

THE LAMB OF GOD

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CHAPTER 1

The Divine Sophia

I. The Creaturely Spirit

Personal consciousness of self is proper to the nature of spirit: "I am that I am," Jehovah, says the Lord. Spirit is, above all, *personality* as personal consciousness of self, as "I." An impersonal ("unconscious") spirit is a contradiction. But this I is not an abstract self-consciousness that is not connected with anything and empty for itself (even the dreaming I of Hinduism at least has its dream and lives in it). It is a living I ("I am that I am"), the subject of a certain objectivity, the subject of a certain predicate, the receptacle of a certain content. The living I has its own life. It is the source of this life and its fullness, its beginning and end. The personal spirit thus has in itself its own *nature*, in which it lives, ceaselessly realizing itself for itself through this nature, defining itself and revealing itself to itself. This indissoluble unity of the personal self-consciousness, of I and its nature, grounding the life of the personal spirit, is the spirit's *limiting intuition* of itself and also the initial ontological axiom. This axiom is contained in Revelation, and it is attested by the Church in the fundamental dogmatic doctrine that God possesses personality and nature, *hupostasis*, *physis*, or *ousia*. As a result, God is a hypostasis that has its own nature, and precisely in this sense He is a living personal spirit. Such a definition of personal spirit is applicable to *any* spirit, divine, angelic, or human. The distinctive property of the Divine Spirit is that this Spirit is not only a personal but also a trihypostatic spirit, a trihypostatic personality, which, however, has *one nature* and, accordingly, *one life* (not a life in common, but precisely one life), just as every unihypostatic spirit has one nature and one life.

One can view the nature of the spirit in two ways: The nature of the spirit is the *source* of every particular manifestation of life rising to self-consciousness; it is the dark depth nourishing the roots of being, a depth unilluminated by personal self-consciousness (it is the “subconscious” or the “superconscious,” the extraconscious, the not-yet-conscious); it is in general the unconscious as well as the preconscious principle in the personal spirit. Without this source, without potentiality that can become and ceaselessly becomes actuality, *natura naturata*, entering the consciousness, the personal spirit would be empty, devoid of content. Without it the personal spirit would not be living, but only an abstractly “I-ing” self-consciousness (which is how Fichte considers it in his *Ich-Philosophie*). But the nature is the very life of the spirit, in the capacity of its accomplished self-revelation, *natura naturata*, in the capacity of the *content* of the life of the spirit and in this sense its authentic predicate. Between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata* there exists a *living* identity. However, a modal distinction in the life of the spirit is also manifested here, insofar as one and the same natural content exists for the spirit, on the one hand, as an *act* of its own life, a creative self-revelation, and, on the other hand, as a *fact* of a certain reality present before it — that is, the proper being of this reality according to itself and in itself. This content is not independent of the I, insofar as it is its proper act, creatively posited by the I in and for itself; however, in its reality, in its being according to itself, this content is also a fact independent of the I, and present before it. The living spirit reveals itself to itself in a certain objective actuality, which has its own reality. The spirit lives in this actuality, in this state of subject-object, as if in its own home.

For the moment, we are considering the concept of nature in an indeterminate sense: as the potency of the life of the spirit, which lies outside the spirit as personal consciousness but which belongs to the spirit and is revealed for and in it. In this sense, the nature of the personal spirit, as the predicate of all predicates, can be defined as the *world* of this spirit: the personality lives in the world as in its own nature, which it masters in proportion to the revelation or realization of this nature in the personal consciousness. The world is precisely the necessary “not-I” that Fichte postulated; in this case, however, it is understood, not in the negative sense as solely the limit of I (for the living I, the subject for all predicates, does not have a limit), but in the positive sense of an objective reality, which for I becomes a subjective experience, its personal life. We thus arrive at the conclusion that personality as the conscious center of being presupposes for itself the presence of the world as its nature, the presence of a being that is not yet personal, and not extrapersonal, but for the mo-

ment only impersonal. The personal spirit is not enclosed in itself (like Leibniz’s monad) but open *for the world*; and the world thereby becomes the precondition of the personal spirit as living personality, for the spirit lives not by its “I-ness” but by the nature that is inherent to it. This nature must be understood here in the broadest sense as a not-I that enters into I and lives in it, including the psychological world, external nature, and (what is especially important) other living persons, other I’s, as co-I’s or we. Likewise, the life of the spirit, the entry of not-I into I, or the expansion of I into not-I, presupposes toward the world not only a passive and contemplative attitude. Such an attitude is, in general, not proper to the nature of the personal spirit with its actuality (as Fichte correctly pointed out, I itself is active self-affirmation, *Tathandlung*), and the life of the spirit is an active penetration into the world as one’s own nature.

The personal spirit, which must find the foundation and fullness of its being in itself, thus turns out to be *conditioned* in its life by the *world*, or the nonspirit, although the world is able to enter into the life of the spirit and in this sense become its nature. As a result, the spirit is not free for itself, it is conditioned; it is not an absolute spirit but a correlative, *becoming* spirit. “It doth not yet appear what we shall be” (1 John 3:2), but before this limit is attained, the personal spirit, in its life, does not possess fullness and adequacy; on the contrary, it is enchained by relativity and limitation, which, however, are not capable of abolishing the indestructible seity of the spirit. This conditionedness is the mark of *creatureliness* that is stamped on every created spirit, whether human or angelic. In particular, the human spirit also is becoming. It has not yet become itself; it is only a part of itself, and even a small part. Nevertheless, this creaturely spirit possesses traits of the Absolute Spirit; it is the image of the Divine Proto-Image, and only on the basis of this fact can the creaturely spirit be understood in all the sublimity and absoluteness of its calling, as well as in all the relativity of its being, which is both becoming and unfinished. A particular creaturely eternity and even uncreatedness are proper to the creaturely spirit. Having created man’s body out of “the dust of the ground,” that is, having united him with creaturely nature as his proper world, God out of Himself “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Gen. 2:7). The mystery of the createdness of the creaturely spirit consists in the fact that God gave hypostatic being to this “breathing into,” to this outpouring of His essence. “For in him we live, and move, and have our being . . . we are also his offspring” (Acts 17:28). Spiritual being is rooted in Divine eternity; the creaturely spirit has an eternity that is analogous to the Divine, and it is uncreated. It bears the consciousness of this

eternity and of this uncreatedness and, in general, of its divinity, which is why spiritual consciousness of self is essentially consciousness of God. Furthermore, the creaturely spirit is conscious of itself as self-grounding, self-affirming being. Here, it is I who start myself and affirm myself and belong to myself in my I-ness. I am not a thing, and no one can affirm my I except me myself; I myself create myself for myself. Hypostatic consciousness of self includes self-affirmation: in calling His breath to hypostatic being, in hypostatizing the rays of His own glory, God accomplishes self-affirmation by one eternal act *together* with the hypostasis itself. God's creative act asks, as it were, the creaturely I if it is I, if it has in itself a will to life. And God hears the answering *yes* of the creature.

But is the proper life of the spirit not extinguished in its natural condition, which is given to it from outside and even forced upon it in a certain sense? Is not spirituality lost to such a degree that man can become "flesh" (Gen. 6:3) and that even God Himself "repents" that He created him (Gen. 6:7)? "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit" (Jude 1:19). Such a possibility exists for man as a consequence of the ontological complexity of his nature, which combines the eternal spirit and the created nature, the breath of God in the dust of the earth. This possibility does not exist, however, for the angelic (or demonic) spirits, because of their relative simplicity and spiritual self-evidentness for themselves, since they lack the "subconscious," that is, nature or "flesh." Even the fallen angels, who become demons and attach themselves to sinful human flesh, remain confined in their spirituality, and "spiritual life" is the only life that is possible for them.

