

Vilém Flusser

The History of the Devil

Chapter 7. Pride

(Translated from the Portuguese by Rodrigo Maltez Novaes)¹

7.0.1. The struggle between the Devil and the forces opposed to him has transformed our minds into a field of rubble. The splendid edifices that once adorned it are now in ruin and form a chaotic heap of wreckage. The wheel of life, once the propelling center of our mind, and whose gyration integrated us into the community of beings, is cracked, dilacerated by lust and inhibition, and its movement is only a slight tremor of remembrance and longing. The palace of the sciences, once the pride of our constructive capability, had its wall cracked by the shaking foundations, and wrath wanders within it, desperate and pursued by the specter of chance. Gluttony's feast covered the scene with the poorly digested refuse of its menu, with machines, instruments, and institutions in different stages of putrefaction, ready to become an amorphous humus, to become nature. The pyramids of society have lost their marble cladding and their structures have been laid bare: envy and greed. Pieces of words and phrases, blown by the wind of death, fly over and above this desert landscape of our mind. The climate is gelid; and if it were not for the low whisper of the cold wind of death, the silence would be absolute. The Devil seems to have abandoned this destroyed battlefield, and seems to have removed himself from it. Alone and pathetic, the only survivor wanders the streets of this bombed city: the human Will to realize itself, despite everything and as a challenge to everything.

7.0.2. This chapter shall be an ode, a hymn in praise of the human Will. It shall sing the miraculous legend of its deeds. This is the most beautiful legend, the most emotionally moving, the most touching of all. The storytellers sing the ode in the bazaars, the bards and the musicians make the strings of their lyres and the hearts of their listeners vibrate, the priests sing chants on the steps of altars in the temples, and the legend of the human Will inspires marshals and emperors, sages and prophets. The human Will: despite everything and in spite of everything. Its sure step knocks down barriers, and valleys and mountains are flattened in its wake. It raises its strong arms; and its dreams are realized. It spreads its resplendent mantle; and worlds emerge. Human Will, your name is beauty. You make castles with a thousand towers that emerge from thin air, where a flag flies from each tower.

¹ From Vilém Flusser, *The History of the Devil*, Flusser Archive Collection, edited by Siegfried Zielinski, Univocal Publishing, Minneapolis 2014, p. 153-185 <http://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/the-history-of-the-devil>

You transform deaf and mute stones into white and clean statues, carved in your image. You make the wind sing, and you transform a hurricane into a chord. Praise be to you, human Will, you, creator of art, you, inventor of the world, you, producer and annihilator of God and the Devil.

7.0.3. This terrible phrase that we have just formulated, or which formulated itself despite us, emerged unexpectedly and spontaneously, as an expression of the enthusiasm contained until now. Let this phrase come, and let it be sheltered with hospitality. It was about time that we laid bare our false humility. It was about time that we confessed the inebriation and vertigo that the peaks of our creative Will cause. It was about time that we let the nauseating mantle of hypocrisy fall. Let us no longer be ashamed to speak the whole truth. We already knew, ever since we came into being; we already felt, already intuited, that all of this about God and the Devil, of sin and salvation, of real world and illusory world, is nothing but small talk. All of this is nothing but the work of our Will, nothing but representation destined to entertain us. The world is here, in front of us, because we ordered it to emerge from the abyss of nothingness. We only have to turn our backs to it, we only have to lose our interest in it, and it shall disappear into the same abyss. And after all, what is this world that we have created in order to entertain our Selves? It is the projection screen of our Will. We created a world in order to project ourselves onto it. And this image of ours that we project onto the world is God. It just so happens that, sometimes, the illusion that we create is so perfect that it manages to fool us. At these moments we adore our own image. But we only need to turn our backs on it, we only need a slight gesture of contempt for it, and the image disappears, and God says good-bye to us. *“Ich weiss, dass ohne mich Gott nicht ein Nu kann leben”* (I know that without me God cannot live for even one instant. A. Silesius) And this image of ourselves that we project onto the world’s screen, which we created, and which we call “God,” can be projected from two different angles. In order to distinguish between angles, we refer to one projection “God” and the other “Devil.” It depends on whether it pleases us to desire a divine or diabolic world; it depends on our point of view. And it equally depends on our Will to switch the projection off and submerge the world into the gray darkness of neutrality, into platitude and the boredom of a world without God or the Devil. It is precisely to avoid this boredom and platitude, to turn the representation interesting, that we project our own image onto the world’s screen. It is for aesthetic reasons, and to satisfy our sense of equilibrium and drama, that we project God and the Devil upon the world. They are apparently two actors that appear on the screen to entertain us, but they are, essentially, two masks of our Will.

7.0.4. Everything there is, and everything that has been, and everything that can be, is our Will. To

be, to become, and to be able to be, are all forms of our Will. Everything comes from our Will, and everything returns to it. Everything that happens, and everything that comes to pass, happens and passes within our Will in virtue of our Will. The Will creates the world through an eccentric movement, and it comes to know the world through a concentric movement. In this process of knowledge, the Will discovers itself at the bottom of the world. Knowledge of the world is self-knowledge. Through another eccentric movement, the Will creates the mind, and through a concentric movement the Will studies the mind. In this study, the Will discovers itself at the bottom of the mind. The study of the mind, meditation, is self-knowledge. World and mind are the two faces of the Will. Science and meditation are the jaws, the pincers, which lock onto the nut of illusion created by the Will, in order to crack its shell and expose the kernel. These are the two methods of self-knowledge.

7.0.5. The natural sciences and Yoga are the sharpest and most penetrating teeth of the two jaws that advance into the illusion. Once they meet, at the end of the atom and the *Ātman*, the shell of the illusion will crack and the Will shall recognize itself. At this ultimate unveiling, the masks of God and the Devil will be torn-off. It is in this *dénouement* that the representation of the Will shall end. At this climax the purely formal rules of nature shall be exposed, and the veil of *Māyā* shall be torn. There will be nothing left, except pure and free Will. But why should the Will free itself from itself? Because the illusion that the Will created is so perfect that it fools its creator. The Will has fallen into the very trap it set. Through the eccentric movements it distanced itself so much from its own center that it forgot that center. The concentric movements are a remembrance of its center. The natural sciences and Yoga are methods to rediscover the origin. They are the Will's detectives in the forest of misleading appearances. They discover and seek to prove that nature and the mind are the works of the Will, deliberate works, even though they may have aspects of autonomy. Nature and the mind are works of art. They are works of an unknown, but knowable author. The natural sciences and Yoga prove that the author is the Will. How were these works created? Let us forget, for just one moment, the natural sciences and Yoga, and let us attempt to evoke within us the creative activity of the Will.

7.1. Language

The Will tends. It pressures. Wants to explode. Is thirsty. It wants to spread itself. It is in tension. It seeks to come out of itself. It wants to project itself. It seeks power. It wants to realize itself. It expresses itself. It articulates itself. The Will becomes language. The Will turned into language creates the world of the mind.

