the United States and Germany, this war will be an enormous family feud, a dissension, a war of secession: not between *two* opposite blocks, X versus X, nor between Jews and Protestants, but between Judeo-Protestants and Judeo-Protestants. Cohen's rhetoric is being raised like a white flag: stop this fratricidal war. Would this Jewish, socialist, German, pacifist, nationalist, internationalist, and neo-Kantian philosopher have said that the Second World War brought about what he had feared, what already happened just before his death in 1917, namely a war within the spirit? Within the spirit as the spirit of philosophy, consciousness and conscience of science, the Judeo-Protestant logos under the charge of the Jewish-German psyche?

We have spoken of the soul—or psyche. We have spoken of the spirit—the German spirit, the holy spirit, the spirit of Judaism. But we have only alluded to consciousness, precisely to *Gewissen*, that conscience which is supposed to situate, in history, the becoming-

German of philosophy. As the authentic, full-fledged form of Platonic idealism, German idealism arises, in sum, with Protestantism, namely in the tendency to recognize no authority other than the authority of *Gewissen*.

On the one hand, idealism is the conscience, the *Gewissen* of philosophy and science. On the other hand, Protestantism commands us to put no trust either in the Church itself and its works, that is, in the institution, or in its priests, but "only in conscience's own labor" (*allein die eigene Arbeit des Gewissens*).

But to put one's trust in the incessant "labor" of conscience only is in the view of "religious thought" (*das religiöse Denken*) a double, equivocal gesture. And this partly explains how the German Reformation could have been at the source of an *Aufklärung* which, in contrast to the French *Lumières* and Encyclopaedia, does not go against faith. This is because the labor of conscience at one and the same time frees and encumbers religious thought. Liberation and overburdening at one and the same time. *Befreien* and *Belasten*, because in delivering it from dogmatico-ecclesiastical authority and the external weight of the institution, it charges conscience with taking upon its own self, all alone, a purely internal responsibility. It must *institute* itself, stand up and hold itself up all by itself, assume a faith offered to the blows and objections of knowledge [*la connaissance*]. Faith is like an auto-instituting decision whose authenticity seeks no external guarantee, at least not in institutions of this world. Whence the double sense (*Doppelsinn*) of this faith (*Glaube*) to which Luther appeals against the Church: an anti-institutional and an archi-institutional faith. Let us not forget, by the way, the enormous respect Luther has always inspired among the Jewish German intelligentsia. Rosenzweig and Buber, for example, when it comes to translating the Bible from Hebrew into German, consider Luther as the great ancestor, the formidable rival, the unequaled master. Rosenzweig speaks of him at times in a tone of crushed fervor.

In its double sense, such a faith constitutes idealism precisely insofar as it is opposed to the instituted data of the Church. But the Church will be reluctant to part with the force of idealism. Thus, at least as a polemical pretext, it too internalizes that which contests it, both from without and from within, from an outside which precisely claims the authority of the inside, of the most intimate *Gewissen*. After having up to a certain point consecrated the Reformation, the Church assigns itself a duty (*Pflicht*) of justification (*Rechtfertigung*, which refers back to *logon didonai*). This duty of justification is the only source of bliss, of salvation (*Seligkeit*). It confers on religion a new authenticity, a new truth, a new truthful

truth, a truthfulness (*Wahrhaftigkeit*). This is a historical event, since this truthfulness or this authenticity is new. Such an event institutes a new relation of religion to truth as truthfulness, as authenticity rather than as truth of correspondence in the sense of science or of objective knowledge. This instituting event, whose reach cannot be overestimated, makes faith (*Glauben*) come alive to its authenticity. By the same token, it assigns a "new destination" (*eine neue Bestimmung*) to the German spirit.

The concept of *Wahrhaftigkeit* is clearly an ambiguous one. It signals simultaneously both towards the true and towards the truthful, both towards the truth of knowledge [*connaissance*] and towards the authenticity of a certain existence, here existence in a state of faith. The Reformation exposes the quick, it vivifies in modern man (and in sum Cohen raises the question of modernity, it may even be said that he claims to define the advent of Modern Times [*Temps Modernes*]) two types of certainty (*Gewissheit*). (Let us not forget that for Heidegger, who would rather tend to suspect it, the value of certainty, which he associates rather with the idealism of the Cartesian *cogito*, also marks the advent of a certain modernity.) It is better to retain here the German word *Gewissheit*. Unlike "certainty" [*certitude*], it maintains a certain communication between knowledge (*Wissen*), science (*Wissenschaft*), conscience (*Gewissen*), self-consciousness (*Selbstbewusstsein*) and certainty (*Gewissheit*). There is the *Gewissheit*, the certainty of scientific knowledge, and there is the *Gewissheit* in the realm of faith. As soon as the questions of faith are no longer exposed to skepticism, as they might have been when only the dogmatism of the ecclesiastical institution guaranteed them, they are gathered together and held fast (*zusammengefasst und festgehalten*) within a doctrine of morality, as that very doctrine (*als Lehre der Sittlichkeit*). Henceforth morality stands on the side of religion, side by side with it, flush with religion, inseparable from a sort of "religion within the limits of simple reason," as Kant the *Aufklärer* might say. Morality is no longer the rival but the ally of religion. Religion is no longer the "wretch" that the French *Lumières* (still too Catholic because anti-Catholic, and I can add: too French in 1915!), with Voltaire, wished to get rid of. The ideal of Protestantism structures and founds the cultural and scientific consciousness of the modern nations on these two types of *Gewissheit*. Consequently, the development of ethics, like that of religion, becomes conditioned by this idealism of modern culture. Without it there is no rectitude or justice (*Aufrichtigkeit*), no honesty, no personal conscience for the man of modernity.

What becomes of Judaism in all this?

If it is not prepared in a scientific manner, if it does not stem from positive science itself, idealism tends naturally toward philosophical speculation. That is to say also toward ontology and the thought of being itself. Now Judaism begins by the self-presentation of God in the burning bush. God said: "*Ich bin der Ich bin.*" In translating the Hebrew formula into German, Cohen notes that the tense of the original version is marked by the future. God names himself, he calls himself *being*. But he calls himself (into) being in the future, a future which is not simply the modification of a present, just another present yet to come. And this being yet to come is unique. Cohen goes on to translate the "*Ich bin der Ich bin*" without any further precaution, into the Platonic idiom: God is being, he alone; there is no being beside him; any other being, "as Plato would say (*wie Platon sagen wurde*) is but pure appearance; a mere phenomenon (*Erscheinung*)." God is being; it is in him that the world and humanity have their foundation, that which guards and maintains them. Judaism would thus merge with Platonism, Yahweh with the *agathon* or the *anhypotheton*. Like the Good, God escapes any image, any comparison, any perception. He remains unrepresentable. The purely intuitive thought relating to him is not a thought of knowledge (*Denken der Wissenschaft*), but a thought of love (*Denken der Liebe*): "The knowledge of God is love," says Cohen. Love is presumably the authentic word for faith in reformed biblical language. This is the Greco-Platonic Eros, at the source of knowledge and of the aesthetic sense. This is also the vocabulary of so many Christian texts, primarily evangelical ones.

Hence the initial kinship of Judaism with Idealism. This kinship is explored and developed, from Philo to the twelfth century with Maimonides, the source of the great scholastics, of Nicholas of Cusa in his doctrine of divine attributes and of Leibniz, who also quotes him when he speaks of the divine being. Hence this odd formula: Maimonides is the "symptom" (the revealing sign, the mark, *Wahrzeichen*) of a Medieval Jewish Protestantism. There was presumably a Jewish Reformation before the letter of the Christian Reformation. Maimonides is its proper name; he is the emblem and the seal of the alliance between these two Reformations. Between them, he signs for the first time the alliance or the contract. It is the figure of the first signatory or the first delegate to the signing of this alliance, an alliance which forms the Jewish-German psyche, the mirror or the reflexive consciousness of modernity. All of this goes with the grain of an "authentic" (*echten*) Platonic idealism.

Oh, if Maimonides had only known, if he had only seen himself in advance carried away along the course of this fantastic cavalcade, this galloping of a Jewish-German historian of philosophy, running through all of Western history in one breath without stopping for a single moment, all in front of an American public! If he had only known, he who considered himself rather Judeo-Maghrebian, Judeo-Arab, or Judeo-Spanish, that one day he would see himself recruited for this strange struggle, having unwittingly signed an alliance with post-Lutheran Germany, having consigned the great Jewish alliance to that alliance between the two alleged Reformations, would his soul rest in peace? I mean, would his psyche? And if only Plato had known? If all of them had?

Their protesting against Cohen, that is to say against Protestantism, would not perhaps have been quite unjust. But who can say that it would have been quite right [*dans le vrai*] for all that? For ultimately what is the truth in this case? Is it not precisely a matter of interpreting the truth of truth itself in the origin of its institution?

How does Cohen rationalize this recruitment of Maimonides for the Jewish-German cause? He does not rationalize; he thinks he does not have to. He speaks of reason itself—and of the historical institution of rationalism. Although he does not challenge the religious institutions, as Luther might do, Maimonides still seeks the foundations of religion. He founds religion upon a grand, rigorous rationalism. It is in the name of reason that he founds the Jewish Reformation.