In contrast, man by his composition is not only spiritual but also psycho-corporeal, or natural. In him there lives not only his spirit but also his nature, which also lives by its own life. Nature is not spiritual but only psycho-corporeal. It is alive and lives (the fact that the life-giving God "did not create death" is applicable to it); and this life has for itself its sensuality, its different degrees of consciousness, its "psychic" character. In nature we have all the degrees, from the absolute sleep and the imperceptible life of the minerals and in general of "inorganic" matter, to the life of the vegetative world, and finally to the infinite varieties of organic life with the faculty of consciousness. In its limitedness, this animal consciousness (which is not spiritual, although it is individual) remains inaccessible to us. However close the convergence between an animal with its "psychic" consciousness and man might be, there remains between them the insuperable limit of spiritual consciousness of self that is proper to man (just as man in his corporeality and complexity is transcendent for the fleshless

angelic spirits, with whom he comes into contact only in his spirituality). But with the natural side of his being, man touches the animal world; he is an animal, although not only an animal. Man is capable of submerging himself in this animality to such a degree that it is as if the spiritual consciousness of self disappears in him and he is conscious of himself as only an animal, desiring to "descend from the apes." In such a state, man forgets about his heavenly homeland to such an extent that he is truly perplexed when he hears talk of spirituality.

Such a possibility results from a particular property of the creaturely spirit, namely from the fact that its proper nature is not exhausted by its proper spiritual world but potentially includes the entire created world, into which all the windows and doors are open for this spirit. The creaturely spirit can go out of itself through these doors to such an extent that the external nature in man can become for him the sole reality. Through this going out of himself, a man stops seeing himself as a spirit; he loses consciousness of his proper spirituality and sees only *psycho-corporeality* or simply "flesh" there where it is *pneumo-corporeality* that actually exists. Nonetheless, this state of "flesh" is for man a *spiritual* self-definition, a state of his spirit, although it is reduced to an exteriorized condition.

But man's spiritual essence, his "spiritual life," can become for him a fact of empirical self-evidence, of consciousness of self. A man sees himself and knows himself both in his eternity and in his creatureliness, both in his spirituality and in his natural condition. It is erroneous to think that "spiritual life," the spirit's consciousness of self, rips apart or abolishes the link between the spirit and nature, which lives in the former, and that it makes the spirit extranatural (illusory) or antinatural (self-disincarnating). It is just the opposite: spirituality heightens the sense of connection with the natural world, but it also gives an awareness of the proper depths of the spirit, not only of the nature of the world, but also of spiritual nature. For the spirit — every spirit, whether incarnate or unincarnate — necessarily has its proper *spiritual* nature, even if it is manifested in the spirit's life in the natural world. Without this proper spiritual nature the spirit would only be a dim candle of consciousness of self (Kant's "transcendental I"), illuminating the world's being but not living in it as an incarnate spirit.

Where does this spiritual nature come from, and what is it like? It is *divine* in its origin, inasmuch as the "sons of man" are also the "sons of God," born not of flesh and blood "but of God" (John 1:13), by a spiritual birth: "that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of

the Spirit is spirit" (3:6). And just as "God giveth not the spirit by measure" (3:34), so this spiritual life — that is, the life in God and by God, this deification of man — has many degrees, is an infinite ascent. This spiritual life of the sons of God does not remove them from participation in the natural life of the sons of man; on the contrary, the *duality of the natures* in man, his eternal divine-humanity, makes possible the deification of life, the inseparable and inconfusable communion of the two natures in man. If man were capable of freeing himself from his natural essence by the power of spiritual life, he would simply be God, and his life would be *fused* with divine life. However, although this is accessible to him (for "ye shall be as gods" [Gen. 3:5]), he can attain it only as a creaturely spirit. He can attain it precisely as a natural creaturely spirit, to whom the task of elevating all of creation to the image of spiritual being has been given. Thus, through the spiritual principle, the nature in man comes to belong to the spirit. It becomes spiritualized.

II. The Divine Spirit

God is Spirit. As such, He has a personal consciousness of self ("hypostasis") and a nature ("ousia"); and this inseparable union of nature and hypostasis is the life of Divinity in itself, a life that is both personally conscious and naturally concrete. This interrelation between hypostasis and nature, their inseparable union, is proper to both the divine spirit and the creaturely spirit. An essential difference, however, exists between the two.

In relation to the hypostasis of God as the Absolute Subject, there is the trihypostatic personality, which in one personal consciousness of self unites *all* the modes of the personal principle: I, thou, he, we, and you; whereas a unihypostatic personality has all these modes except I *outside* itself, in other personalities, and is thus limited and conditioned by them in its being. Fully manifested and actualized, the personal principle, the hypostasis, is a trihypostatic personality, in which the personal unity is revealed in the reality of three hypostatic centers, or hypostases, in triunity. Triunity is the divine number, not three and not one, but precisely triunity, Trinity. Such hypostatic being is realized not statically, as the unipersonal self-consciousness of the separate, isolated I in itself, reposing in its self-giveness (although this static and self-finished character is only apparent, for every I goes out into thou, we, you); rather it is realized dynamically, as the eternal act of trinitarian self-positing in another. This dynamic self-positing is *love*: the flames of the divine trihypostasis flare

up in each of the hypostatic centers and are then united and identified with one another, each going out of itself into the others, in the ardor of self-renouncing personal love. *Statically*, the unihypostatic personality is the center of self-affirmation and of repulsion; it is egocentric. *Dynamically*, the personality actualizes itself as the initial principle of self-renouncing love, as the going out into another I. The Holy Trinity as a personality is precisely such a dynamic personal principle. In it, the static being of each personal center is the initial principle of the dynamic going out, where personal self-affirmation is removed and overcome, and the Person is realized as the ring of this trinitarian self-moving love. Therefore, the first thing one must say about the Divine Person is that, as trihypostatic, this Person is equally real in one hypostasis and in three hypostases, that this Person is the pre-eternally realized reciprocity of love that totally vanquishes personal isolation and identifies three in one, while itself existing by the real being of these personal centers.¹

The trihypostatic Divinity is *one* Person, despite this trihypostatizedness, or rather in virtue of it. And in this unity of its personality (which nevertheless is not a monohypostatizedness) the Divine spirit does not formally differ from the creaturely spirit. And the Divine Person lives, actualizing His life in His nature. The one trihypostatic Divine Person has His divine nature — that is the fundamental definition of the Church. The trihypostatic God has His one nature, and He has this nature both as the Divine triunity in its unicity and as each hypostasis in its being: not only is the Son "consubstantial" with the Father (which was precisely the subject of dispute in the Arian epoch) but the Holy Spirit is "consubstantial" with the Father and with the Son. The three hypostases have their nature *not* in common, not in common possession (nor do they have it each one for Himself, which would be tritheism), but as *one* for all, homoousianly, not homoiousianly. In the domain of the theoretical reason, or rationality, this can be expressed only in equalities of the unequal: (1a) the Holy Trinity differs from each hypostasis, is not equal to it; (1b) the Holy Trinity is equidivine with respect to each hypostasis and consequently is equal to it; (2a) the Holy Trinity possesses one nature; (2b) each hypostasis also possesses one nature; consequently, the possession of one nature is equal and different for the Holy Trinity and the individual hypostasis. These rational contradictions, to which this idea is reduced, can be explained by the fact that rational thought deals with static quantities that are posited exter-

1. On this subject, as well as on the further considerations in the present chapter, see my work "Chapters on Trinity." I will not repeat the discussion in that work here.

nally in their finished facticity, whereas here it is faced with *acts* that are fluid in their dynamicity and continuity. These acts are therefore not subject to rational thought; they are not exhausted by its schemata.

In the relation of the Divine Personality to its nature, there exists a radical difference from what we know about the creaturely spirit. The proper nature of the creaturely spirit is an unexhausted and even inexhaustible *given*, a certain *mē on*, a possibility that is ceaselessly becoming an actuality, a darkness out of which new forms are emerging. In this sense, the creaturely spirit remains unrevealed and unknown for itself as well; it does not exhaust itself but is only in the process of *becoming* itself. Becoming is synonymous with creatureliness. Insofar as it is alive, the creaturely spirit always keeps accumulating for itself a new content of being, and therefore the proper nature of this spirit is, for it, both a given and a task that is proposed. Its proper nature is this not-I that belongs to its I only by ontological predestination, not yet in reality. Therefore, the I is not only revealed through this not-I but is also limited by it. The I cannot be realized by a self-affirmation (as Fichte attempted to do through *absolute Tathandlung*), by which in a certain sense the personal I posits itself. Not-I is the limit for I, potentially being I; that is, being destined to enter into the life of the I, into the possession of it, it remains *given* for the I. In his I, man also bears not-I; he is not transparent to himself and not fully knowable. In this sense, he is not self-positing; rather, he is a creature, although his personality is connected with his nature *on the model* of the self-positing spirit.