7.1.1. Poetry

The Will is the spider that secretes the web of language from itself. Unceasing and untiring, it expels the translucent and shiny threads of phrases; it weaves and knots these threads, rendering the web dense, to then run around inside the web in order to consolidate it. The Will creates illusions of intellects where the threads cross each other, through the “individuation principle,” and through the principle of the discourse, it creates the illusion of the anatomy of the web. The web grows and expands in all dimensions, fed by the Will’s secretion. New threads of phrases unceasingly emerge, new intellects are formed, and new connections between intellects emerge. The threads consolidate and become rigid. Upon these rigid threads, chains that consist of concepts and relations between concepts, are formed. These chains arrest the intellect. The chains of threads ramify. Some of the branches come together to form new chains, new discourses. Other branches float with their ends in the vacuum; unfinished arguments. The Will’s power that propels the web in all directions informs every thread. This power is the meaning of every phrase and the aim of every discourse. The web vibrates. Undulates. The threads run. The position of the intellects within the web is fluid and variable. Sometimes they are linked through threads of solid discourse, sometimes they distance themselves to the extremes of the web and almost become isolated, stuck to the web only through recent, tenuous, and weak threads. In some intellects the Will petrifies. These are the rigorous and clear intellects. In other intellects, the Will pulsates and seeks to expand further, to extend the scope of the web. The Will is propelling these intellects to the edge of the web. From them the Will extends threads and branches into the void and beyond. The Will puts these intellects at risk.

7.1.1.1. In this extreme and risky situation, where these propelled intellects find themselves, the web of language floats in nothingness. These intellects are in touch with nothingness. They are the advanced posts of the Will. The illusion, and the deliberate character of the web, is existentially grasped by these intellects. It is toward these extreme points that the Will’s spider goes to consolidate the web. It runs to the edge of the web, takes the place of the intellect at an extreme situation, and transforms this intellect into the center of its activity. It is from this extreme point that the Will secretes its threads and forms new discourses. At such an extreme, the intellect has become the center of the Will’s creative activity; it has become the source of language. This intellect has become a poet. And it is in this situation, in this extreme tension of the Will, that we can experientially grasp the creative activity of the Will.

7.1.1.2. The first stage of this activity is the phase of withdrawal. The intellect withdraws the web of threads that surrounds it and concentrates the web upon itself. Its discourse becomes internalized. In this internal discourse the phrases crisscross and intertwine to form fabrics of unbearable complexity.

The intellect becomes a Gordian knot, and becomes unbearable to itself. The Will's tension within it threatens to explode the intellect. The experience of this stage is one of despair. Suddenly, and in a fulminating instant, a sword falls and cuts the Gordian knot. The struck intellect falls, internally wounded, into the abyss of nothingness. But the threads that it had withdrawn continue to attach it to the web of language. They prevent it from drowning. The Will that possessed this intellect starts to project new threads, to guarantee the web's continuity. These new threads that project from the struck intellect falling toward the web, vibrate and oscillate with the shock that the intellect suffered as it fell. They are witnesses of the shock with nothingness. These threads are new verses. The Will has just created a new work, within this intellect that it possessed. The experience for the intellect is one of exaltation, of a sense of power, of pride.

7.1.1.3. The new verses that are propelled from the poet's intellect toward the web of language are the immediate manifestation of the Will. They are concrete Will. They are caught in their concretion by the intellects near the poet. Let us call these intellects, which inhabit the poet's vicinities, "critics." The warm and vibrating threads are consolidated and integrated to the web through these intellects. They are conversed. The concrete manifestation of the Will is submitted, by the critics' intellects, to the process of conversation, which progressively turns this manifestation more abstract. Conversation is the process of abstraction, in the sense of being a progressive distancing from the concreteness of the Will. Concreteness and abstraction are measures of the distance of a phrase from the creative Will. As a phrase distances itself from the creative Will, as it advances into the web and into language, it loses concreteness and gains abstraction; it loses intimacy with the Will and gains autonomy. Phrases that are advanced in the abstraction process acquire the appearance of automaticity and independence from the creative Will. They acquire the appearance of "data."

7.1.1.4. The phrases that have concretely originated within the creative Will, and which flow, through the abstraction process, into language, discourse in countless streams. It is as if the intellect, possessed by the creative Will, was located at the peak of a mountain, and as if the verses that spring from it, spill over the mountainsides. But in the plain, at the farthest point from poetry, all of these currents, all of these threads of discourse, are dammed into two lakes: nature and mind. Nature and mind are the dams that hold verses that have been turned abstract. Nature and mind are the reservoirs of the Will once it has been entirely abstracted; entirely "objectified." These lakes are so distant from the peaks of creation that they do not seem to be connected to the peaks. However, they hide, in their muddy waters, the secret of their origin in the Will. The natural sciences fish on the Western side of the mountain, and they start to discover the structure of the Will at the bottom of the lake.

They start to discover the primordial poet that created nature: the Will. Yoga stirs and scours the whole lake on the Eastern side of the mountain. It has always been suspicious of the origin of the lake. Furthermore, the two lakes communicate subterraneously. Fishing expeditions and studies in the natural sciences have discovered the subterranean channel that connects the lakes. They shall reinforce, almost as if from below, the efforts of the yogis. They shall reveal, in a conjugated effort, the secret of the lakes: nature and mind are the Will turned abstract, therefore objectified. The prophet of this discovery, Schopenhauer, this intellect that personifies pride, and the glorifier and singer of this discovery, Nietzsche, this intellect that personifies the absurdity of pride, are the guides of these efforts. Today's philosophy, especially that which dedicates itself to the analysis of experience, and that which dedicates itself to the analysis of language, are their followers.

7.1.2. Music and Concrete Poetry

Every verse that projects itself from the poet's intellect is a concrete manifestation of the Will. But at the very instant of articulation, the verse starts to abstract itself. The speed of the verse's decadence into abstraction is related to the slope that connects the course of the discourse that began in the lakes of the mind and of nature. There are verses that precipitate, in a sparkling fall, directly into the lake of nature. Others direct themselves, subtly and softly, through the slightly sloping plains of poetry. Layers of language prefigure the course of the discourse of verses. We shall call the course that leads directly to the lake of nature, "pictorial language," the one that leads to the lake of the mind, "semantic language," and that which detains itself on the plains of poetry, "the language of music," however, this nomenclature is provisory, and will be removed by future arguments.