When it comes to Maimonides, an abstention by Cohen may seem astonishing. In this text, which overflows with learning and cites just about every canonized philosopher (provided he is not French, with the exception of Rousseau, of whom we shall speak later), one philosopher is never named. No significant place is recognized for him. He is, however, a great rationalist philosopher, Jewish in his own way, and precisely a critic of Maimonides: Spinoza. Cohen knows him well, he has written about him a great deal. Why doesn't he grant him any place? Here is a feature that he will have in common with Heidegger in what is for both a meditation on the *logon didonai* and on the Principle of Reason. There would be a great deal to say about this common silence. All the more so since Cohen talks abundantly about Mendelssohn. This is particularly difficult to do without mentioning the man who for Mendelssohn was a master, a disputed one, no doubt, but still a master. The last lines of the article seem to take aim at a certain Spinozism, without naming Spinoza, as if to excommunicate it from the Jewish-German

psyche, along with mysticism and pantheism. At the moment of celebrating the unity of the unique God, Cohen writes: "The future of German culture (*Gesittung*) rests on the force that the national spirit can muster to resist all the charms of mysticism, but also the pantheistic illusions of monism: our future depends on the ability to comprehend in their pure rational difference both nature and morality, 'the starry sky above me and the moral law within me,' and not to seek their unity (unification, *Vereinigung*) except in the idea of the one God."

The absence of Spinoza seems all the more blatant since Cohen speaks of a religion and a morality founded upon the love of God and on Pauline law: these are also the essential motifs of the *Theologico-Political Treatise*.

Cohen will have often named the *spirit*: the German spirit and the Holy Spirit. I, for my part, have often spoken of a Jewish-German psyche, of symbiosis or spiritual alliance. But has Cohen said nothing of the soul, of the Jewish or the German soul, of the Jewish psyche or the German psyche? We are coming to it.

There are presumably two principles of Judaism. One is God's oneness, the other that of the "purity of the soul" (*Reinheit der Seele*). The Jewish morning prayer says: "My Lord, the soul you gave me is pure. You created it, you formed it inside me, you breathed it into me [and the psyche is breath], you preserve it inside of me and it is you who will take it back again some day in order to return it to me in the life to come." The purity of the soul, says Cohen, is the "foundation pillar" (*Grundpfeiler*) of Jewish piety. Hence the immediacy of the relation to God, without intercessor, without mediator. After Maimonides, Cohen cites another Jew, Ibn Ezra, the earliest and the most important among the critics of the Bible. The authority of this Ibn Ezra, let me note in passing in order to recall Spinoza once more, is invoked at some length in the *Theologico-Political Treatise*, particularly in Chapter 8, when the issue is the authorship of the Holy Scripture, especially of the Pentateuch. Everybody used to believe it was Moses, notably the Pharisees, who resorted to an accusation of heresy against anyone who doubted this. Ibn Ezra, however, "a man of a rather free spirit and of immense erudition, says Spinoza, was the first who, to my knowledge, has noticed this prejudice." But he dared not say so openly, and in order to dodge what was also the authority of an institution, he said it cryptically. Spinoza meant to lift this self-censorship and disclose his true intentions.

What, however, does Ibn Ezra say, the one whom Cohen now

cites? One of his maxims states that there is no mediator between God and man other than human reason. The Holy spirit is equally man's spirit as it is God's. Man's spirit is holy because the holy God deposited it in him. Involved in the spirit are both the reconciliation (*Versöhnung*) between God and man and the redemption of sins: purity of soul and holiness of spirit. Quoting one of David's psalms, Cohen means to show (§11) that, in Judaism, redemption assumes a concept of human psyche.

This Jewish concept of the soul implies an immediate relation to a unique God. No mediator is necessary. But if it permits an understanding of freedom and of what morality assumes of freedom, how can this philosophy of immediacy account for duty, obligation, commandment? What is to be made of the law, so essential to Judaism after all? Cohen's way of posing and resolving the problem in three sentences (a war is on) is marvelous. A marvel of elliptical simplification, not to say distressing simple-mindedness, the more so when one knows that this economy conceals enormous exegetic problems, hermeneutic debates still open despite the libraries and the institutions growing rich by them by the day. Cohen knows them well, he inhabits them, teaches in them, and occasionally writes about them.

What does he say? The following: I have just shown a "point of support" (*Stützpunkt*) of Idealism, but there is another fundamental conception (*Grundgedanke*) of Judaism. Since Paul, it has been opposed to the former through the concept of the law. This is a single sentence, in the beginning of §12. It is true that in very well-known and extremely complex texts (which, moreover, Spinoza interprets in his way around the problem of circumcision in Chapter 3 of the *Treatise*), Paul says some rather negative things about obedience to the law in Judaism, at least to the external and transcendent law which is supposed to be at the origin of sin and to which Paul opposes love and internal law.

The fundamental thought of Judaism, if there is one and if one interprets along with Cohen, would thus be stretched between two poles: freedom of the soul in the immediate relation to God, respect for transcendent law, duty, and commandment. Now, who has done this? Who has thought, *en bloc*, like a single revolution, that which revolves about these two poles, both freedom and duty, autonomy and universal law? Kant, and this thinker presumably delved deep into Judaism, into its spirit or its soul. Since he is the holiest saint of the German spirit, it is in "this innermost sanctum of the German spirit" (*in diesem innersten Heiligtum des deutschen Geistes*) that we find "the innermost kinship" (*die innerste Verwandtschaft*) or affinity of the

German spirit with Judaism. "Duty is God's commandment, and in Jewish piety, it must be on an equal footing, for the free service of love, with respect [here not *Achtung*, Kant's word, but *Ehrfurcht*]: for the love of God in the love of men." The spiritual consanguinity, the psycho-spiritual symbiosis is sealed in the *Critique of Practical Reason* and in everything which accords with it in Kant's work and elsewhere.

The gesture is not new. Kant's thought, whose Protestant descentance is so evident, has very rapidly been interpreted as a profound Judaism. It may be recalled both that he was saluted as a sort of Moses and that Hegel saw in him a shameful Jew.⁸ This philosophical anti-Semitism or rather this anti-Judaism will reappear, with scarcely different motivations, in Nietzsche's *contra* Kant. On the other hand, *Religion within the Limits of Pure Reason* does resemble that Judeo-Reformationist *Aufklärung* of which Cohen speaks. *The Critique of the Faculty of Judgment* describes the exemplarity of the Jewish experience in its relation to the sublimity of moral law. The fact that the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* includes at least one properly anti-Semitic note (literally anti-Palestinian) is not incompatible with Kant's quasi-Judaism. Besides, what is anti-Semitism not compatible with? This is a terrible question, for it is directed at Jews, at those who call themselves such, as well as at non-Jews, at the anti-Semites and at those who are not such, still more perhaps at the philo-Semites. Without being able to formalize here the strange logic of this question, or prove that one is not to expect any positive and determinate answer, I would say only that the essential excess [*démesure*] of this thing called anti-Semitism makes itself known in it. It has a form and it does not have one. Its form consists in deforming and de-limiting itself ceaselessly in order to make contracts with everything that is opposed to it. Instead of deploying this logic, which we cannot do here, let us make do with an image and a fact: the tribute of a bouquet of flowers which, during a public demonstration in Nice, the Jewish militants of the Front Populaire thought fit to present to Mr. Le Pen (the man who dared speak of a "detail" in relation to the Shoah and captured 14 percent of the vote in the first round of the latest presidential election in France). One can explore all the possible combinations implicit in the positions thus taken, and the matrix of strategies gathered together in this bouquet.

Cohen, whether he wants to or not, presents at each moment a bouquet to all the dormant—or rather ever-wakeful—Le Pens, who do not concern themselves overmuch with detail. Concerning details and anti-Semitism in its most visible empirico-political manifestation,

Cohen is well aware that at the very moment he is writing to celebrate his sense of sublime sacredness and of moral law, this German culture or society practices, officially and institutionally, legal anti-Semitism. This anti-Semitism touches Cohen quite closely in his own institution: it takes the form of excluding Jewish students from corporate student associations. Cohen devotes to it no more than a brief allusion, and this in no way disorganizes his discourse, which would like to remain "spiritual," not factual. He claims not to be able to embark on this question "in detail" (*wir hier keine Einzelförderungen aufstellen*) (§42). There is a war on, this is not the time to open fronts at home, national and Jewish-German solidarity must come first, we shall see later, there is still progress to be made, our Jewish American coreligionists are well aware of this (and it is true that a certain *numerus clausus* was for a long time applied to Jews in a practically official manner in the United States, and in fact still after the Second World War with regard to full professors in Ivy League universities). Cohen is aware then, as a university professor (and, to recall once more, he was the first Jewish professor of that rank in Germany), of the existence of this embarrassing detail, the exclusion of Jewish students from the corporate community. He puts the analysis off: "We are living in the great German patriotic hope that the unity between Judaism and Germany, to which all the past history of German Jewry committed itself, should finally be brought to full light and radiate, like a *truth of cultural history* [my italics] in German politics and in life but also in the feeling of the German people [*im deutschen Volkgefühl*: we shall return to *Gefühl* shortly]" (§41).