In the Divine Spirit the relation between person and nature is defined in another manner. In the Divine Spirit, there is nothing in a given or unrealized state. This Spirit is totally and thoroughly transparent to itself. For it, its nature is not not-I as a limit or an unactualized potential. God knows Himself with absolute, exhaustive knowledge: "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2:10). Therefore, although nature is other than hypostasis in God as well, it is entirely hypostatized, rendered conscious in the personal life of Divinity, manifested and actualized. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5); in particular, there is in Him no meonal darkness, no nocturnal twilight of half-being. No opposition or even distinction between consciousness and nature in God can be admitted in this sense, for that would signify that the Divine life is limited. It would contradict the all-blessedness, unchangeability, and fullness of the Divine life. In this sense, in the life of Divinity there cannot be any place for a "subconscious," and especially not for a "superconscious." If personality in divinity has a nature, this nature is

entirely personal; and one therefore cannot conceive in God a divine "nature" (analogous to Schelling's meonal "freedom"), which for Him would be a potentiality, a kind of *Urgrund* out of which the world would arise by its inner self-disclosure, God Himself being realized in this process (cf. Boehme, Schelling, and Hegel's dialectical self-disclosure of thought). The divine nature entirely and totally belongs to God; it is personally realized in Him as "His eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20). But in virtue of this realized state, even if the nature in God must be distinguished from His personality, one must not oppose to it, as another principle, a "fourth" in the Holy Trinity, a "Divinity" in God (such was the doctrine of Joachim of Fiore and Gilbert de la Porrée, a doctrine that was justly condemned in *this* sense by the Catholic Church²). The divine nature cannot "quaternize" the trine Divinity, for the nature cannot be categorically juxtaposed or "counted" with the hypostases: it is an autonomous principle and different from the hypostases. The divine nature is totally transparent for the Divine hypostases, and to that extent it is identified with them, while preserving its proper being. The nature is eternally hypostatized in God as the adequate life of the hypostases, whereas the hypostases are eternally connected in their life with the nature, while remaining distinct from it.³

This transparence of the nature for the hypostases and its total adequacy are realized in the unity of the trihypostatic life in conformity with the trihypostatizedness of the Divine Person. God has His nature by a *personal* self-positing, but one that is personally trihypostatic. God's nature is the *one* nature of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, with each hypostasis having it *in its own way*, for itself and for the other

2. The Council of Reims (1148) against Gilbert affirms that *simplicem naturam divinitatis esse Deum* and *divinitas sit Deus, et Deus divinitas* ("only the divine nature is God, and divinity is God and God is divinity"). This was also established at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) against Joachim of Fiore, who "quaternized" the Holy Trinity. (See Denzinger, 190, n. 431; cf. 191, n. 432.)

3. The proposition that the nature is hypostatized in God has a fundamental significance for sophiology. No one will dare deny the very being of the nature in God because of this hypostatizedness of the nature, and no one will see the quaternization of Divinity in this recognition of the reality of the nature. However, such a theological delirium is encountered every time it is a question of this very same nature as Sophia. Let those who are subject to this delirium reflect upon the fundamental relation between personality and nature in Divinity, for it contains the key to everything that follows. These delirious people speak insouciantly of the ousia in the Holy Trinity without fear of quaternizing it, but a panicked fear of this quaternization arises in them whenever this very same nature is considered as Sophia.

hypostases within the triune circle. The principle (*archē*) of the nature of Divinity, as of the entire Holy Trinity, is God the Father. He has His own nature, and His possession of it is a hypostatic, co-hypostatic, and interhypostatic act. The Father acquires Himself as His nature, not in Himself and for Himself, but in proceeding out of Himself and in begetting, as the Father, the Son. Fatherhood is precisely the form of love in which the loving one desires to have himself not in himself but outside himself, in order to give his own to this other I, but an I identified with him, in order to manifest his own in spiritual begetting: in the Son, who is the living image of the Father. The Father lives not in Himself but in His Son's life; the Father lives in begetting, that is, in proceeding out of Himself, in revealing Himself. The Father's love is ecstatic, fiery, causative, active. Unfathomable for the creaturely spirit is this *begetting* of the Son by the Father, of the Person by the Person. This begetting power is the ecstasy of a going out of oneself, of a kind of self-emptying, which at the same time is self-actualization through this begetting. The Father actualizes *His own*, His own hypostatically transparent nature, in the hypostasis of the Son, who is His Word, the "image of his person [*hypostasis*]" (Heb. 1:3). The Father has Himself in His nature as the *hypostatic* Word, His Word, and the Father is the one who speaks the Word. Thus, in the first place, God's hypostatic nature is the Father's hypostatic Word, which is uttered by the Father in the Son. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son" (Matt. 11:27). For the Father, begetting is self-emptying, the giving of Himself and of His own to the Other; it is the sacrificial ecstasy of all-consuming, jealous love for the Other: "love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame" (Song of Songs 8:6).

The Father begets; the Son is begotten. These are two forms of generation: active and passive. To be sure, this should not be understood as the emergence from nonbeing of that which was not, for the Divine hypostases are equally eternal. The Father is the cause (*aitia*) of the Son not in the sense of His origination but only of eternal interrelation: that of begetter and begotten, the revealing one and the revealed one, the subject and the predicate. However, that which on the part of the Father is active begetting is, on the part of the Son, passive and obedient "begottenness." The Son, as the Son, has Himself and His own not as Himself and His own but as the Father's, in the image of the Father. Spiritual sonhood consists precisely in the Son's depleting Himself in the

name of the Father. Sonhood is already *eternal kenosis*. The Son is not a flame of the Father's fire but the gentle Light of holy glory (as the vespers hymn says). The Son's love is the sacrificial, self-renouncing humility of the Lamb of God, "foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Pet. 1:20). And if the Father desires to have Himself outside Himself, in the Son, the Son too does not desire to have Himself for Himself: He offers His personal selfhood in sacrifice to the Father, and being the Word, He becomes mute for Himself, as it were, making Himself the *Father's* Word. Being rich, he makes Himself poor, becoming sacrificially silent in the bosom of the Father.

The sacrifice of the Father's love consists in self-renunciation and in self-emptying in the begetting of the Son. The sacrifice of the Son's love consists in self-depletion in the begottenness from the Father, in the acceptance of birth as begottenness. These are not only pre-eternal facts but also acts for both the one and the other. The *sacrifice* of love, in its reality, is pre-eternal suffering — not the suffering of limitation (which is incompatible with the absoluteness of divine life) but the suffering of the authenticity of sacrifice and of its immensity. This suffering of sacrifice not only does not contradict the Divine all-blessedness but, on the contrary, is its foundation, for this all-blessedness would be empty and unreal if it were not based on authentic sacrifice, on the reality of suffering. If God is love, He is also sacrifice, which manifests the victorious power of love and its joy only through suffering.⁴

This mutual sacrifice of generation, this self-emptying and self-depletion, would be a tragedy in God if it remained self-sufficient. But it is pre-eternally resolved in the bliss of the offered and mutually accepted sacrifice, of suffering overcome. This mutual sacrifice never exists unresolved, although it cannot be separated or excluded from this bliss, for it is its hidden foundation. Divine bliss cannot be understood as self-loving and empty self-admiration, analogous to egotistical human happiness; and the fullness of love demands real, not apparent, sacrifice. God is not the dyad of Father and Son, but the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who is precisely the *joy* of sacrificial love, the bliss and actualization of this love. In begetting the Son and proceeding out of Himself in this begetting, the Father does not yet have the One who is being begotten as the already be-

4. One can also define this state of sacrifice as voluntary hypostatic dying, under the condition that the concept of death is liberated from the meaning it has in temporal creaturely life, a meaning that has nothing in common with spiritual dying as a manifestation of eternal divine life.

gotten One, as the object of His love and joy, just as the torments of human childbearing *lead* to joy but, in themselves, are not yet this joy. The relation of the Father to the Son therefore has two aspects: for the Father, the Son is not only being begotten, He is already begotten; He is “the only begotten, beloved Son.” And the relation of the Son to the Father also has two aspects: for the Son, the Father is not only the Begetter but also the Father, in whom His own life is concealed: “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9); “I am in the Father, and the Father in me” (14:10). I am Thou and Thou art I; I am We.