7.1.2.1. The course of the language of music has a barely perceptible slope. It is almost meaningless. We have defined "meaning" as the direction of the discourse. The discourse with a gentle slope, the discourse almost exempt of meaning, is the discourse of the language of music, and this language retains the concreteness of the Will. The verses that become the language of music propitiate the most inventive experience of the creative Will. The creative Will manifests itself, through the musical verses, as pure beauty. The experience that music affords us is concrete; because we are in immediate contact with the creative Will, that is, with the *aistheton*, the aesthetic impact of the Will. Music is an almost entirely pure discourse; undistorted by the scum of ethics and logic, which adheres to the pictorial and semantic discourse in order to pervert it. Ethics and logic are aspects of phrases that emerge as a consequence of abstraction, as a consequence of the distancing of thought from the Will. Ethics and logic are symptoms of abstract thoughts. The Will, as the source of reality, is beyond ethics and logic, beyond Good and Evil, and beyond the truth. The immediate manifestation of the Will

is beauty. The mind possessed by the creative Will is a proud mind. It finds itself beyond Good and Evil, and knows that art is better than truth. Music is the purest articulation of this mental climate.

7.1.2.2. Music is pure beauty. Music is the articulation of reality. The essence of reality (which is the creative Will) is beauty. The rules of aesthetics are the structure of reality; they are the harmony. When listening to music we are being confronted with the structures of reality. This is the reason for the profound emotion that music causes in us, and the sense of exaltation and freedom that it provokes. Lie and sin, truth and goodness, all explode before music. Music is the ultimate argument. After music, nothing more can be said. And what cannot be said must remain silent. Music dissolves God and the Devil; it annihilates both. Every argumentation and dialectic is overcome and made meaningless by music; music puts an end to them. When we hear music, we feel that music is our origin and our aim. Language, turned into beauty, which is music, represents our most direct route toward self-recognition. Music wins over illusion, because it represents reality directly – our creative Will. Music is pure language, and pure language is God's, and the Devil's, sepulcher.

7.1.2.3. Music is the manifestation of the most immediate Will. All other discourses are distorted Will, abstracted Will; they are illusion; they are *Māyā*. If it were possible to purify all other discourses from the scum of logic and ethics, and if it were possible to concretize all other discourses, illusion would have been overcome and reality reestablished. This is, effectively, the attempt to translate every discourse, every language, to the language of music; to concretize them. And these attempts at translation (that are attempts at self-recognition) are currently underway. Let us briefly consider these attempts.

7.1.2.4. Let us take, as a first example, the attempt to concretize semantic language, being undertaken by the poets of concrete poetry. They seek to grasp the discourse at the moment of its eruption from the creative Will, and to dam it in the plain of poetry. They seek to prevent this discourse from discoursing, thus quickly turning toward conversation, and from there, toward the mind. They even seek to avoid crystalizing the discourse into verse. They insist therefore, on the *aistheton*, on the immediate experience of the word. They accept the word as it springs from the Will, as an immediate articulation of the Will. They submit themselves to the word, and absorb it. They accept the word in its plenitude, as a visual and auditory structure. They do not suppress the meaning of the word, that is, they do not seek to drag the word into the river of language, whose discourse gives a direction to every word. However, the simple fact that the word is dammed within this attempt already alters its direction; already modifies its meaning. Concrete poetry demands, therefore, a violent effort from the intellect. Effectively, it demands Will power. It demands the intellect's refusal to be dragged by

the discourse, and its effort to stay on the plain of poetry. Every web of language pulls the intellect down through the mountainside of poetry. Concrete poetry seeks to offer the intellect a support so that it can hold on to the summit. Concrete poetry is, therefore, a weapon of the Will against illusion, which seeks to prevent abstraction and to keep concreteness. This is a new weapon, and its efficacy has not yet been put to the test. It is, however, a potentially dangerous weapon. The emergence of this attempt in Brazil is proof that this civilization is ready to overcome gluttony and envy through pride.

7.1.3. Painting

The situation in which the attempts to concretize pictorial language occur, is more complex and demands more detailed consideration. The poets who choose this language to articulate the creative Will are, at least in the West, deeply immersed in the illusion of nature. They accept nature, this collection of pictorial phrases, extremely distanced from the creative Will; they accept this nature as “given.” They are being misled. They do not see that nature is an abstract set, and that, in order to concretize it, it is necessary to discover the creative Will in it. They do not recognize themselves in nature. They do not know, or they have forgotten, that it was the Will, or in other words, that it was they, who created nature. From this misunderstanding emerges that hybrid phenomenon that is Western painting and sculpture.

7.1.3.1. The painter and the sculptor, who are “poets” in the sense we employed here, are intellects possessed by the creative Will. The Will tends, in these intellects, to articulate itself through the process that we have described. It expels and projects its articulation, which is beauty. It is an articulation in accordance to aesthetic rules, and exempt, in its first impulse, of all meaning. But the painter and the sculptor, prisoners of the illusion of nature, cast this articulation over nature in order to capture it. Let us use an image to describe this process. In becoming possessed by the creative Will, the painter is on the summit of poetry. The creative Will projects the pure articulation of beauty from it, which is a net of rules that organize colors and forms. These colors and forms are already an illusion; they are already the first abstraction of the creative Will. The rules, these are pure Will, yes. But the abstraction, which the colors and forms are, is an inevitable consequence of the articulation, since articulation is already alienation from reality. The net of rules that organize colors and forms is cast, by the painter (sitting on the summit of poetry), into the lake of nature to fish out data. The painter bows deeply before nature in the act of casting his net. Through great Will power, he pulls back this immense net of nature and tries to drag it back to the summit of poetry. But the net has changed within this process and has become heavy. Weeds, shells, and fish have become attached to it and

have made the structure of the net almost unrecognizable. From now on, the net “represents” nature. This net, hidden by illusory impurities, is what we call “representational” painting or sculpture. The history of Western visual arts is the enumeration of works of this type, in which the creative Will is hidden. These products are works of art, because the net of the Will shines through them, and the more it shines through, the more exciting the work is. However, they are incomparably less concrete than the verses of music and concrete poetry.

7.1.3.2. These works are the result of the strength of illusion upon the intellects that created them. However, ultimately, we start to awaken from this illusory dream, and we start to recognize the creative Will within us as the foundation of reality. Our self-recognition acts like a beam of light that penetrates the fabric of illusion like an X-ray, in order to discover the structure. It is against this light that we start to examine these works. We find the net of the Will at the bottom of these paintings and sculptures, which is a pure structure that organizes color and form. This rediscovery of the Will in the visual arts profoundly modifies our attitude and propitiates a new experience of reality. Reality can be articulated, both immediately and concretely, through the aesthetic rules that structure colors and forms. The consequence of this is the emergence of “abstract” and concrete paintings and sculptures.

7.1.3.3. The term “abstract,” that painters use, is proof that only the illusion was overcome. These works are “abstract” because they refuse to represent nature. But nature is still tacitly accepted as reality. The works that emerge through this effort are close to the Will and distant from nature, and that is why they are called “abstract.” Effectively, they are concrete works. “Abstract” painting is the first manifestation of a concrete pictorial language in the West. It is experiential proof of the enormous progress of Western mentality in its attempt to free itself from illusion and rediscover the Will. This is the fully conscious articulation of the Will through colors and forms. The Will speaks almost immediately in these paintings and sculptures. These new works free our mind, just as musical compositions and concrete poems do, and they demonstrate the pride of our Will experientially.