This already amounts to recognizing that the psycho-spiritual truth, like the truth of cultural history, is not yet incarnated in historical effectivity: the truth has not yet been recognized. Cohen goes on:

§12. We have no intention of examining here in detail that complex question (*diese komplizierte Frage*) of determining in what way the conditions of national cohesion [rather than consensus, as one might say: *nationale Einmütigkeit*] must be rooted in social life. However this may be, the great educational establishments which are the universities ought to make it their imperative duty [unconditional: *unbedingte Verpflichtung*], in view of the dignity and the preservation of the sense of national honor, to eliminate, without any further formality, because it goes "against good manners" (*gegen die guten Sitten*), the exclusion of Jewish students from student associations and corporations. This exclusion damages in the first place the respect [*Achtung* this time] due to the Jewish teachers. He who does not hold me worthy

of his socio-academic community [and here, in an exemplary manner, the professor uses the first person], should also not follow my lectures and disdain my teaching. This demand is then pressingly directed at the academic authorities as well as at the students having the benefit of their academic freedom.

In all logic, Cohen couldn't but appeal to academic freedom. In a manner equally formal and perverse, it was in the name of this freedom that the exclusion was practiced: one has the right to set freely the conditions of association. Cohen's appeal is at the same time both very dignified and somewhat humiliating: first for himself, but also for the Jewish students, whose rights would have to be protected and guaranteed by the prestige or the authority of the great Jewish professors.

But this, for him, is only a contextual and an institutional question. It remains a relatively minor question; dealing with it "in detail" may be put off until later. What counts, in the order of urgencies of a time of war, is the most fundamental thing, namely Judeo-Kantian law and its correlation to the freedom, the autonomy of the subject as spirit, soul, and conscience [or consciousness, *conscience*]. The choice here is not between two realms [*ordres*] of interpretation and institutionality, since what I call the Judeo-Kantian also belongs to the realm of historical events. These do not go without instituting moments and are always incarnated, if we can follow Cohen, in peoples, nations, languages, and even in juridico-political structures. We shall come to this. As the deepest foundation of all morality, God's law is also the foundation of legal justice [*droit*] and the State. The Mosaic code [*le droit mosaïque*] has always been recognized, even if, when Grotius's jurismaturalism first arose, it was rejected on account of its formal justifications. In fact, this divine law and this Mosaic code were, according to Cohen, at the origin of legal justice. They have made possible the correct [*juste*] establishment, the institution of legal justice, and first of all the juridical sense. The latter exhibits some analogy, at a level other than that of the moral law, with the sense of respect defined by Kant. It commands the universal consciousness of rightness [*conscience universelle du juste*], even beyond the Judeo-Christian cultures, for instance in Islam (here Cohen cites Trendelenburg, author of a *Naturrecht* [1860]). By uniting freedom and duty in "personality," Kant states simultaneously both the difference and the intimate link, a new "Verbindungslinie" between ethics and religion. In religion, this new "line of alliance" gathers together "the soul and the spirit" (*die Seele und der Geist*).

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Kant, the Jew, the German. In this title, then, none of the attributes can be made minor, none is more essential. This is a cosubstantial reciprocity rather than a coattribution. This fundamental identification or this substantial alliance may rather be said to be *subjectal*. It is in the very subjectivity of the Kantian subject, of man as a subject of morality and justice [*droit*], free and autonomous, that the Jew and the German are associated. Their *socius* (alliance, spiritual symbiosis, psyche, and so on) is that very *socius* which makes of the *subjectum* a moral being and a legal being [*un être de droit*], a freedom, a person.

At this point, a leap seems to me to be required in this reading. It is necessary to bring out the strategy and the pragmatics of this text, the contextual and institutional aim of its rhetoric, at the moment when a new line of alliance between the soul and the spirit has just been named. This will permit us also to recall that German, if not Jew, is also German as a language, German as it is spoken.

Cohen's strategy aims at demonstrating to all the Jews of the world, primarily but not only to American Jews, that the universality of the moral subject came to be rooted in an event: the history of the German spirit and the German soul. So that Germany is the true homeland of every Jew in the world, "the motherland of their soul (*das Mutterland seiner Seele*)."¹ If religion is their soul, the homeland of their soul is Germany. The old accusation against Jewish internationalism or cosmopolitanism rests upon an obscure prejudice. We ought not to take it into account when we wish to elucidate questions of principle. If there is a Jewish internationalism, this is insofar as all the Jews of the world have a common homeland for their psyche (*Seele*). This homeland, however, is not Israel but Germany: "I believe that, if we abstract the problem of naturalization (*Naturalisierung*), the Jews of France, England, and Russia are bound by obligations of piety (*Pflichten der Pietät*) toward Germany; for it is the motherland of their soul, if however religion is their soul."

Cohen does not wish to avoid the contradiction into which he locks these poor non-German Jews in a time of war, for similar discourses might be held at the same time, for example in France or in America. He goes on to develop an argument which I give up paraphrasing—it remains so inimitable. Before quoting a paragraph, let me briefly note that, in the name of what is advertised as "the finest political tact" (*Freilich bedurf es des feinsten politischen Taktes*), it comes down to demanding of all the Jews of the world to recognize Germany as the motherland of their soul, without

betraying the other one, but while still working toward universal peace, that is, the end of a war to be won by Germany, and of a war in which the sacred obligation to love one's neighbor, be he even one's enemy, would be maintained.

To say the truth, it takes the finest political tact in order for this piety not to hurt or give umbrage to the higher duty of love for one's country. Nevertheless, this difficulty, which is proper to the war situation, is not fundamentally of a different nature: everyone conducts a war *without losing sight of the peace latent in deep humanity*. Wars of extermination are humanity's shame. Is the duty of piety felt toward his original homeland by whoever has been naturalized, if only in part, perhaps so different from this international and universal duty of humanity?

Surely it is the most concrete meaning of the obligation to *love one's enemies*, that there should be preserved, in the enemy people, its participation not only in humanity in general, but also in the most complex ramifications of this idea. And there is no discontinuity, *a fortiori* no gap, between this general duty of humanity and the piety owed to his real cultural and spiritual, even physical motherland by anyone whom destiny led to a foreign State or caused to be born there.

It is from such a principle that the peace efforts undertaken at the international level must draw the only essential and indisputable foundation which would confer upon them an efficacy that none of the parties involved would contest. The humanity proper to one's birthplace can become the mother tongue of a true internationalism so as to establish firmly a spirit of peace. (§40)

The last sentence says that "humanity [*Humanität*: and Fichte recalled that, in its abstraction, this Latin word was not equivalent to *Menschheit*, an immediately sensible and intelligible essence to a German] can become the maternal ground (*Mutterboden*) of a true internationality in view of founding, establishing, or justifying, of firmly instituting by right [*en droit*] (*Begründung*) a spirit of peace, a sense of peace (*Friedesgesinnung*)."

Precisely as to language, however, the statement is rather odd. Why should the American Jews, who are Cohen's primary addressees and who came by the thousands from Germany or Russia, still have a pious duty towards Germany, even though they are American citizens? Why should they piously (*pietätsvol*) respect (*achten* this time) their psycho-spiritual motherland (*als ihr seelisch-geistiges Mutterland*)? Because of language; more precisely and even more significantly, because of the so-called "Jargon," the Yiddish language. Even though it maims, mutilates, truncates (*verstummelt*) the mother tongue, it still signals back to the language to which it owes the originary force

of reason (*Urkraft der Vernunft*) as originary force of the spirit (*Urkraft der Geistes*). It is through the mediation of this language, German, that man (and here, in an exemplary manner, the German Jew) has been able to spiritualize his thoughts and ennoble his religious habits. He must not deny the people that gave him such a rebirth [*renaissance*] (*Wiedergeburt*) his inner loyalty.

Addressing himself thus to the American Jews, Cohen indicts the attitude of certain French or English Jews (those, by the way, who, for their part, indulged in analogous—and for essential reasons, only analogous—rhetoric). These Jews have presumably shown themselves to be weak with regard to Russia, which annexes their brethren, and ungrateful with regard to Germany. Such is for example the case of “Mister Bergson,” who puts his talent and his credit into the service to France. This renegade loses his soul in forgetting that he is the son of a Polish Jew (not even a German!) and especially that his parents spoke Yiddish (not even pure German, which Cohen, like every self-respecting member of a certain Jewish-German intelligentsia, puts way above that degraded [*verstummt*] form of the noble German idiom):

Outstanding in this context are the invectives of a French philosopher who, using all the devices of virtuosity and of advertising (*der Virtuosität und der reklame*), which unfortunately work only too well for him in Germany [one hears analogous things today from certain German philosophers], puts up the act of an original philosopher: he is the son of a Polish Jew who spoke Yiddish. What may be happening in the soul of this Mister Bergson when he remembers his father and denies Germany its “ideals!” (*Er ist der Sohn eines polnischen Juden, der den Jargon sprach. Was mag in der Seele dieses Herrn Bergson vorgehen, wenn er seines Vaters gedenkt und Deutschland die “Ideen” abspricht!*)

Our analysis must become more refined in order to come still nearer to the sharpest specificity of *this* interpretation, in *this typical* contextual and institutional situation (*this war, this Jewish-German Professor, this neo-Kantian philosopher, and so on*), and in order to better determine the articulation between the “external” and the “internal” institution of *these* interpretations. There are several ways to do this. Having chosen to privilege the reference to *Kant, the Jew, the German*, we shall underline first the ambivalence which, despite the hyperbolic tribute, continues to mark this reference. This ambivalence corresponds also to a general type. It is not the property of neo-Kantianism, of Cohen, or of Jewish-German thinkers of the period. We do not have enough time and space to better

situate Rosenzweig's thought in this respect, in its double relation to Kant and to Cohen. In the course of a brief detour, we shall then be content to invoke not only Rosenzweig's ambivalence toward Kant, but also—what is more interesting at this point—his awareness of it and the interpretation, diagnosis even, he proposed for it.