This identity of Father and Son, their self-identification in love, is realized by a hypostatic act: the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father upon the Son (or “through” the Son). Insofar as the Father and the Son mutually know each other in self-renouncing love as an act being accomplished, their mutual being for each other has only an *ideal* character. It acquires reality only in the *accomplished* act, in begetting-begottenness. This reality of the divine nature, already revealing itself in an ideal manner in the fatherhood of the Father and the sonhood of the Son, is accomplished by the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father, reposes upon the Son, and unites the two of them. This is the mutual love of the Father and the Son and the joy of this love; it is the accomplished self-revelation of Divinity in its nature, not only in Truth, but also in Beauty. This is no longer the sacrificial act; it is the triumphant testimony about itself of love and the self-knowledge of God’s nature; it is not begetting but procession. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and is received by the Son; He is the “third” person of the Holy Trinity, for He establishes the mutuality of the Father and the Son. God *ideally* defines His own nature in this begetting of His Pre-eternal Word by the Speaking Father. But the *reality* of this nature is experienced through the Holy Spirit. In God there is no self-definition that is not hypostatic. Therefore, the recognition of His own nature as *reality* is the hypostatic act of the procession of the Holy Spirit. This act determines not only the relation between the Father and the Holy Spirit but also the relation between the Father and the Son. This hypostatic relation is their mutual love. The Holy Spirit loves the Son, for He “reposes” upon Him; and together with Him, in an inseparable dyad with Him, the Holy Spirit reveals the Father and loves the Father as the source of love, the First Cause. The Holy Spirit Himself does not reveal the Son to the Father or the Father to the Son, but He unites Them in the reality of the divine nature. In this sense one can say concerning the “procession” of the Holy Spirit that it is not active but passive; the Holy Spirit issues, flows out. He does not reveal Himself, for He does not have

His own particular content; rather, He proclaims that which the Son says in the name of the Father. He is the Spirit of Truth, not Truth itself. In Him and through Him the depths of God become transparent as all-real Truth and Beauty. The trihypostatic God has His nature as the triune and unitrinitarian act of the love of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, the *one* nature of the three hypostases.⁵

III. The Divine World

The spirit has personality and nature; the Divine Spirit also has its trihypostatic personality and its one nature, which, being totally transparent for the personality, is entirely personal, hypostatized. However, this does not diminish its special character as nature or Divinity (*theotēs*).⁶ This is the *Divine world* in God, who, as the living God, has His proper life and its source in the divine nature, or “depths of God.” Sometimes Divinity, or the nature in God, is denied solely on the grounds that in God all is personal, and His entire essence is permeated with rays of consciousness of self, that is, it is hypostatized. This impoverishes His being, however, reducing it to *abstract* personal consciousness, that is, making it poorer than the creaturely spirit. But this being, which is transparent for the consciousness of self, nonetheless exists also *by itself*, the way our nature exists in us, not only insofar as it is still an unrealized given and an unilluminated depth, but also insofar as it enters into our conscious life.

God’s nature is not diminished in its being by the fact that it is exhaustively realized in the divine consciousness. His nature exists not only for this consciousness of self but also *by itself*, as *ens realissimum*, as ousia. This ousia of God can be understood as God’s life and God’s power, that is, as something entirely simple and in this sense superqualitative, not only in the sense of its *transcendence* in relation to creation (the apophatic element), but also in the sense of the *fullness* of the absolute white light that cannot be decomposed into lines of the color spectrum but that contains them (the kataphatic element). However, this transcen-

5. The question of the character of the Third hypostasis is touched upon here only as far as necessary. A special study of the Third hypostasis can be found in the second part of the present trilogy, *The Comforter* [published by Eerdmans in 2004 in Boris Jakim’s translation].

6. This distinction between God and Divinity plays a large role in the Palamite disputes and definitions.

dence for creation does not diminish Divinity and does not impoverish His nature in itself. The divine nature is not only the *power* of life but also its *content* — the absolute content of absolute life with all its “properties,” the property of all properties. It is proper for this content to include All, for no limitations are applicable to Divinity; furthermore, this All should be understood not as an aggregate or series of an infinite number of elements of the All but as their organic inner integrity, as integral wisdom⁷ in union. This is the All as unity and unity as All, *All-unity*. God’s life is this positive All-unity, and the All-unity is God’s nature. In this capacity God’s nature as the absolute content of His life is that which Scripture calls the Divine Wisdom, Sophia (see Prov. 8:22 and parallel texts). Thus, the *Divine Sophia* is nothing other than *God’s nature*, His ousia, not only in the sense of power and depth, but also in the sense of self-revealing content, in the sense of the All-unity.⁸ When we speak of God’s Divinity, we have in mind His nature both as the closed depths, the source of life, and as the open depths, life itself; and here the source of life is identical to life itself, even as Ousia and Sophia are identical.

Ousia is usually conceived as a Divine reality, whereas Sophia is usually conceived as only a property or combination of properties belonging to this reality, a property or properties that arise or manifest themselves only in the case of a definite relation, precisely to the creaturely world. There is no basis for such a distinction and separation. Divinity as Sophia is *ens realissimum* to the same degree as Ousia, insofar as the source of life cannot be separated from or opposed to its revelation. The Divine Ousia, like Sophia, is precisely the All-unity that is the life of God and that lives in God by the whole of Divine reality; having Ousia, God thereby also has it as Sophia. God is Ousia: *Deus est Divinitas, ho Theos theotēs estin*. The reverse, however, is not true: Ousia is not (the personal) God; Divinity is not the Divine Personality. Likewise, God is Sophia; Sophia is Divine. She is God in His self-revelation, *Deus revelatus*, although the reverse, again, is not true: Sophia is not *ho Theos* but only *theos* or *Theos*.⁹ Sophia cannot be

7. The Russian word *tselomudrie*, here translated “integral wisdom,” can also mean chastity. — Trans.

8. Wisdom in this sense is not only a “property” or one of the “properties” that are found in the appropriate scholastic rubrics of dogmatic theology. Rather, it is the “property of properties,” in which all of them find their foundation. Wisdom is Divine being, the All-Unity, which is not only without qualities (since it surpasses qualities) but also possesses *all* qualities.

9. Sophia is not *the* God (*ho Theos*). Rather, she is god (*theos*) or God (*Theos*, without the article *ho*). — Trans.

equated with the Divine Personality, and therefore particularly not with the Logos. The equality that here expresses concrete identity, life-identity, is *irreversible*, just as the subject and the predicate are irreversible. Only abstract, mathematical, and (in this sense) empty equalities are reversible: $a = b$ and $b = a$.

Thus, God is Divinity, Ousia-Sophia. It follows that in God there is not only a Person (and Persons) but also Divinity, which is *not* a personality, although it belongs to a Person (and Persons) and is totally hypostatized. Divinity is therefore both personal and impersonal. Such is precisely the Church’s dogma of the union of Hypostasis and Ousia in God: Ousia itself is not a personality, although in God it exists only personally. If we consider Ousia only in the aspect of *personal* being, we effectively abolish it. Ousia possesses both personal being (in relation to a Person) and impersonal being (by itself): at no moment of its being does it exist outside of and separately from personality, but also at no moment of its being does it merge with personality, for otherwise the personality too would lose itself, become deprived of nature, be transformed into an empty abstract I, and would not be a vital spirit, living in its own nature. The nature must therefore be considered not only as something existent in God, as Ousia-Sophia, but also as something independent, as Divinity or the Divine world in itself, existent not only in God but also for God. Thus, one can say not only that God *is* Divinity but also that He *has* Divinity, existent by itself, although not for itself (that is, not personally, not as a “fourth hypostasis”).