7.1.3.4. Painters of concrete art are of a fundamental importance for an interpretation of current times. In my opinion, there is no other event more important than this. These painters are prophets of future developments; they are the pioneers of pride. They are, effectively, the advanced posts of the natural sciences. Our scientists are still at the stage of representational painting. They do not even know they are poets. As the victims of the illusion, and almost entirely unaware of their creative efforts, they believe that nature is a reality. They try to cast their purely aesthetic net of creative Will, which projects itself from their intellects in the form of mathematical rules, into the lake of nature in

order to represent it. And then these poets, disguised as scientists, are surprised that nature structures itself according to these rules. They are starting, effectively, in a somewhat confused manner, to discover their own Will at the base of nature. The process of the concretization of nature has begun. The process of the self-awareness of the natural sciences has begun. Nature is a work of art. Scientists are its poets. But nature is representational art; it is figurative. It represents the creative Will in its abstract stage. Nature is an illusion. The natural sciences, following in the footsteps of painting, start to apply the X-rays of self-recognition against nature. Modern physics is the most advanced of the sciences. It is quickly approaching the stage of concrete painting. The structures of modern physics are no longer representational and figurative. They no longer contain “true” or “false” phrases. The criterion to be applied to the judgments of modern physics is the criterion of aesthetics, and physics as a whole no longer seeks to “signify,” it seeks to be consistent: the natural sciences are becoming musicalized.

7.1.4. Science

We sought to illustrate the method, through which, the creative Will weaves the veil of illusion, by applying three languages. That which we call “world,” and whose most abstract extremes are nature and mind, is the fabric created by the Will, it is *Māyā*. Mind and nature form the floating, multicolored surface of the veil: if we intend to contemplate it reflexively, that is, in the opposite direction of the Will. This surface is what philosophy calls “the phenomenal world” because it is through this surface that the reality of the Will appears to the reflexive mind. Reflection is the disciplined penetration of the surface, with the aim of reaching the reality of the Will. Reflection is the inverse movement of poetry. Reflection is therefore, the attempt to destroy the illusion; it is an attempt at self-recognition. Let us cast a gaze upon the surface of the veil, upon the phenomenal world, before we attempt to follow reflection in its advance.

7.1.4.1. The phenomenal world presents itself to us, at the current stage of our development, as a set ruled by the rules of beauty. Wrath ended its logical aspect, and envy and greed ended its ethical aspect, so that the phenomenal world is ethically neutral and logically meaningless. Ethics and logic are aspects of the creative Will’s abstract judgments; they are illusory and no longer manage to mislead us. “God” and “Devil” are terms already overcome. They are prejudices from which we have been freed. Our reflection about the phenomenal world advances without the burden of these prejudices. This layer, the most illusory layer of the world, has already been abolished. “God” and “Devil” are the extremes of illusion; they are the most distant phenomena from the Will. We may dismiss them. They are nothing but extreme projections of the Will upon the screen of the phenomenal world; they

are illusory even from the perspective of the illusion of the world. The image that we seek to create is the following: the creative Will is at the center. The threads of phrases extend around it, created by this Will. These threads form, on the horizon, the two illusory realities of nature and mind. And the cover that envelops everything in order to give it meaning, is the projection of God and the Devil. If reflection manages to eliminate nature and mind, if it manages to dilute this illusion and reach the Will, the protective cover shall automatically collapse. During this collapse of God and the Devil, we shall verify that both are nothing more than our own engorged Will. This shall be the Will's definitive victory.

7.1.4.2. The phenomenal world, if seen from its surface, seems to be constituted of phenomena that are interconnected in two ways: through causal chains, or heaped together by chance. We know that this is nothing but an illusion, because all phenomena are linked not only among themselves but also to our Will through the chains established by this Will. To accept the causal chains as independent from our Will, and to seek to reduce the causal heaps and chains (as the antiquated sciences do), is proof of the strength of illusion upon our reflexive minds. As long as science nurtures this illusion, as long as it accepts these causal connections as "given," it shall not manage to penetrate all the way to the Will. Science is not yet aware of the fact that we are the authors of the laws of nature; this level of self-recognition is still missing. However, once this self-awareness becomes effective, every ontological and epistemological difficulty, which oppresses science today, shall be overcome. The problem of causal law and of chance, which brought about the failure of wrath, shall be seen in a new light, and lose its problematic. The situation will be the following:

7.1.4.3. The phenomenal world is a collection of fields of activity of the Will, even though they are very abstract fields. There are fields in nature that seem to us to be governed by causal laws because in these fields the creative Will fixed itself into a rigid and particular structure. These are the fields in which the creative Will articulated organized verses, through the intellects of the poets called "scientists." There are other fields in nature, in which chance seems to rule. These are the fields in which the Will is seeking to realize itself in verses. The function of science is precisely to articulate the creative Will in these fields. If phenomena behave in a causal manner, they prove, through this behavior, the strength of our Will. The movements of the stars, for example, or the Newtonian free fall, are works of art that prove the function of the creative Will. If phenomena behave in a causal manner, they prove, through this behavior, that the Will still has fields that are open to its creative activity. The behavior of particles inside an atom, for example, is raw material for future poets. To be understood: all of these fields that form nature as a whole, are illusory fields, and have been created by the

Will. However, they were created precisely so that the Will could articulate itself within them. Nature is an abstract articulation of the creative Will, which concretizes itself thanks to science made aware of itself. The laws of nature are not proof of God, but they prove the divine strength of the Will. Chance, in nature, is not proof of Divine incursions, but proves the freedom of the creative Will. Nature as a whole is the representation of the Will. It is a collection of articulations of the Will through an entirely abstract pictorial language.

7.1.4.4. The phenomenal world has, like a rug, two sides and two faces. Nature is one of these faces. The mind is the other. Everything that has been said about nature is equally applicable to the mind. The method to penetrate the mind differs from the method to penetrate nature and has been perfected in the East. However, the results are exactly the same. The phenomena of the natural world have replicas in the mental world, and vice versa. The Will is at the base of nature as well as the mind. I leave, however, the considerations of this face of the illusory world of phenomena for a future paragraph. I shall only say that nature is a collection of phrases, articulated through a pictorial language, and the mind through a semantic language, and that there is a correspondence between these two languages.

7.1.4.5. Therefore, we have the following worldview created by pride: the creative Will emits language. The illusory and extreme meaning of language is “God” and “Devil.” In the intermediary regions, the nebulous fabric of the phenomenal world extends its misleading richness. This nebulous fabric has two faces: nature and mind. This work of art of our Will is so beautiful and complex that it seems to be completely autonomous, by hiding its origin to reflexive contemplation. We no longer recognize ourselves in the phenomenal world and we have forgotten that we are its authors.