In 1923 Buber had just published his lectures on Judaism.⁹ Rosenzweig wrote to thank him for the book. Of this long letter, dealing mainly with Jewish law, I shall quote first a tribute to Buber. It announces a sort of double bind in filiation or rather in *discipline*. Just as, for "our spiritual Judaism," it is both possible and impossible to inherit Kant, both possible and impossible to be Kant's *disciple*, so it will be both possible and impossible to follow Buber (and a fortiori Cohen): "The preceding centuries had already reduced Study to genteel poverty, to a handful of fundamental concepts; it was left to the 19th century to complete this development methodically and with the highest seriousness. You have liberated Study from this limited sphere, and in doing that, protected us from the imminent danger of making our spiritual Judaism depend on the possibility and impossibility for us to be Kant's pupils."¹⁰

Possibility and impossibility: we could and could not be Kant's heirs. This translates perhaps into "we could but we shouldn't," or "shouldn't have." Or else: "toward Kant, the man who gave its categorical formulation to the law and to the imperative of that name, we have contradictory attitudes, perhaps contradictory duties. Kant was and should not have been the institutor and the law of our relation to the law. And from this Moses to whom Kant had so often been compared, from this idol or effigy of Moses and from the necessarily troubled and ambiguous link we had to him, you, Buber, have emancipated us."

In truth, you have emancipated us and you have not. For in turn the same ambivalence is declared with regard to Buber's teaching. Buber would have shut the relation to the law in a space of teaching, that is to say ultimately in a theoretical or an epistemological space. The law, however, is no mere object of knowledge, any more than a text one should be content to read or study:

This is why, it is all the more curious, that after you have liberated us and shown us the way toward a new kind of Study, your answer to the other side of the question concerning the Law—"What should we do?"—that your question had to leave this Law still locked in shackles, the same ones as those the 19th century imposed on Study as well [having no access, at the moment, to the original, I am quoting a French translation which seems strange and may be inadequate]. For is it really with the Jewish Law that

you are trying to reach an accord, and are unable to do so? Is it really upon this law that you turn your back simply in order to tell yourself and to tell us, who had expected the answer from you, that our only task must be to take cognizance of this Law, reverentially, with a reverence that in no way affects our selves or our way of living? Is it really the Jewish Law, that age-old Law, studied and experienced, searched and celebrated, the Law of everyday and of the Last Day, meticulous and yet sublime, sober and yet woven with legends; a Law that knows both the flame of the Sabbath candles and that of the martyrs' stake? (KS)

What is the place, in the letter, where the double bind ties up with the question of nation? The "unheard of" uniqueness of the Jewish nation in its relation to the law is that its birth pertains not to nature but precisely to the Law. Rosenzweig dissociates nature and nation, birth by nature and birth by law. This distinction actually is still a Kantian one. All nations, he says, are born in the bosom of nature, in the bowels of Mother Nature. This is why they are in need of historical development. At the moment of their birth, of course, they do not yet have a history, they do not even have a face. The Jewish nation does have a history, so to speak, *before* being born. It does not come to be born naturally but by being taken out from another nation, having been known, having been called by God's Law even before its birth. It comes to be born out of this calling in a non-natural way. Its face had already been shaped, its birth already inscribed in a history that had begun before it even though it was already its own. That is why the history of this nation is somehow supernatural or, if one prefers, transhistorical. Its path remains unique. Like Heidegger, Rosenzweig thinks all this in the form of the *path* [*chemin*] and as a new thought of the path, thought as path. He links the path to the Law. This passage of the letter is a passage on the path where we are, the path that we are. It is a passage on the path and on the leap: "We can attain both Study and the Law only by becoming aware that we are still in the first part of the path and that it is up to us to choose to go ahead. But what then is the path leading up to the Law?" (KS)

This is Kafka's question in *Vor dem Gesetz* [Before the Law] (written a few years earlier): How to gain access to the Law? How can one touch it? What is progress toward the Law? Rosenzweig questions this path toward the Law as a path toward the unreachable. He does so using words and a tone that are very close to Kafka's. The "track" is "open" to someone who, having traveled "the entire length" of the path, would not even have "the right to claim that he thereby attains his goal." "Such a man would have to be content with saying

that he travelled the entire path, but that even for him the goal is one step beyond—in the unreachable. So why call it a path? Can a path lead to the unreachable?" Does it still deserve the name "path"? A "tiresome, goalless detour through knowable Judaism gives us the certainty that the ultimate leap from what we know already to what we need to know at any price, the leap into Study, has led us to Jewish *Study*." What is the need for this ultimate leap? The answers tell of the "unheard of" uniqueness of the Jewish nation. Its relation to the Law is, but is not, the relation determined by Kant:

Other nations do not feel this kind of need. When a member of one of the nations teaches, he is teaching out from amongst his people and toward his people, even if he has learned nothing. All he teaches becomes the possession of his people. For the nations have a face still in the making—each its own. None of them knows at birth just what it is to be; their faces are not molded while they are still in nature's lap.

But our people, the only one that did not originate from the womb of nature that bears nations, but—and this is unheard of!—was led forth "a nation from the midst of another nation" (Deuteronomy 4:34)—our people was decreed a different fate. Its very birth became the great moment of its life, its mere being already harbored its destiny. Even "before it was formed," it was "known," like Jeremiah its prophet. And so only he who remembers this determining origin can belong to it; while he no longer can or will utter the new word he has to say "in the name of the original speaker," who refuses to be a link in the golden chain, no longer belongs to his people. And that is why this people must learn what is knowable as a condition for learning what is unknown, for making it his own.

All this holds also for the Law, for doing.¹¹

After this detour, let us come back to Cohen to stake out some points of reference within this relation to Kant. As we have seen, Cohen, in his way of telling the story [*raconter l'histoire*], regularly assigned a variety of origins to what he calls the German spirit or German idealism: the Platonic hypothesis, its adoption or anticipation by Judaism, notably by Philo, the Christian logos, the Reformation, Kepler, Nicholas of Cusa, Leibniz, Kant. Each time its birth did but announce another birth. At one particular moment, the peak, the high point (*Höhepunkt*) of this chain of births or mountains, was Kant ("until it [German idealism] reaches with Kant its historical high point" [*seinen geschichtlichen Höhepunkt*]) (§6). Now here is the ambiguity: it appears now (§44) that the real high point is not Kant. It is Fichte: he discovered that the social Self is a national Self (*Das soziale Ich hat er als das nationale Ich entdeckt*"); Cohen's italics). In

seeking and finding in the “national Self” the “supra-empirical foundation of the Self,” he thus constituted “in fact” (*in der Tat*) the peak of German philosophy (*So budet Fichte in der Tat einen Höhepunkt der deutschen Philosophie*).

How is this possible? What does it mean? Let us first note that, as for Rosenzweig, it is the thought of the national [*la pensée du national*] which makes it possible here to go beyond the Kantian peak. But this time it is in view of a summit which identifies the national with the essence of the German or of the Jewish-German couple. Its representative figure is a thinker of the German nation, the very man who considered the German nation a chosen nation and who used occasionally the reference to Jewish prophecy in order to intimate what he wished to intimate of the German nation to the German nation. In his *Address to the German Nation* he also speaks of a path of human history. He even specifies that “midway point” where the second half of human history must begin:

The real destiny of the human race on earth . . . is in freedom to make itself what it really is originally. Now this making of itself deliberately, and according to rule, must have a beginning somewhere and at some moment in space and time. Thereby a second great period, one of free and deliberate development of the human race, would appear in place of the first period, one of development that is not free. We are of opinion that, in regard to time, this is the very time, and that now the race is exactly midway between the two great epochs of its life on earth. But in regard to space, we believe that it is first of all the Germans who are called upon to begin the new era as pioneers and mode[l]s for the rest of mankind.¹²

It is not insignificant that this *Address* (the third) ends with “the vision of an ancient prophet”:

Thus says the prophet by the river of Chebar, the comforter of those in captivity, not in their own, but in a foreign land. “The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And He said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again He said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up the flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord . . .”

Though the elements of our higher spiritual life may be just as dried

up, and though the bonds of our national unity may lie just as torn asunder and as scattered in wild disorder as the bones of the slain in the prophecy, though they may have whitened and dried for centuries in tempests, rainstorms, and burning sunshine, the quickening breath of the spiritual world has not yet ceased to blow. It will take hold, too, of the dead bones of our national body, and join them together, that they may stand glorious in new and radiant life. (43–44)

How does Cohen analyze Fichte's relation to Kant? And how does he account for this duality of peaks? (1) By the dissociation of the theoretical from the practical; (2) by recalling the social point of view presumably latent in Kantian ethics; (3) by showing that the manifestation of the latent unites the national with the social, nationalism with socialism (§44).