What can one say about Ousia as Sophia? About nature as content? About Divinity as the Divine world? According to content, this is the All; according to mode of being, this is All-unity, Integral Wisdom; according to power of being, this is the living and eternally alive principle. Its reality is equal to the reality of God Himself (for it is precisely God in His self-revelation); its life is equal to the life of God Himself (for it is His proper life); its aseity is equal to the aseity of God Himself (for, apart from Divinity, the very idea of God becomes an abstract concept). Sophia is the Pleroma, the Divine world, existent in God and for God, eternal and uncreated, in which God lives in the Holy Trinity. And in itself this Divine world contains all that the Holy Trinity reveals about itself in itself; it is the Image of God in God Himself, the self-Icon of Divinity (according to the doctrine of St. John of Damascus). This world has in itself the life of Divinity. It is therefore not only a *thought* about the Divine world, not only an ideal, but unrealized and thus abstract thought (the Platonic *kosmos noētos*); it is not only the mute perception of this world, deprived of

differentiatedness and transparency of being. It is the real and fully realized divine Idea, the idea of all ideas, actualized as Beauty in ideal images of beauty. The icon of Divinity is divine self-art, life in ideal images and in the reality of these images. Ousia-Sophia is a living principle, and it lives such a profound life that no creaturely life can be compared with it. Ousia-Sophia is the Life of life and the proto-ground of all creaturely life. She is the divine life in God, who is love. Therefore, divine life too is love, which is the power of this life: The *All* — multiform, multidiverse, but also one — is linked in the *All-unity* by the power of love as one in the many and the many in the one, as all in all. This is the *organic* image of the multi-unity, in which the unity is not established by the abstraction of concrete properties (as is the case with Aristotle's "one in many") and in which concreteness does not abolish the multi-unity. Love in God's life is an all-permeating, all-concrete multi-unity as a spiritual organism. This form of unity is not given to us in our rational logic, which corresponds to the corrupted state of the sinful world. The sinful world knows reality only as mutual repulsion, and it knows multiplicity only as extra-position or juxtaposition; its logic therefore has at its disposal only the *abstract* concept of the universal without any possibility of thinking the concretely universal. Therefore, the very idea of the divine all-concrete all-unity remains abstract for this logic. This all-unity is nevertheless a necessary ontological postulate for our thought and feeling in relation to life, not as this relation is given, but as it is proposed — the universal cosmic *sobornost*¹⁰ of concrete all-unity in divine love.

Love is not only the linking or uniting force of the all-unity of the Divine world in this world itself, but it is also the link between this world and the hypostatic God. In our abstract logic of the world, the copula "is" represents the indifferent glue that formally links or unites the subject and the predicate. But in the statement *God is Ousia or Sophia, or the Divine world*, the copula "is" signifies not a relation of formal logic but the ontological link of love. *God is Sophia* signifies that God, hypostatic love, loves Sophia, and that she loves God with an answering, though not hypostatic, love.¹¹ Thus "is" signifies love. In Sophia, God loves Himself in His self-revelation; He loves His Own, existent by itself, objectified and reified. But

10. The concept of *sobornost* (derived from the Russian *sobirat'*, "to gather," and related to *sobor*, "council") is usually used to describe the divinely inspired fellowship of believers in the Church, their "catholicity." Here, Bulgakov extends this concept to the entire universe. — Trans.

11. See the chapter on Sophia in my book *The Unfading Light* (Moscow, 1917).

Sophia too, this self-revelation, loves the hypostatic God-Love by an answering love. She does not merely belong to God, she *is* God; that is, she *loves* the trihypostatic God.

This form of God's love for Sophia and, inversely, of Sophia's love for God requires special clarification, for the same term "love" is used to express three (or even four) different forms of one love. First of all, it is necessary to distinguish *hypostatic* love, love of person for person, which is love in the proper sense, the foundation of the trihypostatic unity of the Holy Trinity; it is in relation to this triunity that it is first of all said that *God is love*. We have an image of such love in the *personal* love between human beings, as well as in churchly love. Furthermore, one must distinguish hypostatic love for a nonhypostatic, although hypostatized, principle: this is God's love for Sophia, His self-revelation, God's love for the divine world. In the creaturely, sinful world, love for *one's own*, that is, in essence, love for oneself, acquires the character of self-love and prejudice, in virtue of which this "one's own" is prized not at its essential and true worth but precisely as one's own; this is the egotistical admiration of one's own image, "narcissism." Herein lies the principle of the fall of Satan, who fell in love with himself, who came to love *his own* with an egotistical, self-asserting love. But even in the sinful world there can exist a righteous love for one's own, a love based on an appreciation of the objective value of one's own, for the sake of which true self-renunciation with the forgetting of oneself is manifested. In this same way a creator loves his creation, and a doer loves his deed: he loves it for the sake of the deed itself, although he does not separate himself from it but in a certain sense identifies himself with it. Here the image of God's love for Sophia is imprinted in man.

The third form of love is Sophia's answering love for God, as the inner connection of the Divine trihypostatic Person with His nature. On the part of the nature, on the part of Ousia as Sophia, there is of course no place for personal love (the type of love exhibited in the first two forms of love), for there is no person here: Sophia is not a "fourth hypostasis," just as in general she is not a hypostasis at all. However, she too loves; otherwise we could not understand her relation to God, since the mere fact of belonging based on the right of property or possession does not, in itself, conform with God's essence: in the life of the spirit there is no place for thingness or facticity. Clearly, one must recognize a special form of *nonhypostatic love in relation to a hypostasis*, and this is precisely the relation of the Divine Sophia to the triune Divine Person. Sophia loves God without being a hypostasis. What can this mean? Sophia is not hypostatic be-

ing, but she is a living *entity*. The divine world is alive, for nothing nonliving can be conceived in God. This living entity is hypostatized in God as His personal nature and life, but in order to be hypostatized this entity must in itself be *ens realissimum*; it must live in itself by a supremely alive life, if one can use such an expression. The power of life — its fire — is love, and to live in God is to love. Nonhypostatic love cannot know the self-renouncing, sacrificial self-positing that expresses divine trihypostatic love, this circulation of personal depletion aimed at filling oneself in the other. The nature of nonhypostatic love is different: it can only *belong*, surrendering itself, loving and, in this self-surrendering, “feminine” love, realizing the power of life, the bliss of love. It is in this sense (but *only* in this sense) that Sophia’s love is feminine. This is the original meaning of the biblical images of the wife and bride that are applied to the Church.

But it is precisely Sophia’s self-surrender to God that signifies her hypostatization.¹² In order, however, to fully understand this idea of God’s love for Sophia and of Sophia’s answering love for God, without which God would inevitably be conceived of as without nature (which would constitute the most pernicious of heresies in the first and initial dogma of God), one must fully accept the reality of the divine world, without evading this acceptance under different pretexts and deviating into idealistic and spiritualistic mystification. Sophia, as the divine world, *exists* in God and, in a certain sense, is *present* before God and is *possessed* by Him in all her divine reality and authenticity. Any attempt to diminish this reality is an attempt to diminish the reality of the very essence of God.

But together with the reality of this divine world, we must not forget its *spirituality*, for God is Spirit and nothing nonspiritual can be attributed to Him. Consequently, the divine world in Sophia is a *spiritual reality*. In order to be real — in order to be supremely real — this world must be spiritual. In general, *reality* is by no means connected, as many think, with thingness and materiality (the angels are immaterial, but their reality is not thereby diminished). Reality, to the supreme degree, is proper to God Himself, who is in the Holy Trinity: we cannot speak of His nonreality if only because there can be no question here of any material and reified principle. Consequently, spiritual reality exists as the prototype of reality in general.