This error of ours is the source of all our suffering. We believe that the phenomenal world conditions and oppresses us. It is necessary to tear this illusion; it is necessary to tear the veil of *Māyā*. It is necessary to refresh our memory so that we may find ourselves as the authors and creators of the world again. We are the authors of this cosmos that we fear. We are the creators of the destiny that we have attributed, so naively, to the illusion of “God” and the “Devil.” Therefore, let us tear the veil of illusion; let us become gods. Let us reach the last conclusions from thinkers such as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche; let us make use of the techniques of Yoga.

7.2. Pincers of the Will

At the beginning of this chapter we spoke about “the pincers of the Will,” which break the nutshell of illusion in order to expose the kernel. Let us modify this image, and let us say that this is a pair of scissors cutting the veil of *Māyā*. The scissors consists of two blades, the European and the Indian.

The European blade advances into nature, and seeks to eliminate this illusory veil, its ethical and logical aspects, in order to discover the purely linguistic structure; the purely aesthetic structure of its foundation. The Indian blade seeks to reconstitute the mind, by vertically cutting and laying bare the Will's path as it creates the mind. The methods of science and Yoga are opposed methods. Science seeks to find the Will by walking in its direction. Yoga seeks to find the Will by running after it. They are, both, detectives of the Will. Science goes from the crime scene and seeks, by retracing the criminal's steps, to find him. The yogi does not look for the criminal. He knows who perpetrated the crime. He follows the criminal's steps in order to catch him *in flagrante delicto*. The scientist and the yogi are therefore placed in two different climates of study. The scientist's method is systematic doubt, since he does not know the criminal and therefore suspects everyone. The yogi's method is systematic perseverance, since he knows the criminal but needs to prove his knowledge. It is true that science has a strong suspicion as to who the criminal is: it is the Will. But the scientific pose demands that the scientist keeps the appearance of doubt and continue to pretend that he is searching. The yogi refuses to concede a word for us, and speaks with an exasperating conviction for a Western listener, but his persistence proves, existentially, that there must be a remainder of doubt in his attitude.

7.2.1. Science as Yoga

Be this as it may, these opposite methods, and different climates are beginning to find each other today. Science still pretends to dismiss Yoga, but some scientific disciplines seem to confirm not only the results, but also the presuppositions of Yoga. And Yoga continues to observe our science with a benevolent grin of superiority, but the concepts that it formulates are ever more similar to the scientific terms it dismisses. Science has penetrated so deep into the fabric of nature that this fabric has almost become transparent. At the base of this thin veil, woven from mathematical equations that are reducible to zero, science already sees the Yogi in his lotus position, attempting to tear the veil. There is only one final step missing and then science and Yoga shall unite. This encounter does not require too much imagination. The history of the white race shall come to a close the moment this encounter occurs, in the circle of pride. The two blades of the pair of scissors called "white race civilization," which separated some five thousand years ago, will have come together again. This will be the end of a cycle. Maybe our days are numbered, and maybe our pride is a symptom of our twilight; or, of our omnipotence, as science and Yoga might say. Let us observe this encounter.

7.2.1.1. The phenomenal world consists of attributes; of properties of something. It is a collection of the colors, noises, and smells of something. These attributes, and properties, hover and are volatile.

The Ancient Greeks already knew that attributes are misleading, and that they do not provide “knowledge” (*sophia*). Their search was for that something, of which attributes are properties. The history of Western thought could be approached as the history of the search for that something. For example, they tried to hierarchize the attributes, and to speak of primary and secondary attributes, as if extension and hardness were the “immediate” attributes of something, and as if all the others were even more illusory than these. They tried to deny movement in the phenomenal world (Parmenides), or, like Heraclitus, they tried to identify the movement with something. Plato went so far as to deny any reality to the phenomenal world, but elevated the mind to the level of the foundation of reality.

7.2.1.2. However, all of it was nothing but deliberate speculation. It did not convince the “senses,” that is, it did not convince lust, which insisted upon the reality of the world of attributes because of its delightability. Philosophers can say whatever they like, but the table continues to be a table because I “sense” its reality. However, the scientific method strengthened the arguments of philosophical speculation in such a convincing manner that even lust could not ignore them. Together with its instruments, that is, together with something experientially graspable, science proves that the table is not black, or hard, or any other thing, because it is not a thing. It is not even a copy of a Platonic original, or of any other type of mental phenomenon: it simply does not exist. What exists is an electromagnetic field and a gravitational one, therefore, what exists are structures of virtualities. The field is an imaginary structure where something can come to be. And the field is the substance of the phenomenal world, of the table, for example. We should speak of the world of appearances, therefore, in terms of its potentiality, and not its reality, as we are doing. The sciences are essentially preparing a grammatical revolution. They have discovered a grammatical error in the way we speak, and they are correcting the error. Every phrase that contains terms such as “table” must be formulated, from now on, according to potentiality. The reality of the “material” world has evaporated.

7.2.1.3. This leaves the philosophers of materialism in an embarrassing position. This philosophy, daughter of the sciences of the 18th and 19th centuries existed thanks to its connection to the sciences, and it kept the same connection with them, as Scholastic philosophy kept with theology. Now the materialists must become accustomed to their position as heretics in relation to modern science. However, idealism should not nurture the hope of becoming the heir of materialism. Science has not become idealist; it has simply become self-aware and no longer needs philosophy. It is almost ready to prove, in an empirical and rational way, that the phenomenal world does not exist. What exists is a set of rules. And these rules are the material that science has to deal with, in order to organize them. As one can see, the non-existence of the phenomenal world is not the end for science, but the be-

ginning of its activities. Science is beginning to comprehend itself; this is its purpose, and not to comprehend “nature.” Nature is a consequence of the self-comprehension of the natural sciences. Science shall become creative. It shall comprehend that it is the creative Will. It shall comprehend that the laws that it formulates are not something “discovered” in nature, but are the Will itself as it creates nature. During the stage of magic these laws had an ethical character, and in the stage of representational and abstract science they had a logical character, but at the stage of future developments, in the concrete stage of science, they shall have a purely aesthetic character, which by the way, they already have in modern physics. They shall be beautiful laws. Natural phenomena shall no longer follow the laws of nature because they must (magic), or because they need to (current science), but because they have been thus composed by creative science (future science). The world of future science is a work of art aware of itself. Whatever the Will should want, ask for, or dream, science will be ready to produce in the form of nature. Nature will be the Will’s dream produced by science in order to entertain it. It shall be art for art’s sake. And when the Will becomes tired of this representation, nature will disappear like froth. Nature shall be a deliberate composition, and we shall have the same sensation that music provides in it. The contemplation of nature shall be a liberating experience, just as music is, because it shall be a concrete and immediate manifestation of our Will. We shall admire nature and its composer, which is our own Will. We shall be absolute.