Cohen recognizes that, theoretically speaking, no one has gone beyond Kant. Fichte's philosophy of the Self (*Die Ich-Philosophie Fichtes*) is a theoretical regression in relation to Kant. It would be superficial or inconsistent to fail to recognize this. He puts himself in opposition to those academics who, in the name of purely patriotic considerations, out of concern for "patriotic merit," would then be prepared, in this context, to prefer the nationalist Fichte at any price. Cohen's complex gesture consists of recognizing the national question as an essential and an essentially philosophical question, but at the same time also emphasizing that, theoretically speaking, Fichte's philosophy of the Self is regressive. Cohen also admits that philosophy is a "national matter" (*eine nationale Sache*) and one must be grateful to Fichte, his "theoretical regression" notwithstanding, for having made some progress (*Fortschritt*): he brought out the latent socialism of Kantian ethics into "explicit display." Let us not forget that this 1915 nationalist discourse is also a socialist discourse. Fichte's great "discovery" is that the Self is social, but also that the social Self is in its origin and essence a national Self.

In other words, the "I" in "I think," in the *cogito*, is not a formal one, as Kant presumably had believed. It appears to itself in its relation to the other, and this *socius*, far from being abstract, manifests itself to itself originally in its national determination, as belonging to a spirit, a history, a language. I—the Self—sign first in its spiritual language. The nationality of the *ego* is not a characteristic or an attribute that happens to a subject who was not national-social to begin with. The subject is in its origin and through and through, substantially, subjectally national. The *ego cogito* discovered by Fichte is a national one. It has a universal form, but this universality does not occur to its truth except as nationality. This "new truth (*neue Wahrheit*) completes" in fact (*in der Tat*) what was latent in the *Ich* of

the Kantian *Ich denke*, because it is a “new realization (*Verwirklichung*) of the I.” It goes beyond the ethical abstraction of humanity and provides the “*Lebensgrund*” of Fichte’s Idealism.

These statements pivot around themselves—like a psyche. If the essence of egological effectivity is nationality, if there lies the truth of idealism, namely of philosophy itself of which German idealism is also the realization, then one must say, conversely, that the nation is an *ego*. It relates to itself in the form of egological subjectivity. The truth of nationality asserts itself as idealism. And since the truth of philosophical idealism, that is, of philosophy in general, is German idealism, the truth of nationality *in general* is German idealism. When one says “in general” one must think that the realization (*Verwirklichung*) of this generality is nationality—German nationality. The truth of the *I* inasmuch as it *posits itself* is German. If in the act of positing itself by itself as nationality one finds something of *reflection* and therefore of the narcissistic structure where a “new truth” “discovers” (*entdeckt*) itself, if that structure posits itself in unveiling itself, then the mirror of a certain psyche is thus to be found in the pivoting center of the relation to itself of the *ego* as national *ego*. Hence the literally cosmopolitan proposition which happens to be [*se trouwe*] deduced, in accordance with Fichte’s best logic, from this national-socialist German idealism. This is the exemplary superiority of German idealism as of German nationalism. The German spirit is the spirit of humanity: “The spirit of humanity is the originary spirit of our ethic. In this ethical determinacy, the German spirit is the spirit of the cosmopolitanism and of the humanity (*der Geist der Weltbürgertums und der Humanität*) of our classical period” (§45), that is to say, of the eighteenth century.

At the peak of the Fichtean peak, Cohen dreads, certainly, the narcissistic effects of this exaltation of the German spirit and of the national *ego*. This fear and its formulation pertain moreover to the program or the typology of all nationalisms. There is always a moment when one must issue a warning, as does Cohen, against a national enthusiasm or excitation (*nationale Begeisterung*) which shows every appearance of narcissistic infatuation (*Eigendunkel*) and sentimental complacency for one’s property. Cohen remains Kantian enough to suspect this *Begeisterung*. He is for balancing enthusiasm by the consciousness of the law, the harshness of obligation, the sense of responsibility. Privilege also assigns a mission, it even consists of this mission. The national Self is, of course, also a “We” and first of all the subject of rights, especially of duties. With no other transition, Cohen moves on to a list of consequences that seem to follow [*se déduire*], in a quasi-analytical way, from this German

idealism: mandatory military service, the right to vote, compulsory education.

While taking care not to give way to misleading analogies, one might be tempted to recall here the three “services” deduced by Heidegger, in his *Rectorate Speech* (1933)—another war discourse in sum, postwar and prewar—from the self-affirmation, not to say self-positing of the German university. The content of these two times three duties is undoubtedly not exactly the same, although both knowledge and the army are there. Heidegger does not mention the right to vote, which is moreover not a duty, but in both cases all of these obligations or services (*Aufgabe, Dienste*) are deduced from national self-affirmation. And although the democratic theme is absent from Heidegger’s text, the socialist, even populist theme spans both texts.

Let us not imprudently bring these two gestures together. The differences between them are considerable. But they are re-marked [*elles se remarquent*] within the common web of a tradition that should never be forgotten. All the more since Cohen’s text is also, in many respects, a text about the academic institution. This can be recognized by the crucial role that the German university plays in the argument. First, because German idealism has no sense, no *effectivity*, precisely, outside the effectivity of the German university and its history during the nineteenth century (which is also the century of the emancipation of the Jews, let us never forget, and Cohen is still a nineteenth-century man). Then, because, as Cohen literally says, the university must become the people’s thing, a truly popular school: “*Die Universität muss die wahrhafte Volksschule werden*” (§44; Cohen’s italics). The self-positing of the German spirit, the reflexive psyche that ensures its keeping and tradition, finds its effective truth nowhere else than in the people’s university. Let us try yet another cautious and limited analogy. Just as for the 1933 Heidegger, among the three obligations (*Bindungen*) or services (*Arbeits-, Wehr-, Wissensdienste*)—all as originary as any of the others and of equal dignity—the service of knowledge maintains [*garde*] a privilege inasmuch as it molds the guardians and the guides of the German people in its university, so it is to the “higher institutions of education” (*höheren Bildungsstätten*) that Cohen wants to entrust this pedagogical function. It must be accessible to the popular classes, ensure social justice and national unity.

These three duties link together the consciousness of the national subject. They limit the risks of the exaltation into which one might be pushed by a dangerous interpretation of Fichte’s thought. From one peak to another. One before the other, and Cohen returns

regularly from one to the other. In defining the three duties and this cohesion of the national consciousness (*Einheitlichkeit des Nationalbewusstseins*) which constitutes the living core of the "national sentiment" he emphasizes the word "sentiment" (*Gefühl*) but insists on the necessity of understanding Kant's thought, which is not merely a sentimental thought about duty and responsibility. (It is, however, also that: respect for the law must remain a sentiment.) "Every German must know, with an intimacy such as love offers, his Schiller and his Goethe, must always keep them in his mind as well as in his heart. But this intimacy presupposes his having also acquired a familiarity and a basic understanding of his Kant" (§44).

Here the question of military service, that is, the first of the three obligations mentioned earlier, deserves special attention. This for three reasons. First, of course, because this text is being written and published during wartime by a socialist who wishes despite everything to remain pacifist and cosmopolitan. Then, because Cohen links this question specifically to Kant. Finally, because his link to the Jewish question is at that time rather peculiar in Germany. Let us follow these three threads.

There is no exaggerating the importance of music in this problematic of the German nation—of any nation, for that matter. Now, we note the appearance of the military thematics at the very heart of what we are being told about the soul, about the national psyche, and about music. The latter is in the first place the law of the breath and of pneumatic structures (*Lufthauch, Luftgebilde*), that is to say, psychic as well. Music is the locus of the "spiritual sublime" (*geistige Erhabenheit*). Now the fusion of spirit and soul (*Verschmelzung von Geist und Seele*) does not achieve its ultimate fulfillment (*Vollendung*) except in German music (*einzig in der deutschen Musik*). This must be demonstrated in order to reply to the question of the unique property of German music and to the question of knowing why it should have such an impact on the unique property (*die Eigenart*) of the German spirit. Music is the most ideal of the arts (*die idealste der Künste*). This hierarchy of the arts, according to their degrees of ideality, is assumed by this entire discourse. It should call for a comparative analysis of classifications of the arts, from Hegel to Heidegger at least. Here this higher ideality of music puts it in tune with the whole idealistic purpose of this discourse on German idealism. If music is the most ideal art, this is precisely because of its psychic character. The structure, the architecture or the edification (*Gebäude*) of music is pure breath (*reiner Hauch*), respiration, *spiritus* and psyche. Mindful as he is of rhythm, Cohen is equally so of the vast empire of mathematical forms which organize music. Rosenzweig pays Cohen the tribute of having been, perhaps

unwittingly, a great mathematical thinker: "Hermann Cohen, contrary to his own conception of himself and contrary to the impression his works make, was something quite different from a mere epigone to this movement [begun with Plato], which had truly run its course. And it remained for him to discover in mathematics an organum of reasoning, just because it creates its elements out of the definite Nought of the differential, each time assigned to that required Element, not out of the empty Nought of the one and universal Zero. The differential combines in itself the characteristics of the Nought and the Aught."¹³

In the same development Rosenzweig speaks of Cohen as a "master." A master because he is supposed to have truly broken with that idealism to which he nevertheless laid claim, to have broken with Hegel, precisely, by his return to Kant. Rosenzweig then means to introduce into the heart of the idealist tradition rifts to which Cohen is supposed not to have given enough consideration. That same development concerns no less than a thought of nothingness which would also call for a debate with Heidegger:

Mathematics is the guide for the sake of these two paths. It teaches us to recognize the origin of the Aught in the Nought. Thus even if Cohen, the master, would be far from admitting it, we are continuing to build on the great scientific achievement of his logic of origins, the new concept of the Nought. For the rest he may have been, in the execution of his ideas more of a Hegelian than he admitted—and thereby as much of an "Idealist" as he claimed to be. Here, however, in this basic idea, he broke decisively with the idealistic tradition. He replaced the one and universal Nought, that veritable "no-thing" (*Unding*) which, like a zero, really can be nothing more than "nothing," with the particular Nought which burst fruitfully onto reality. There he took his stand in most decided opposition precisely to Hegel's founding of logic on the concept of Being [I will say, Heidegger did so too in his own way in *Was ist Metaphysik?*], and thereby in turn to the whole philosophy into whose inheritance Hegel had come. For here for the first time a philosopher who himself still considered himself an "Idealist" (one more indication of the force of what happened to him) recognized and acknowledged that what confronted reasoning when it set out in order "purely to create" was not Being but—Nought.