The reality of the divine world is that this world exists in God as the self-revelation of the entire Holy Trinity — of the Father, who reveals Him-

self in the Word and shows the All in it; and in the Holy Spirit, who accomplishes this All for the Father and the Son. There cannot be another or greater reality, and the only matter for discussion is whether this self-revelation exists only for God, as His personal, “subjective” representation, or whether it is also real *by itself*, in order to be for God as well. Anyone who confesses that the Holy Trinity has one nature would hardly dare to affirm such subjectivism. Can one really allow that this one nature is not revealed in God and for God as His self-revelation or Sophia? To recognize the *reality* of the divine world, a reality that establishes the possibility of Sophia’s answering love for the Divine Person, is to recognize in Sophia, as the divine world, her proper life in a certain sense. To be sure, this life is not hypostatic but natural; nevertheless, it has its *natural* (although by no means hypostatic) center or coherence. The entire life of this world, with its spiritual reality, is centered in love as an all-unity, as a pan-organism, and in this sense as a *spiritual body*, living one life, but a life that is all-one. This organizing principle of the spiritual body, this centering force of the spiritual pan-organism, is precisely *love*, as the inner life of this body. Here we encounter the idea of love in a new form, its fourth form. This love is completely devoid of the personal principle, for if Sophia is not a person, her inner life is not personal. Love is manifested here impersonally, as the connecting and organizing principle, as the universal mutual attraction and order of divine ideas existing in the divine world. This is not a mechanical attraction, which cannot exist in a spiritual organism; rather, it is the inner attraction and interpenetration of that which is kindred in multiformity and one in its nature. Love here is the natural order of the divine world.

IV. The Divine Sophia

The divine world is the objective principle of the life of God, of the being of the One who is. This world is this life itself, and through it no extradivine principle is introduced into Divinity. This life of God in His Divinity, or the divine world as an objective and living principle, is precisely what Scripture calls Sophia, or the Wisdom of God (see Job 28; Prov. 8–9; Wisdom of Solomon 7–11; Ecclesiasticus 1:24). In considering Sophia as Divinity in God, one can distinguish two aspects of Sophia, in conformity with Holy Scripture: She is, properly, Sophia (Hokhma), as the revelation of the Wisdom of God; and she is also Glory, as the revelation of God’s Beauty and All-blessedness.

12. See my essay “Hypostasis and Hypostatizedness” in *Collection in Honor of P. B. Struve* (Prague, 1925). This essay has been translated as “Hypostasis and Hypostaticity” by A. B. Gallaher and I. Kutkova (*St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 49:1-2 [2005]: 5-46).

In Sophia is revealed the *content* of the divine nature, as All and All-unity. In this sense, she is the revelation of the Logos, the Word, saying All: "All things were made by him" (John 1:3). The Word-Logos is the principle of meaning, content, distinction, multiplicity, but also the principle of connection, correlation, all-unity. This is self-thinking Divine Thought, *noēsis tēs noēseōs*, whose object and content is itself. Thought is identical here with its object, the word with its content, and the all-permeating connection of thought is the connection of the all-unity,¹³ the very wisdom of being. Multiforimity and "logical" connectedness, differentiation and interpenetration in the dialectics of thought that posits and knows itself, the essential density of content of thought and its "logical" transparency, the clear and cloudless world of divine ideas — such is the Kingdom of the Logos. And so Wisdom, as wisdom, is proper to the entire Holy Trinity and each of its hypostases. And this Wisdom, as the content of all meanings, is also the consciousness of self of the trinitarian God. However, just as in the Holy Trinity the unity of life is established given a particular self-determination of each of the hypostases, so in this case Wisdom, as Logos, is the predominant self-revelation of the Second hypostasis as the Father's Word and the Father's Wisdom. The Father speaks His Word in the Son, and He also reveals His Wisdom in the Son. Sophia, as Wisdom, is the self-revelation of the Logos, through the self-determination of the Second hypostasis,¹⁴ which is why the incarnate Logos, Christ, is called "the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:24).

However, Sophia as the Divine world, as the fullness of Divinity, *plērōma tēs theotētos* (Col. 2:9), is not only the Wisdom but also the *Glory* of God. The Glory of God, an expression frequently used in the Old and New Testaments to refer to God, must, first of all, not be understood in the subjective sense of a glorification of someone by someone else, in particular not in the sense of the glorification of God by creatures, for the Glory of God exists outside of any relation to creation, to the extradivine. The Glory is in God Himself and without reference to creation ("before the world was" [John 17:5]) as an intradivine principle. God glorifies Himself

in Himself; glory belongs to God not only as praise of glory but also as the Glory proper to Him, about which Holy Scripture speaks. Scripture describes the Glory in massive religious images as the appearance of Divinity itself: to Moses on Sinai, to the people in the tabernacle and in the Temple of Solomon, to Isaiah and Ezekiel in their visions.¹⁵ Its appearance to the prophet Ezekiel most fully expresses the essence of the Glory as Sophia. Glory, by its very concept, cannot be without object and content; by intention, it is glory about something — it has its object, which is given to it. And the Divine Glory is thus the Glory of God about His Divinity that is being revealed. This is God's joy about Himself. It is God admiring Himself, being comforted by Himself, seeing Himself in Beauty; and this relation should be taken in its essence, that is, apart from the self-love and narcissism proper to created beings.

God's Glory is about what is worthy of glory, about what is *glorious* in itself. In a unihypostatic created being, such self-glorification would inevitably be egocentric and even egotistic and prejudiced, insofar as love for *one's own* is inseparable here from love for *oneself* (nevertheless, here too, as we have indicated, it is possible to attain a certain self-renunciation in love for one's own, by recognizing it as a value). But in the trihypostatic God, in virtue of His trihypostatic character, all self-love or egocentric self-affirmation is excluded; and Glory here is just as inalienable and essential in the self-revelation of Divinity as Wisdom or the Word. In other words, that which is revealed in the Word as Wisdom is *glorious*, worthy of glory, and has Glory. This is the all-blessedness of God, the joy of Divine life as self-knowledge and self-revelation. The Glory of God expresses the divine self-relation of God to His Wisdom; the Glory has an object for itself. The Glory is therefore not the first but the second in the self-revelation of Divinity (to be sure, this is not a chronological but an ontological distinction). One can say that Glory in Divinity does not precede but rather follows the Wisdom of the Word. Glory is Glory *about* Wisdom; it reposes upon the accomplished revelation of the Word. Glory renders the Word palpable, valuable, desirable, joyous, full, adequate.

Thus, the revelation of the Glory is *inseparable* from the revelation of the Wisdom of the Word; the two are one and identical in the Divine Sophia herself, just as Sophia herself is one and indivisible. Here it becomes perfectly clear that, if Sophia, as the Wisdom of the Word, as the

13. That which Hegel attributed to thought as the sole principle of being is here completely applicable to the Divine Sophia in the capacity of the Logos. See my book *Die Tragödie der Philosophie* (1927).

14. There is a sophianic icon that expresses precisely this idea: the Pre-eternal Adolescent, the Word of the Father, the Vigilant Eye. This is not an icon of Christ in His adolescence but an icon of the Logos in the capacity of Wisdom.

15. For the texts on the Glory of God, see the excursus to my book *The Burning Bush: An Essay in the Dogmatic Interpretation of Certain Features in the Orthodox Veneration of the Mother of God* (Paris, 1927).

Logos, is the self-revelation of God in the Second hypostasis, then the Glory is the self-revelation of God in the Third hypostasis. In other words, *Sophia as Glory belongs to the Holy Spirit*. Also disclosed here is the relation between the Word and the Holy Spirit as the relation between the Second and Third hypostases: first the Word and then the Spirit. The Spirit reposes upon the Word; the Word and the Holy Spirit, their dyad and bi-unity, reveal, in the Divine Sophia, the Father. And therefore it is said about the trinitarian God: "thine is the kingdom [of the Father], and the power [of the Son], and the glory [of the Holy Spirit], for ever" (Matt. 6:13). In their *hypostatic* being the Word and the Holy Spirit are "distinctly personal," whereas in the Divine Sophia, as the self-revelation of the Holy Trinity, they are distinct but inseparable. They are distinct since the Son is a hypostasis other than the Holy Spirit, and the mode of His revelation is other than that of the Holy Spirit; but this *revelation* itself, as an objective principle, as the Divine world, the Wisdom of God, is *one*: in Sophia the Father reveals Himself through the Son and the Holy Spirit in His Divinity. Therefore, to say that the Logos in His *revelation* is the Divine Sophia is just as legitimate as to say that the Holy Spirit, the "Spirit of Wisdom," is the Divine Sophia in His *revelation* (although the converse is not true: one cannot say that the Divine Sophia is the Logos or that she is the Holy Spirit). But it would be just as legitimate to say that neither the Logos nor the Holy Spirit as such, as personally distinct, is the Divine Sophia, for Sophia is their self-revelation in *bi-unity*, in relation to the Father; that is, she is the self-revelation of the Holy Trinity as the Father in the Son and the Holy Spirit.