7.2.2. Yoga as Science

The phenomenal world presents itself, if we invert our contemplation, as the mental world. The West has not reached great successes in this inversion, and we will follow the method of Yoga in order to describe this scene. The mental world presents itself as a collection of thoughts, imaginations, desires, and impulses. The yogis of antiquity had already discovered that these phenomena are illusory and misleading. Already during the time of the *Veda*, Hindu thinkers sought to penetrate the illusory layer of the mind, which these phenomena form. They discovered a structure that informs these phenomena; a structure that is very similar to our natural laws. They called it “*Karma*.” However, the parallels should not be exaggerated. Our laws had an ethical aspect only during the stage of magic. Science has relegated this aspect of the law to the field of theology, and we have, in the West, two distinct disciplines: science and theology. In India, this division never occurred. “*Karma*” is a structure of laws at once ethical and logical, and Yoga is therefore parallel to our science and theology. However, this does not make it a “primitive” discipline. It is a method as rigorous as ours. Our scientific method prepares itself to transform logical laws into aesthetic ones, and ends up therefore, in mysticism. Yoga reaches the same result without having previously eliminated the ethical aspect of

its discipline. This is the reason for the apparent primitivism of Yoga, but also of its apparent progressiveness. The judgments that the yogis formulate, present themselves to us simultaneously as a barbarous stammering and prophetic mumbling, and it will be necessary to translate them to our civilized language in order to comprehend them.

7.2.2.1. If the self-aware Will turns itself against the mind in order to elucidate that mind, it penetrates successive layers of illusion. It comprehends the Will, in the first place, as the illusion of the relation between mind and “body.” The “body” is nothing but a superior, and entirely fictitious, layer of the mind, and the mind changes bodies according to rules of *Karma*, just as the body changes its clothes. The second illusion that is overcome is that which relates to the individuality of the mind. The Will discovers that the mind is nothing but a superficial organ of the great mental wheel that is the foundation of all minds. The individual mind is only a passing manifestation of this fundamental wheel; it emerged from this wheel in order to be dissolved in it. This mind is only a phenomenon caused by the turning of this wheel, and the laws of Karma rule this rotation. The “principle of individuation,” which is an aspect of *Karma*, brings the illusion of individual minds to the surface of the mental wheel, and the illusion of the continuous reincarnation of these minds; of the continuous changing of bodies. But the wheel itself, or *Samsara*, is nothing but an illusion, and this is the Will’s third discovery. The entire gigantic wheel, which unites all of the apparently individual minds of plants, animals, men, and gods, is nothing but an illusory whirlpool that emerged from the creative Will. It is nothing but a “poetic” manifestation of the creative Will, of the *Ātman*. In this sense Yoga comes very close to today’s Western thought. As the fourth illusion, the differentiation between mind and nature is overcome. These are the two aspects of the “*Ātman*.” Natural phenomena, to which the “body” belongs, are only superficial layers of the mind, and are being continuously produced and reabsorbed by the mind according to the rules of *Karma*. The expression “the reincarnation of the mind” is therefore equivalent to “the re-psychologization of the body” in order to describe the rotation of the wheel. By the way, the distinction between mind and nature is not rigorous, and intermediary stages could be discovered, such as astral bodies, specters, and gods. This not only proves the illusion of the distinction, but also the illusion of all mental and natural phenomena. The last illusion penetrated by the Will in its elucidative effort is the illusion of God and the Devil; of the “*Brahman*.” The *Brahman*, this apparent foundation of the *Ātman*, is nothing but a projection of the *Ātman*, and is equal to it. Everything is the creative Will. It is true that this last conclusion is generally unacceptable for yogis. In their majority, they continue to pay homage to the *Brahman*. But the very structure of the discipline of Yoga proves that it is completely dedicated to the struggle against the

Brahman, and that its aim is the overcoming of the *Brahman*.

7.2.2.2. The chain of *Karma* is broken at the very moment when the elucidative Will, the Will turned against itself, recognizes itself at the bottom of all appearances, but only if it recognizes itself in the *Ātman*. The veil of illusion, *Māyā*, to which nature and mind belong, is torn, and there is nothing left but *Ātman*. The whole world, nature and mind, are nothing but creations of *Ātman*, of dreams of *Ātman*, and the handcuffs of destiny, *Karma*, have been imposed on this world by the *Ātman*. *Karma* is nothing but an aesthetic web spun by the creative Will in order to realize its dream. “We are such stuff as dreams are made on.” (Shakespeare). The result of Yoga is identical to that which the sciences of the West are arriving at.

7.2.2.3. This is therefore the situation that presents itself to the self-aware Will: nature and mind are the creative Will’s works of art. They are a chant in praise of the Will, a musical monologue of the *Ātman*. That which maintains the world, which gives it structure, is the harmonic order of *Karma*, which in its turn is a musical and grammatical order, the order of language. The world is a monologue and chant, a meaningless monologue and chant. The world is a wordless song. The Will created the world as purposeless, pure beauty. The mathematical and musical beauty of the world’s structure is existential proof of the creative Will. The self-aware Will enjoys the world as beauty. A mind stuck in the illusion, and which does not recognize itself in the world, suffers the world, because the ethical and logical aspects of the world oppress it. This suffering is overcome through self-recognition, and everything becomes transformed into the pure absorption of pure beauty. The phenomena that are ruled by causal laws become comprehensible as the fields of activity of our Will. It is as if the phenomenal world were a canvas on which someone was painting. The phenomena that are ruled by causal laws are the walls of the canvas that is already covered with the oil of our creative activity. Chance happenings are the parts onto which we are applying the paintbrush of our creative activity. The painting’s project is within us, and we are projecting it onto the canvas. Chance in the phenomenal world is the point within which our Will realizes itself. This is the tip of our paintbrush, which we apply upon the world. It has already been said that “chance” and “miracle” are synonyms, and that they seek to articulate the moment that created the world. Chance is the miracle through which our Will realizes itself. It is the bridge through which the project of our Will transfers itself into the world. Thus law and chance became the two aspects of our Will, which is our freedom. Law is our Will realized, chance is our Will in action, they are the two aspects of our freedom. The chains of *Karma*, the chains of destiny, the chains of illusion, are finally broken. We are sovereign.

7.2.2.4. For us the structure of the world does not seem meaningless, even if we still persist upon the

illusion of this world. We recognize, or we believe that we recognize, values in this illusion. And we recognize, or we believe that we recognize, types of knowledge. Nothing has value in the world, and nothing can be known, except our Will. The criterion to be applied to the world is purely formal; it is the aesthetic criterion of internal consistency. The Kantian insistence on *a priori* synthetic judgments is overcome in our act of self-recognition. The world is a product of our judgments, which are organized by the rules of our Will. They are meaningless judgments. All of them are synthetic, and *a priori*. All of them are, effectively and equivalently, mathematical or musical judgments. The laws are articulations of themselves. These laws are purely formal, and they do not have either ethical or epistemological aspects, they do not valorize or seek knowledge.