For the first time—even if it remains true that here too, as everywhere, Kant, alone among all the thinkers of the past, showed the way which we are now to follow, and showed it, as always, in those comments to which he gave utterance without drawing their systematic consequences. (21)

Need we point out again the institutional dimension of these so-overdetermined interpretations? They concern the system, the unity of the corpus, the way in which interpretive, auto- or hereto-interpretive traditions, hence academic institutions, evaluate, man-

age, conceal, rank, canonize—founding themselves by these operations. And, let us not forget, what we have here, in appearance, is a nonacademic speaking of the academy. But it is not sufficient to be by profession foreign to the university in order to be simply outside of it. Neither as a civilian nor as a military man, still to use convenient yet problematic distinctions, especially during wartime. But what is wartime? Nothing that is military is foreign to knowledge, to the mathe and to mathematics. Especially not military music. The greatness of German music appeals to the sublimity of spiritual forms (*Erhabenheit der geistigen Forme*). This whole discourse about nationalism is also a discourse about the sublime. This sublime edifice (*dieser erhabene Formenbau*) plunges its beams into the deepest sources of originary feeling [*sentiment*]. This sublimity of spiritual forms goes hand in hand with the mathematization of rhythms. It links up with the sources of feeling and thus makes for the originality of German music. Now, to what must this structuring of feeling be compared? Cohen's answer: to that of a *Heerzug*, a military array, a military train, procession, or parade (§15).

Here we must recall the history that Cohen places in perspective: not only that of the emancipation of the German Jews, but also that of a world Jewry interpreted according to German Jewry in its link to the *Aufklärung* and to Kant. Cohen has no doubt about this, so he says: Mendelssohn's influence and Kant's were simultaneous and of the same nature. This influence reaches beyond Germany, to Judaism in all its depth "as well as to the cultural life of the Jews, at least of those who were living in the modern Western countries" (§33). (This final restriction appears to be very significant, especially if one considers the essentially European character of early Zionism.) Having noted this influence, Cohen emphasizes once more the "very internal or very profound moral affinity" between Germanity and Judaism. It concerns political socialism. It corresponds both to the generalization of priesthood, both a Lutheran and a Jewish motif, and to messianism. The German State is supposed to be in its modernity both priestly and messianic. This is recognizable in its social policy, more precisely by the fact that social policy is recognized by it as a duty: an ethical duty prior to being a political one, a duty already prescribed by natural law. Socialism is not a policy among others, and it is the German policy *par excellence*, by essence [*par essence*]. Socialism is national and it is German. There may be different modes of policy or politics, different strategies in the implementation of such and such a socialism, but as to its end there is no doubt whatever. This socialist policy, this morality inspired by universal priesthood, serves a fundamental messianism: Jewish-German messianism.

To illustrate this truth (some indices of which are undeniable anyhow), Cohen gives some examples. First of all, Bismarck made universal suffrage a right written into the constitution. (Let me recall here a remark by Blanchot, who wonders, in connection with the alliance between nationalism and socialism, in connection with national socialism, whether Heidegger in 1933 did not mistake Hitler for Bismarck.¹⁴) Bismarck, according to Cohen, draws a logical conclusion written into the very idea of a German *Reich*. The other example is that toward which we have been heading for a while. The same logic has led disciples of Kant to make obligatory military service a major institution deserving to be written into the German constitution. And if Cohen emphasizes that these were disciples of Kant's, it is in order to recall their being in principle pacifists. Because of the war for Schleswig-Holstein and the war against Napoleon, they have had to surrender themselves to this necessity. This necessity is still marked by democracy, by social democracy rather than by militarism. The obligatory character of military service corresponds to a democratization of the military institution. The founding of social democracy is besides an essential property (*Eigenart*) of the German spirit in Cohen's eyes; he recalls furthermore that the Jews proved their military patriotism in the wars of liberation, whereas at the time of Frederick II they had been barred from military service. This patriotic zeal is supposed then to have lucidly anticipated and prepared, in spirit, the letter of the legal apparatus. As to social democracy, as an ethical phenomenon (once purged of its "material cinders"), being the essence of the German spirit in its alliance with Judaism, Cohen sees many signs for this fact, such as for example Marx's Jewish origin or the religious orientation of Ferdinand Lassalle in his youth.

VI

Interpretations at war, we were saying. The status, the date, and the purpose [*finalité*] of this text justify the attention we pay to that in it which concerns the philosophy of the army as well as the philosophy of war. Cohen wants to reconcile at least three apparently incompatible things: (1) He wishes, quite openly, for Germany's victory. (2) He wishes for it also as a German Jew and so must interpret such a victory as a victory for Judaism, knowing full well that the majority of world Jews are not German. (3) As a good Kantian, he is committed not only to cosmopolitanism but also to pacifism. How does he go about it?

(1) He wishes clearly for victory by force of arms, "the heroic

victory of our fatherland" (*den Heldensig unseres Vaterlandes*). When he says "our," he is addressing himself to the Germans, to the German Jews, but also to the Jews of the world, who should recognize, we remember, their being or their having to be German. This "we" bears within it, in this usage—its pragmatics, its rhetoric—the teleological force of the "we" in the *Discourse to the German Nation*. This "we" is at the same time invoked as that which is yet to be constituted—and presupposed as the most originary instance. The hope for victory definitely concerns an actual military triumph by German arms ("*Wir hoffen auch den Triumph der deutschen Waffen*") (§41). But Cohen's discourse is more embarrassed when it has to deal with justifying this war. Is it a "just" one? As a socialist pacifist Cohen begins by asking himself: Was it necessary? Is war in general necessary? His apparently calm reply: we shall not discuss these questions here. They pertain to historical judgment and to the philosophy of history. As to the causes of [the] war, the question is left to the historians and to the disciplines that deal simultaneously with history, economics, and the State. A strange move, but one based, in any case, on the division of labor as a division of problematic regions, of disciplines of knowledge, and of academic departments. All of which are presuppositions and, furthermore, institutional ones.

How can someone whose major point is the justification of the victory of one side, and who also calls himself a pacifist, leave these questions to others or postpone [*différer*] them till later? How can he reserve them to constituted disciplines, thus to institutions that are external to the one that underwrites his own discourse? May we talk here of evasion or denial? For this question is both posed and evaded by Cohen in a gesture that, while perhaps not rigorously Kantian, still maintains a Kantian style. Cohen is saying, in short, I am here renouncing the philosophy of history, the theodicy of universal history, as well as the regional sciences (economics, political science, and so on). But I may still, having thus turned back by a neocriticist gesture, maintain a reflecting and a teleological attitude by asking myself: the event of the war *having occurred*, whatever its causes (for this see the work of historians, economists, political scientists) or final aims (for this see philosophers of history or theologians), "what lesson can one draw from the event of the war (*aus der Tatsache der Kriege*) and the events of the present conflict that would lead to a better understanding of the destiny of mankind (*Bestimmung des Menschengeschlechts*), and of the destiny of Germanity (*Bestimmung der Deutschtum*) within it, in order to illuminate and accomplish the moral purpose of Germanity (*um dem sittlichen Zweck der Deutschtums zu erhellen und zu erfüllen*)?" (§43).

Cohen calls this a “teleological” method (§43). A method, merely, since by renouncing knowledge of ultimate ends, human or divine, one recoils towards this question: What is the purpose of this war with regard to our national *Dasein* (*suchen wir den Zweck dieses Krieges für unser nationales Dasein zu erforschen*)? Immediate reply: from this war we expect a national rebirth (*nationale Wiedergeburt*) and the social rejuvenation of our entire people (*die soziale Verjüngung unseres gesamten Volkes* [Cohen’s italics]. This is why, in the view of a German, a triumph of arms is to be wished for.

(2) But this German teleology is also a Jewish teleology. Since this war is occurring, the same question arises: Why must a Jew wish for the triumph of German arms? And what can this mean for the destiny of Judaism? In reply, this war is not far from being presented as a war of liberation. Such, at least, is one’s hope—or trust. By the “heroic victory of our fatherland,” the “God of justice and love will put an end to the barbarous servitude” that the tzarist empire imposes upon our brethren (§41). The political existence of those poor Russian Jews is a shameful challenge to human right, dignity, and respect. But if he seems to place German Jewry higher than others, higher than downtrodden Russian Jewry for example, Cohen hopes precisely that the German victory will also advance the emancipation of the German Jews. He is well aware that progress remains to be made on the German side, for example, concerning the unreserved recognition of the Jewish religion, which cannot stop at mere legal equality. A German victory, thinks Cohen, should even enhance the life and the truth of the Jewish-German psyche. One knows why he was unable to submit his hypothesis to the test of experience.