This definition of the relations of the Divine Sophia to the different hypostases of the Holy Trinity concretely manifests the fundamental position of the dogma of the Holy Trinity: the hypostases are *separate* and *distinct*, and at the same time their *equal dignity* and *equal divinity* are preserved. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and the entire Holy Trinity, Each equally is God, not more and not less. But in addition, the Holy Trinity is not identical to any of the hypostases, just as the hypostases are not identical to one another, although they are of equal dignity and divinity: they manifest equality with inequality and identity with distinction. But it is the same way in the Divine life and self-revelation, in the Divine Sophia,¹⁶ as it is in hypostatic being. The Divine

16. This makes clear that, from the trinitarian and sophiological points of view, it is erroneous to fully equate Sophia with just one person, namely the Logos. If only the Logos were Wisdom, that would mean (contrary to churchly and patristic tradition) that

Sophia can be defined both in relation to the entire Holy Trinity in its unity (which is without separation) and in relation to each of the hypostases (which are inconfusable and inseparable). However, here the particular character of each hypostasis is preserved in all its force, as is each one's interrelationship within the Holy Trinity.

The Second hypostasis is revealed in the Divine Sophia according to His hypostatic character not only as the Word and Wisdom but also *as the Son*. We recall that, in itself, the sonhood already represents a certain pre-eternal kenosis of the Son, His self-depletion in His love for the Father, the hypostatic sacrifice of the Lamb. This *sacrifice* of the Lamb is revealed also in the Divine Sophia — no longer as the *personal* self-definition of the Son in relation to the Father, but as His *natural* self-positing in the self-revelation of Divinity, in Sophia. The Son surrenders Himself as the *Word of All and about All* to the Divine world; He serves the self-revealing Divinity, and He posits Himself as the *content* of this self-revelation. He sacrifices *Himself* to the Father, and He sacrifices *His own* to the Divine world, sacrificially depleting Himself in all things and to the end. The *Divine world*, in its first state, is therefore the Word by whom all things were made. The imprint of the self-revealing hypostatic love of the begetting Father and of the begotten Son, of the Proto-Image and of the Image, lies also on the Divine world, in the Divine Sophia; the self-revelation of God is a work of sacrificial love, in which the Father is the loving priest and the Son is the loving sacrifice, revealing in Himself the Father. In its content, the Divine world bears the seal of the Lamb, of the Word of God. One can see in this a new confirmation of the fact that, in a *certain* sense, the Logos is Sophia. But the Divine world is not *only* the revelation of the Logos, for this revelation is accomplished by the Holy Spirit, who reposes upon the Logos, manifests Him, and answers the depletion of the Logos with *glorification* (the comfort of the Comforter). In this sense, if the Logos can be called the "демиург" in the Divine world, then the Holy Spirit is its "cosmourge," its Comforter and Beautifier, the *Glory of the Word*.

There is one final definition of the Divine Sophia that follows from the aforementioned definitions of the Divine world, but that also is a re-

Wisdom is alien to the other Persons. If Wisdom belonged only to one Person, that would mean that the Divine triunity is sundered, and that it is replaced by a tritheism, with the gods on this pseudo-Christian Olympus divided, as in paganism, according to specialization. This also abolishes the one nature, life, and self-revelation of the Holy Trinity. Thus, to negate the Divine Sophia by reducing her to an attribute of the Logos constitutes first an antitrinitarian heresy and then (as we shall see) also a christological heresy.

flection of the creaturely world. By her *content*, Sophia, or the Divine world, is the pan-organism of ideas, the organism of the ideas of all, about all, and in all; she is Integral Wisdom. In herself, Sophia contains life, although it is not for herself, for she is hypostatized in God. How should one understand this divine organism, or this spiritual body, which is the revelation of the Glory of God? This organism is a certain living essence, a living, spiritual, although nonhypostatic entity, the Divinity of God, living by an integral but also differentiated and qualified life. What is this organism? Is it indefinable in concepts of the creaturely world (being entirely transcendent to this world) and expressible only in the *not* of apophatic theology (the *via negationis*)? Or is it accessible to the creaturely consciousness — to the human consciousness and to the angelic consciousness — also in a *positive* definition, so that it is possible to have a kataphatic theology with reference to it? A kataphatic theology is possible, not through human ascent into the Divine world (which is impossible for the creaturely consciousness), but only through the condescension of the Divine world to the creaturely world, that is, through a self-revelation of God that would be accessible to man. This accessibility is based, of course, solely on the divine being's also becoming a human being to a certain degree, enabling man — out of himself and through himself, through his knowledge of himself — to gain knowledge of God. A certain initial identity, which is the basis for human knowledge of God as a certain identification with Him (there can be no other path here), is the necessary condition for this. Without this identity, God would be absolutely transcendent for man, and we could think and say about Him only that which He is *not*, remaining silent about that which He *is*.

Such self-revelation can only be the proper work of God in the *creation of man*. This self-revelation is accomplished by God as the foundation of man's being and, in man, of the being of all creation. Man is created by God in "the image of God" (Gen. 1:27), and this image is the *ens realissimum* in man, who thereby becomes a creaturely god. This *ens realissimum* builds a bridge of ontological identification between the Creator and creation through the deification of the latter, and from the beginning it establishes a *positive* relation between the Image and the Proto-Image. This can be understood only in the sense of a relative, analogical identity that, although it has its particular path of development, its epochs or aeons, is already implanted in man and predetermined. This identity signifies not only the divinity of man but also a certain humanity of God — "we are . . . his offspring" (Acts 17:28). There is something in man that must be directly correlated with God's being, and this something is

not some individual feature but man's very *humanity*, which is the image of God. Man, as a creaturely spirit, has personality (hypostasis) and his own nature, just as God has personality (trihypostatic) and His nature, Divinity, the Divine Sophia, the Divine world, the pan-organism of ideas of divine being. The divine nature must be understood in a *positive* relation to man's nature as it exists in the fullness of its powers, possibilities, and tasks, not yet manifested in the life of the integral old Adam but already manifested in the life of the New Adam. In ourselves, humanity is as yet an unrevealed essence, one that is only in the process of being revealed and that will be revealed only when "God will be all in all." The initial axiom of this revelation consists precisely in there being a conformity or *co-imagedness* between Divinity and humanity. In other words, the Divine Sophia, as the pan-organism of ideas, is *the pre-eternal Humanity in God*, as the divine proto-image and foundation for man's being.

The Divine Sophia as Humanity, or as its principle, is not yet Man. Man is a *hypostasis* living in its nature, which is precisely humanity. Thus Sophia by herself, as an essence that is nonhypostatic (but is only in the process of being hypostatized), does not yet express the full image of man, which necessarily requires a hypostasis. Man receives a hypostasis from God at his creation as "the in-breathing of the Divine spirit," and he thereby becomes "a living soul," a living man, I — in which, for which, and through which his humanity lives. But this humanity already possesses *the ability to be hypostatized*, and in this it already bears the imprint of its Proto-Image. Although the Divine Sophia is not a hypostasis, she is never nonhypostatic or extrahypostatic; she is eternally being hypostatized, and for her the direct hypostasis is not the Father (although He is revealed in the Divine Sophia) but the Logos, the demiurgic hypostasis who reveals the Father. It can be said about the Logos that He is the eternal Man, the human Proto-Image *before* the creation of the world, and that man is created in His image. In this sense, the apostles and the Gospels repeatedly call Him the Man from Heaven or simply Man, the Son of God and the Son of Man, in all the mysterious interrelation of these names.¹⁷ And as the First Man, He is also the Lamb sacrificed before the creation of the world; that is, He is predestined to become also an earthly man. This idea is foundational for Christology, soteriology, and anthropology in their

17. Cf. the divinely inspired audacious words of the Apostle Paul: "the gift by grace . . . [of] one man, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:15); "the first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man is the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47). Also relevant here are the Lord's words from the Gospel of John: "he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man" (3:13).

unity: Sophia is the pre-eternal Humanity,¹⁸ and the Logos is the Divine Man. The Divine-Humanity and the God-Man, that is, the humanity of Divinity and the divinity of humanity, are given pre-eternally in God. The Logos, the Second hypostasis, is the proper hypostasis of the Divine-Humanity in God.