7.2.2.5. However, at the extreme edge of illusion, these laws acquire contexts of ethics and knowledge. At this extreme edge the illusion of Good and Truth emerge. The creative Will made these illusions emerge, in order to give meaning to the world that it created. It made the illusion of Good and Evil, and the illusion of Truth and Lies emerge, in order to make the illusory world it created consistent. It thus created the illusion of a purpose for the world. It is perfectly deceitful. The Will created nature and the mind in six days, and on the sixth day, in order to crown its creation, it created the illusion of Good and Evil, of Truth and Lies. The creative Will created God and the Devil on the sixth day, and it did this so it could rest on the seventh day, because then, the world was perfect. God and the Devil endowed it with the appearance of objectivity. God and the Devil work to maintain an apparent independence of the world from the Will. They are the two subtitles of this creation, the two auxiliary elements of the Will. Had the Will not created God and the Devil, the world would demonstrate, in an obvious manner, its meaninglessness. It would be an obviously absurd world, a world obviously dependent upon the Will. Having projected God and the Devil upon the world, the Will perfectly masked the obscurity and subjectivity of the world. Thanks to God and the Devil, the world manages to mislead the mind, and to therefore divert the creative Will. Without God and the Devil, the world would be a tedious representation. It would obviously be an *idem per idem*. Thanks to God and the Devil, the Will can entertain itself in the world. God and the Devil are the main clowns created by the Will in order to endow the representation that is the world with attraction. God and the Devil are the projections of the Will, the Will created them in its own image.

7.2.2.6. The self-aware Will knows that God and the Devil are its creations. But it knows that they are useful creations. The Nietzschean phrase (whose thought we are following in this chapter, however in a somewhat independent manner), “God is dead” must be comprehended within this context. God died because we killed Him when we acquired self-awareness, but He could be resuscitated at

the snap of a finger. And in resuscitating God, we would have automatically resuscitated the Devil. The Devil is God's counterpart, a necessary counterpart for the maintenance of the aesthetic equilibrium of the representation that we are building. Hence, these two masterpieces of our Will shall continue to function to our full content. They shall entertain the Will without causing it any embarrassment. God and the Devil could be abolished at the slightest sign of disturbance, in order to be reinstated whenever the representation of the world requires them.

7.2.2.7. The self-aware Will is all-powerful. Everything around the Will is its creation, and is subject to its commandments. Everything around the Will is pure music, pure mathematics, and pure beauty. The veils of illusion have been penetrated and have become transparent. They may henceforth be consciously used to create a new experience of beauty. The Will's project resides there: to create and usufruct beauty. The self-aware Will exists within beauty's paradise. It is the paradise of the eternal weaves of beauty. The Will to Power is the eternal return of the same, as Nietzsche would say. Could this be a paradise, what we have just sketched, and could this be a liberation of the Will's freedom that we have just outlined, or could this be something entirely different?

7.3. Contrition

This entire chapter hardly mentioned the term "pride." It was not necessary to insist on this key. Every phrase and every thought was saturated in it. Let us confess that in the course of this chapter we did not have sufficient self-control to choose terms. It spilled out in uncontrollable streams. The violent contortions of science, art, philosophy, and the juggling acts of Yoga violated our mind and took away its entire disposition for a deliberate scheme. We followed, in fascination, its grotesque exercises, and allowed ourselves to be carried away by its acrobatics. So here we are now, in paradise. We may now rest for an instant, and cast a glance at the victorious Will. There it is, in all its purity, with its legs crossed behind its neck. The Will, the creator of beauty, does not offer a dazzling spectacle (let us be honest). On the contrary, it is downright disgusting. The desiccated and contorted limbs of this enlightened yogi, these limbs that entwine in a way that it is impossible to distinguish between legs and arms, are not the image of a liberated mind. The Will, in its posture of profound meditation upon itself, does not emanate the aura of sovereignty. It is necessary to confess that the representation the Will offers us is of a mold that gives us the chills. There is an air of a magic-spell that is sinister and lugubrious in the entire process of self-recognition, in the entire procedure to overcome the illusion and become free from the veil of *Māyā*. There is something deeply malign, *blasé*, and refined; something deliberate in the Will's victory. It is necessary to confess it, it is necessary to proclaim it as a challenge to Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and the sages of the East: all of this

self-knowledge, all of this conscious creation of beauty, all of this articulation of nature by the human Will, all of this enlightenment of the mind by the human Will, and all of this disciplined and methodical forcing of salvation, is the work of the Devil. It is the capital sin of pride. All of this systematic reevaluation of all values; all of this twisting around of the highest for the lowest, and the lowest for the highest; all of this swapping around of the intimate for the external, and the external for the intimate; all of this is the very essence of Hell. The enlightenment, or *Samadhi*, which accompanies the exercises of Yoga, of science, of philosophy, and, unfortunately, the creative activity of art, is an enlightenment produced by the flames of Hell. The mind that is free of all illusion, the emancipated mind, is the mind that contorts in the caldrons of Hell. This mind's only support, the only substance that supports it, is the Devil's trident. The paradise of disciplined enlightenment is the rotating skewer, upon which the mind spins.

7.3.1. But how can this be the work of the Devil, that is, a situation in which the mind is aware of the absurd illusion that is the Devil? How could the Devil create a situation in which he is annihilated? In order to comprehend this diabolically confusing situation, it is necessary for us to return to the situation in which this development occurred. This was a situation of the darkest despair. Everything within us had been destroyed by the struggle for our soul between God and the Devil. We lost our naive faith in life, our faith in pure reason, in practical reason, and in society. We lost the pleasure in immediate experience, and in pure knowledge; the pleasure that accompanies the transformation of nature into instruments, and the enthusiasm that accompanies the engagement in favor of an ideal society. Our vital fiber, our intellectual moral, our productive *élan*, and our ethos in society had all been annihilated. All of this had happened within the Divine's terrible fire. The very forms of our mind broke, cracked, and snapped in the Divine's blazing breath. Only detritus remained. When the society was dismembered into envy and greed, we had lost the last connection with reality. We were facing nothingness. In such an extreme situation there were only three choices left for us: the grace of a merciful madness, the sweet grace of death, and the vertical fall toward the abyss of faith in God.