(3) Finally, how can this approval of a just war, this hope for a German—one should say Jewish-German—victory, be reconciled with a fundamental pacifism, a pacifism associated besides with an originally Kantian cosmopolitanism? Thanks to the following major idea, which resembles, at least, an Idea in the Kantian sense: this war must be inscribed within the perspective of a messianic idea and bring about an international understanding, peace among nations. What should be the foundation of this peace? Let us pay close attention to the letter of these propositions. It provides exemplarism—which constitutes the very center of our reflection on nationality—with one of its most economical formulations. Our example (*unser Beispiel*), says Cohen (§41), must be capable of serving as a model (*als Vorbild dienen dürfen*). Our example must serve as an example—in other words, as a model, an exemplary example, a paradigm, or an ideal: the *Beispiel*, as a *Vorbild*. It must serve as an example for the acknowledgement (*Anerkennung*) of German

hegemony, predominance, preponderance (*der deutschen Vormacht*: this last word italicized by Cohen) in all fundamentals or foundations of spiritual and psychic life (*in allen Grundlagen des Geistes- und des Seelenslebens*). The logic here is more extraordinary than ever: there will be no understanding and no peace among nations unless our example is followed. But let us follow the progression, which is also a redundant tautology, between the a priori synthesis and the analytic explication: our example (*Beispiel*) must be followed as an example (*Vorbild*) in order to acknowledge our *Vormacht*, German hegemony or preeminence. The progression from *Beispiel* to *Vorbild* to *Vormacht* is tautologous, since an example is not an indifferent case in a series. It is exemplary, a premodel, a preformatory model. To acknowledge it as such is to acknowledge German hegemony (*Vormacht*). Acknowledgement cannot remain merely theoretical. It doesn't go without political subjection—in the spiritual and psychic domain, of course, where all this teleological discourse belongs, while nevertheless proliferating purifying remarks vis-à-vis foreigners and the alien, vis-à-vis “false alien glories,” and so on, that is to say, remarks rarely pure of all xenophobia (see, notably, §45).

This spiritualist determination of national exemplarity does not belong to the German nation only. What would one say were it to be stated that it does not belong to it except in an exemplary manner? In *What Is a Nation?* (*Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*), Renan too emphasizes this spiritual characteristic. “Nothing material” is sufficient for defining a nation. “A nation is a spiritual principle”: neither race, nor even language, nor interests, nor religious affinity, nor geography, nor military necessities are sufficient to exhaust its definition. This spiritual principle is also called by Renan “soul”: “A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle.”

For reasons that are not only of time and space we shall point out only two of the motives which make us quote Renan here. Both lead us back to Cohen.

A. The first concerns memory and forgetting. For Cohen, to become aware of a sort of spiritual Jewish-German nation is to practice anamnesis of a rather peculiar kind. This anamnesis goes back to Plato, to Philo, to the Christian logos, to Maimonides, to Luther, to Kant, and Fichte, and so forth. Memory is possible. But it is also necessary and obligatory, which means that it is not taken for granted: forgetting is therefore equally constitutive of the history that will have formed a nation. Now, Renan's thesis, simultaneously paradoxical and sensible, is that forgetting makes the unity of a nation, not memory. More interestingly, Renan analyzes this forgetting as a sort of repression: it is active, selective, meaningful, in one word interpretive. Forgetting is not, in the case of a nation, a

simple psychological effacement, a wearing out or a meaningless obstacle making access to the past more difficult, as when an archive has been accidentally destroyed. No, if there is a forgetting, this is because there is no bearing something which was at the origin of the nation, surely an act of violence, a traumatic event, some sort of a curse one does not admit. In the midst of historical narratives, that we should all find interest in rereading, whatever our nationality (I can count at least four here), Renan writes, for example:

Forgetting, and I would say even historical error, are an essential factor in the formation of a nation, and thus the progress of historical study is often a danger for nationality. Historical investigation, in effect, brings back to light the violent deeds which took place at the origin of all political formations, even those whose consequences have been beneficial. Unity is always achieved brutally: the union of Northern and Southern France was the result of extermination and of terror continued for nearly a century. The King of France, who is, I daresay, the ideal type of a crystallizer, the King of France who has achieved the most perfect national unity ever achieved; the King of France, too closely seen, has lost his prestige; the nation he had formed has cursed him, and today none but the cultivated minds know what he was worth and what he has done.

A series of examples (French, Slavic, Czech, and German) allows Renan to conclude: "Now, the essence of a nation is that all individuals should have many things in common and that all should have forgotten quite a few things. No French citizen knows whether he is a Burgundian, an Alainian, a Tifalian, a Visigoth; every French citizen must have forgotten Saint Bartholomew, the 13th century massacres in the South. There are not ten families in France that can furnish evidence of a Frankish origin, and any such evidence would still be totally defective, as a result of a thousand unknown interbreedings capable of undoing all our genealogical systems."

These truths, always worth saying, remind us of at least two things. On the one hand, a nation does not exist as long as there is no certainty that "all should have forgotten quite a few things"; as long as some remember originary deeds of violence, a nation remains unassured of its essence and of its existence. On the other hand, as long as some remember and recall the purity of their origin (Burgundian, Alainian, Visigothic, for example), the nation remains unassured of its essence or of its existence.

These truths, however, we should not forget. They did not prevent the French historian Renan from forgetting in his turn (QED), and from being rather violent, when he dares to state the following blatant untruth: "An honorable fact for France is that it has never sought to obtain unity of language by coercive measures." We know

that this is not so (QED). The objectivity of historical science, an interpretive discipline through and through, is here affected at a given moment in one of its representatives by its [or his] belonging to a national institution, the French language, to begin with. Limits of self interpretation.

This discourse about forgetting is interesting not only for what it says of an originary violence, constitutive and still vaguely active. Even though Renan does not do so, one may even put it in communication with a comment located elsewhere in the same text. If a nation has a soul or a spiritual principle, this is not only, says Renan, because it is not founded upon anything of what is called race, language, religion, place, army, interest, and so on. It is because a nation is at the same time both memory (and forgetting pertains to the very deployment of this memory) and, in the present, promise, project, a “desire to live together.” Isn’t this promise in itself, by structure, a relation to the future which involves forgetting, indeed, a sort of essential indifference to the past, to that in the present which is not present, but also an ingathering, that is, a memory of the future? “A remembered future,” one might say, twisting perhaps the title of a book you are well familiar with.¹⁵ This is not Renan’s language. I propose it nevertheless in order to interpret this statement of his:

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things which, truly speaking, are one constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. [Thus we have the spirit and the psyche, the latter being divided in two, we shall soon see, thus being reflected in time: the past and the future turn around a present pivot.] One is in the past, the other in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is the present assent, the desire to live together, the wish to continue to make the most out of the heritage one has received undivided. Man, gentlemen, does not improvise.

The “present assent,” the “desire to live together” are performative commitments, promises which must be renewed daily, inscribing the necessity of forgetting in memory itself, one within the other inseparably. And further on: “The existence of a nation is (forgive me this metaphor) a daily plebiscite, just as the existence of the individual is a perpetual affirmation of life. Oh, I know, this is less metaphysical than divine right, less brutal than supposedly historical right.”

Is this quite so certain? Here I leave this question suspended.

B. Another theme recalls Cohen’s discourse: that of the European

confederation. Appearing after the 1870 war, referring to it (something it has in common with Cohen's later discourse, with which it is from this viewpoint contemporaneous), Renan's text takes stock, in 1882, of what he calls the secession, the crumbling of nations:

We have driven out of politics the metaphysical and theological abstractions. What remains after that? Man remains, his desires, his needs. The secession, you will tell me, and in the long run the crumbling of nations, are the consequences of a system which puts these old organisms at the mercy of wills that are often hardly enlightened. . . . Nations are not something eternal. They began and they shall end. The European confederation will probably replace them. But such is not the law of the century we live in. At the present time, the existence of nations is good, even necessary. Their existence guarantees liberty, which would be lost were the world to have but one master.

This leads us back to our third question: How can Cohen reconcile his hope for a Jewish-German victory with his cosmopolitan pacifism inspired by Kant? How can the German spirit become the center of a confederation that would guarantee world peace? How to legitimize a war by claiming that it is just (*gerechte*) because it is also the preparation (*Vorbereitung*) for perpetual peace?

If the spirit of universal humanity is, *in an exemplary manner*, the origin of *our* Jewish-German ethic, the German spirit is surely, from a moral viewpoint, the spirit of cosmopolitanism as it was formed in the eighteenth century. If a national development serves universal justice, the use of force is legitimate if it in turn serves this national development in its exemplary singularity. In this war, says Cohen, every German is conscious of both national right and universal justice. From this consciousness he draws a "sublime energy" (*mit erhabener Energie*) (§46), and in this too this letter to the American Jews definitely resembles a treatise on the sublime. (Let it be said in passing, this description of the soldier's "consciousness" is undoubtedly sufficiently correct to have been also that in which the French soldier had been educated at the same moment—like every nonmercenary soldier in every war in the world.) In this consciousness [*conscience*, also "conscience"], force is not opposed to right. Here enters an analogy between the individual and the State. "What the organism is for the spirit of the individual, force is for the State, that spirit of peoples" (§46). Just as the individual should not thwart humanity, the individual power of each State should not thwart the universal State, that is, the confederation of States which ought to be the ideal of every State. According to natural right or

according to positive and historical right, the concept of State requires federation. This requirement is written into it and must lead to its maturity. The project of an international socialism must not remain a utopia. And war is there in order to make it finally emerge out of utopia! The power of the State is necessary in order to make socialism effective, to make it into something other than a “blunt weapon and a half-truth.” One sees the working of the same logic, less and less a Kantian one, Hegelian rather, or quasi-Hegelian: the logic of effectivity or of effecting of the State, just that logic that Rosenzweig will have broken with. The force of the State is here supposed to render effective a socialist and internationalist ideal, which otherwise would remain abstract, in a state of pure subjective representation.