However, we also know that the Holy Spirit reposes upon the Word, and He gives reality to the world of the Divine ideas of the Logos. The relation of the Third hypostasis to the eternal Divine-Humanity is therefore expressed, *not* in the fact that this hypostasis is the hypostatic center for the Divine-Humanity, but in the fact that it actualizes and reveals for the Son, and thereby for the Father as well, the Divine-Humanity as a divine reality, receiving and containing the Logos. In this sense, in the eternal Divine-Humanity, the Logos as the God-Man is distinguished from the Holy Spirit as the Divine-Humanity (the analogy to this in the life of the world is Christ as the God-Man and the Church as the Divine-Humanity). As a consequence, the following difference exists between the hypostatic relations of the Logos and of the Holy Spirit to the Divine-Humanity: The Logos, by its hypostasis, is immediately directed at the Divine-Humanity and is its "Head." In contrast, the Holy Spirit is directed at the Divine-Humanity that has already been revealed through the Logos; the Holy Spirit receives and quickens this Divine-Humanity not as His own hypostatic revelation but as the revelation of the Logos. The character of the Third hypostasis remains the same here as in the Holy Trinity: this hypostasis shows the Father not itself but the Son, and it shows the Son not itself but the Father, while becoming hypostatically transparent in this movement of love. And in the Divine-Humanity the Third hypostasis merges with it, as it were, in its being for the Son and thereby for the Father as well. In *this* sense, we can express the relation between the Second hypostasis and the Third hypostasis in the one Divine-Humanity by saying that their inseparable dyad is precisely the Divine-Humanity as the revelation of the Father in the Holy Trinity — in other words, as the Divine Sophia.

This character of the Second and Third hypostases in relation to the Divine-Humanity can also be expressed as the correlation of two spiritual principles in Divinity that, in the creaturely human world, are *reflected* as

the correlation of the male and female principles. The image of God in man is fully manifested precisely in the union of these two principles ("So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" [Gen. 1:27]). In the human world the fullness of this love is manifested as the love of mother, sister, bride, and wife in relation to son, brother, bridegroom, and husband, as well as the love of daughter for father. Precisely these images are applied to Christ and to the Mother of God and the Church: the Most Holy Mother of God is the Mother of Christ, but She is also honored as His Unwedded Bride (or, in the words of the Song of Songs, as "my sister, my spouse"). The Church, which has its personal center in the Mother of God, is "the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Rev. 21:9); at the same time, the most decisive comparison of the female principle in the human spirit with the Holy Spirit is found in the concluding part of Revelation: "and the Spirit and the bride say, Come" (22:17). This is said about the Church as the accomplished Divine-Humanity in its relation to the Lamb, the Logos-Christ. It follows that the hypostatic interrelation of the Logos and the Holy Spirit in Their common revelation in the Divine-Humanity contains a special, *personally* qualified form of love — a "qualification" that can be expressed in creaturely language by analogies of forms of love between the male principle and the female principle (and it is of course self-evident that anything having to do with sex or, in general, with sensuality must be excluded here). And just as the hypostasis of the Logos is the hypostasis of Christ, made incarnate in a male infant and reaching maturity as a "perfect male," so the hypostasis of the Spirit is most fully revealed for us in the Mother of God and becomes a reality for us in the Church, which is the "Spirit and Bride."

As far as the hypostasis of the Father is concerned, even though this hypostasis has a masculine name in human (or more precisely, in divine-human) language, nevertheless this usage can be chiefly explained by the absence of an appropriate term unrelated to the distinction between masculine and feminine. The masculine gender here is *masculinum majestatis*, which is used to magnify the fatherhood of God, not to define it. This is indirectly confirmed by the fact that the Father's fatherhood is "without maternity" in relation to the Son and is not exhausted by begetting (the masculine principle), but it also includes procession (the feminine principle), while remaining outside this distinction, which exists only in the juxtaposition of the two principles that are being distinguished. It follows that the Paternal hypostasis, as "omni-causative" and "initial," revealing itself in the Son and in the Holy Spirit, in the Divine-Humanity, remains

¹⁸ This idea was expressed in a work of youthful genius, *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, by Vladimir Solovyov, who unfortunately never developed his insightful thoughts into a theological doctrine but instead obscured and distorted them with gnostic conceptions.

transcendent in relation to the latter in a certain sense; that is, the Paternal hypostasis cannot be defined in terms of the Divine-Humanity. Unlike the Son, the Father is not the God-Man, and unlike the Holy Spirit, He is not the Divine-Humanity, although He is revealed in it: He has His proper image in the Divine-Humanity and is the universal Principle.¹⁹ This explains why the Father, *although He sends* into the world the Son and then the Holy Spirit, does not appear personally in the divine-human world. He shows Himself only in the Son ("he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" [John 14:9]) through the Holy Spirit, who reveals the Son. The Father *is* the Divine-Humanity in the same sense that the subject is the predicate, but He *is not* the Divine-Humanity — in the very same sense. The subject is revealed in the predicate but is necessarily different from it, is not identified with it, transcends it.

We must add in conclusion that the definition of divine nature as pre-eternal Humanity or Divine-Humanity (which in this case is the same thing) is conceived as a reflection from the creaturely world, from creaturely humanity. In this sense this definition is only an *analogy*, but one that is understood *realistically*: that is, not only are all the distinctions of state preserved, but the identity of being is also preserved. We know man only as a creature, and therefore it may seem arduous to ascend from the creature to the understanding of God. However, we can also take the reverse path of "that which is above is also below"; that is, taking Divinity as the point of departure, we can understand man as the cryptogram of Divinity. And this path is directly imposed on us by revelation, which proclaims that man bears the Image of God, that is, that humanity in the world presupposes the Divine-Humanity. And one should not surrender this idea to militant atheism, which distorts it by understanding not man on the basis of Divinity but Divinity on the basis of man. But with reference to the Divine-Humanity one must exclude all the properties connected with the natural and material existence of creaturely humanity on the paths of its development, and it is necessary to conceive this creaturely humanity truly as an ousia, that is, as an intensive spiritual essence, containing in itself, in the capacity of noumenon, all the phenomena that manifest it. The Divine-Humanity in God possesses the whole of the absolute *spirituality* that is proper to Divinity. This is the "energy" of Divinity, which possesses an infinite multitude of radiations of the ousia (cf. St. Gregory Palamas's doctrine of energies, for which he was accused of polytheism).

However, this does not mean that, in God, the Divine-Humanity, as the revelation of Divinity, cannot also be understood as the *body* of Divinity, a body that is absolutely spiritual and in *this* sense incorporeal, but that also accomplishes what is proper to a body as such: to be the revelation of the spirit that lives in it and that even lives by it in a certain sense. Thus, we get a series of equalities in which one and the same quantity, God's nature, the ousia, receives its definitions as the Divine Sophia. Sophia is the Wisdom of God; she is the Glory of God; she is the humanity in God; she is the Divine-Humanity; she is the body of God (or the "garment" of Divinity); she is the Divine world, existing in God "before" the creation. All this contains "sufficient grounds" for creation in accordance with the principle "that which is above is also below." In other words, it contains "sufficient grounds" for the sophianicity of creation.

19. It is in this sense that we understand the text of Ephesians 3:14-15: "the Father . . . of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."

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