7.3.2. The second and third options would have been catastrophic for the Devil. He chose the first. Our suicide at this stage would have been a Divine victory. The fall toward faith in God had to be avoided at all cost. The Devil chose madness. And he chose a madness that was appropriate for him. He seduced our mind into the madness of beauty. Pure art, pure science, and pure meditation, this is the madness that the Devil chose and we fell into the trap. The Devil abandoned, pressed by our development, any intention of creating a serious reality in order to imprison us. He gave up every

pose and every lie. He showed himself, naked to our dilacerated mind. He took a risk. Effectively, he cried: look at how I am, and look at the Divine abyss, now make your choice. And in full consciousness, we chose. We chose the madness of solid pride, which the Devil offered us, so as not to fall into the Divine crucible. Now we are imprisoned. Even the Devil has abandoned our solitary cell, where we are “creating beauty.” Impenetrably thick walls surround us, and our cry: “we are the architects of these walls!” returns to us with a resounding echo. And our odes in praise of ourselves resonate in our ears like a sinister laughter. Thus, the Devil ingeniously transformed a situation in which he was in danger, into a triumph for Hell’s cause.

7.3.3. But still – and I say this in a whispering and shaking voice, so that no one may betray this secret – even in such deep Hell, a slight glimmer of hope shines. In such Hell I am all-powerful. My Will is God. I am God. As I cry such a cry of the highest pride, the echo resonates: I am God. And this echo, which is nothing but a faithful repetition of my pride, has a demolishing effect upon my mind. Listen attentively to what is happening: I am God and God is me. The sciences and philosophies teach that I am God. The arts prove experientially that I am God. Yoga demonstrates experientially that I am God. Therefore, I know that I am God. And that is why I am in this solitary cell that I created for myself. However, if I were to believe, for even just one instant, in what the echo affirms, in other words: that God is me, then at that very instant all of my proud knowledge of my Divinity would be annihilated. I fear for this knowledge of mine and I intend to defend it. My disciplined Will is my shield against this unexpected incursion. But this is ridiculous. “I am God” and “God is me” are equivalent judgments. Therefore, why should I fear the second formulation of my triumph?

7.3.4. Because in this second formulation, which turns against me in order to flood me with its merciless resonance, I am being called. My pride alienated me entirely from that God who is a work of mine. He is merely a pale projection of my Will. And suddenly this pale projection is calling me. My contortions and my juggling acts have completely turned my mind around, and suddenly, I am face to face with that which is totally different from me, and it says to me: I am you. At this instant my mind becomes aware of itself, turns toward the floor, and hides its face in its hands, because it cannot bare the rays that penetrated its dark cell. The darkness of the cell, in which my mind pretends to feel guilty of its own Will, makes those rays unbearable. The acrobat of the creative Will, blinded by the luminosity, contorts on the floor of his cell. In a single jolt his limbs un-tense in a spasm, his pose is undone, and the proud mind becomes prostrated, contrite, and desperate, in the dust at the foot of that which it is, but which transcends it.

7.3.5. The happening that we have just described, with such inappropriate words, is the sudden passage from pride to humility. For pride, such a happening is always imminent, and it knows, intimately, of this danger. This sudden ruin can happen at any moment through science and philosophy, art and Yoga. For pride, it is necessary to avoid this happening at all costs. It is necessary to prevent that which is all-different to become manifest, if we wish to maintain the pose of pride. And it is possible to do it. The safest method to avoid humility is humble pride. It is necessary to create a humble science, a humble philosophy, and a humble art. That would be the essence of pride, because it would be entirely unimpeachable.

7.3.6. What are these diabolic disciplines, these humble sciences and arts? They are perfect poses. The creative Will represents within them the pose of self-sacrifice in order to entertain itself. The creative Will pretends to sacrifice its works to God, to that God, which the creative Will had created in its own image. The Will humbly approaches God's temple (which the Will built), and says humbly: God, look at the beautiful work that you have created through me, and to your highest glory. And then this creative artist, with a slightly perceptible smile, places the work upon Divinity's altar and retires, humbly, into anonymity. The humble pride, the pride that creates anonymity, is the highest pride. Its representation is perfect. It deceives everyone, including this God, who after all is its own work. Religious art is a good example of this creative Will that keeps itself in anonymity in order to glorify the Eternal One. Or the yogi's faith, reached thanks to a methodical and deliberate discipline. Or the faith of scientists in a transcendent God, reached as the last link of their theories. Humble pride is a safe defense against the authenticity of humility.

7.3.7. However, let us refrain a little from our burning praise of pride. The windows of Gothic cathedrals are extremely proud, and still, even then, there is a tremor of humility in them. The oratories of classical composers are essentially deliberate, and even so, there is a burning faith in them. The borderline region between pride and humility is slippery. We do not want to deny that there can be deliberation and humility in art. But we believe that faith and humility, thus articulated, are already innocuous for the Devil. Deliberation is the opposite of faith, and deliberate faith is a faith without any danger for the Devil. Art is pride, and humble art is humility at the service of pride. Science as a path toward faith is an escape into humility. Philosophy as the handmaid of religion is a refusal to fall into the abyss of the all-different. All of these are the paths of pride trying to avoid humility. And the more humble they become, the more suspect they are. The complex and systematic building of Gothic cathedrals, or the equally complex and systematic Scholastic and Vedic systems, are pride's attempt to represent humility. But what type of humility is this that manifests itself through mon-

sters, on cathedral columns, in the rigorous proofs of God's existence, in the arguments of doctors of the Church, and in the exact and well-tempered preludes and fugues? It is a very well behaved humility; a humility that is too beautiful and well organized to be humility. This is not the type of humility that puts the proud mind in any danger.

7.3.8. The immediate intuition of the insignificance of the enormity of the all-different is not of a mold to make the mind compose hymns in praise of God; nor to make it build cathedrals or proofs of God's existence. On the contrary, it silences the mind. The authentically humble mind is silent. This silence of the mind is the end of pride. Pride is to speak, to articulate, and to create. Pride is language. Humility is silent. This silence is the end of the Devil. In this silence, which is the silence of contrition, the mind dilutes the all-different. It is the sacred silence.

7.3.9. At least that is what the testaments of the great mystics seem to want to tell us when they still spoke, before they dissolved into the silence of the sacred. The author of this book does not have the experience of this silence, and the fact that this book carries on despite his argument proves it. Even though the author has felt the imminence of humility several times, he has resisted it gallantly. But the danger of humility does exist. It is necessary for the Devil to avoid it. The false humility, which is humble pride, is a powerful method in order to avoid actual humility. But there is another. It is the Devil's most powerful weapon. It is the false silence. It is a very similar silence to the sacred silence. It is the silence of sadness. This silence emerges when the mind seeks to simultaneously articulate two opposing judgments. This simultaneous articulation of "yes" and "no," which is an intense articulation, has all the appearances of the sacred silence. In this intense articulation, nothing is articulated, because both judgments call each other out. A zero emerges in this articulation; nothingness emerges. However, this is a dialectically tense zero: a nothingness that is contradictory and full. The Devil appeals to this contradictory and plentiful nothingness, in his attempt to avoid the sacred silence. He appeals to the nothingness that swallows and annihilates everything. He appeals to the deepest Hell. The next chapter shall deal with this tense silence, where sloth and the sadness of the heart exist.