Whereas he had bracketed off the philosophy of history, Cohen now declares, so it seems, just the opposite: the concept of “confederation,” or of “the achievement of the ideal of the state” must be erected into the “*principle of the philosophy of History*” (§47).

Let us provisionally conclude our discussion of this point. Like all the others, the problem of confederation is everywhere a pressing matter of the moment.

Why does Cohen cease taking his cue from Kant when he goes into the problem of confederation and perpetual peace? Because he believes, unlike Kant, in the necessity of permanent armies. Kant, for his own part, put it in principle that the constitution of permanent armies (*miles perpetuus*) must “disappear in time”: “No peace treaty may be considered such, if one secretly reserves in it some subject for resuming war.” Condemning any “*reservatio mentalis*” in peace treaties, he speaks of a sparrow, and this surely addresses itself to hawks and doves of all nations: “Expecting a universal lasting peace from what is called the balance of European powers is purely a chimera, similar to that house in Swift, built by an architect in a manner so conforming to the rules of equilibrium, that a sparrow having alighted upon it, it crumbled instantly.”¹⁶

Cohen thinks, unlike Kant, that the existence of permanent armies is not in itself the cause for wars. He incriminates militarism rather, and condemns those who see militarism wherever there is anything military. Militarism is a depravation of the military. It arises when people exalt an army that, rather than serve a State worthy of this name, serves economic powers and the interests of capitalist expansionism. An antinomy may exist between the State and the military when the army puts itself in the service of private economic forces or a fraction of civilian society. But once it has become effective, the ideal State—that is, ethical and confederative in its

orientation, hence German in spirit—has no reason to give up its permanent army. Cohen thus opposes “our conception of military service” to that of the English enemy, whose social policy gave an impetus to the war. It is true that in passing, and this will forbid us once more to simplify our reading, he calls upon a Kantian proposition in the domain of right, if not morality: the exercise of right implies a capacity for constraint.

If each State is therefore founded so that it cannot renounce its army, this is not only because it means to protect itself, but also because it wants to reserve the ideal of confederation, since the latter, like every constitution founded on right, implies that force should be put to the service of its protection. Consequently the State, a separate entity endowed with an army, remains, from the legitimate viewpoint that takes into account the history of nations both in a genealogical and a teleological perspective, the *original* force (*ursprüngliche Kraft*) that must give the initial impetus to the achievement of the moral task incumbent upon humanity. It is all too certain that confederation is the end that the State must pursue so that the ideal of the State can be achieved elsewhere than in itself (§48).

Earlier on (§46), the State had been described as the summit (*Gipfel*), the summit of the nation as well as the summit of humanity. “The ideal of the State culminates in the confederation of States.”

ECOLE NORMALE SUPERIEURE

(Translated by Moshe Ron)

NOTES

1 The following summary was distributed, by prior arrangement, during the weeks preceding the conference.

The Jewish-German Psyche: The Examples of Hermann Cohen and Franz Rosenzweig

Jacques Derrida

Insisting on the word *example*, we open onto several questions. (1) What is exemplarity (rather than paradigm) in the history of national self-affirmation? What happens when a “people” presents itself as exemplary? Or when a “nation” declares itself endowed with a mission by virtue of its very uniqueness; as of bearing testimony, and of having a responsibility, all of which are exemplary; in other words, of bringing a universal message? (2) In what sense and how have the Jewish and German people been able to declare themselves as exemplary in terms of this “exemplarity”? In what sense and how, since the *Aufklärung* (Mendelssohn, Kant, etc.) has a certain modern pair, both singular and impossible (which was judged “mythic” and “legendary” by Scholem), the Jewish-German pair, been doubly exemplary in terms of this exemplarity? What happened in regard to this in the politico-institutional context of the Emancipation, of the two world wars, of Zionism and of Nazism, etc.? What we call the “psyche” is both a psychic locus of the fantasies that drive us [*fantasmatique pulsionnelle*] (love, hate, madness, projection, rejection, etc.), which has constituted the strange pair of these two cultures, of these two “histories,” of these

two “peoples,” and what is called in French a “psyche,” i.e., a great pivoting mirror, a device of specular reflection. (3) In what way are these examples, and particularly the example of the corpus that we shall be treating (one certain corpus signed by Cohen and by Rosenzweig), exemplary as to the general questions which will be on the horizon of this presentation? What is a context? How can we determine its openness and its closedness? How can we delimit the institutionality of a context? What does it mean to render an account of an institutional context in an interpretation, when a context remains always “open” and inexhaustible, stabilizable but only because of its being essentially unstable and mutable?

In the case of the texts we shall analyze (*Deutschtum und Judentum* by Cohen, 1915, certain pages from *Der Stern der Erlösung* by Rosenzweig), and the contextual dimensions abysmally enveloped are at least (1) the “whole” of the two traditions (Jewish and German); (2) the history of the Emancipation of the German Jews; (3) the history of Western philosophy, with Kant being privileged in an exemplary way by Cohen, Rosenzweig, and other German Jews (Benjamin and Adorno) (we’ll speak of “Kant, the Jew, the German”); (4) the respective situation of the two thinkers (in their relationship to each other, in their relationship to Judaism, to Zionism, to German culture, and—it has to be emphasized—to the discourse or the institution of the university, to academic philosophy in general); (5) finally and most importantly the war of 1914–18: the nationalistic German text (Jewish-German) of Cohen is in fact a very special text, in other words, a powerful, violent, and troubling interpretation of the whole history of philosophy and of Western religions, and above all of the Jewish-German pair. This interpretation was primarily addressed [*destinée*] to the American Jews to ask them to prevent the United States from entering the war against Germany. But what does “primarily concerning a destination” mean here for the question of a text and a context?

This text was said to be “cursed.” It is certainly not so simple. Is there an “actual” “context”—and which one—to reread this text today? Instead of answers to these numerous questions precipitously raised we shall rather multiply preliminary warnings as to the very positioning of these questions.

2 Franz Rosenzweig, “Un hommage,” in *Franz Rosenzweig*, ed. Oliver Mongin, Jacques Roland, and Alexandre Derczanski (Paris, 1982), p. 181; subsequent references to this work will be identified parenthetically in text without pagination. (Here and elsewhere, unless otherwise noted, the English version of quoted material is my translation of Derrida’s French—Tr.)

3 A somewhat different English version of this passage is to be found in Franz Rosenzweig, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, ed. Nahum Glatzer (New York, 1961), p. 29—Tr.

4 “An Unpublished Letter from Gershom Scholem to Franz Rosenzweig. Concerning Our Language. A Confession,” 26 Dec. 1926; French translation by Stéphane Moses, in *Archives des sciences sociales et des religions*, 60, no. 1 (July–September 1985). I shall propose elsewhere a reading of this letter.

5 See Hermann Cohen, *Deutschtum und Judentum* (Giessen, 1915); hereafter cited in text by section number.

6 Theodor W. Adorno, “Réponse à la question: qu’est-ce qui est allemand?” (Replying to the Question: Who Is German?), in his *Modèles critiques*, French translation by Marc Jimenez and Elaine Kaufholz (Paris, 1984), p. 221; *Modèles critiques* is a translation of *Eingriffe: neun Kritische Modelle* (Frankfurt am Main, 1963) and *Stichworte: Kritische Modelle 2* (Frankfurt am Main, 1969).

7 See Jacques Derrida, *De l’esprit. Heidegger et la question* (Paris, 1987).

8 I permit myself to refer the reader to long developments devoted to this scene in my *Glas* (Paris, 1974).

9 See Martin Buber, *Reder über das Judentum* (Frankfurt am Main, 1923).

10 Franz Rosenzweig, *Kleinere Schriften* (Berlin, 1937), pp. 106–21; subsequent references to this work will be identified parenthetically in text, without pagination, as *KS*.

11 Franz Rosenzweig, “The Builders: Concerning the Law,” in his *On Jewish Learning*, ed. Nahum Glatzer (New York, 1965), p. 81.

12 Johan Gottlob Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation*, ed. George Armstrong, tr. R. F. Jones and G. H. Turnbull (New York, 1968), p. 40; hereafter cited in text.

13 Franz Rosenzweig, “Origins,” in his *The Star of Redemption*, tr. from 2nd ed. by William W. Hallo (New York, 1971), p. 20; hereafter cited in text.

14 See Maurice Blanchot, “Les intellectuels en question,” *Le Débat*, no. 29 (March, 1984).

15 The reference is to a book by Harold Fish, a professor from Bar-Ilan University in Israel, who participated in the conference.

16 Immanuel Kant, *Théorie et pratique* (Critique of Practical Reason), French translation by Jean-Michel Muglioni (Paris, 1990).