

... certain fundamental issues of old with certain fundamental issues of today and we have tried to show what has no thought is really at a loss if it touches the fundamental propositions of man in the world ...

Not only in all religions but especially within the Jewish-Christian religion such an outstanding performer because he almost doesn't fit in any and especially in the Jewish-Christian religion. There is a paradox involved; nevertheless he is one of the founders. This is a riddle, but I hope we will solve it by and by, but first we will have to talk about religion itself. We haven't done yet so. It is for us still questionable if we can suppose a creative capability of man – that means an original thinking capability that has its own sources in the possibilities of man and of every man – which we could call religious creativeness, religious thinking. Is there such a thing as specific religious thinking or is religious thinking just let's say a mythical and then a metaphysical mistake about certain philosophic propositions which we know now better and can we do now without religion? So, there we have first a phenomenon, the historical phenomenon that up to about the end of the 18th Century and then the 19th and 20th, up to this time – a very long stretch of human development – people always used religious thinking – even the most bold materialists of the early Greek thinkers or the most bold materialist thinkers like [Lucretius](#), the Roman thinkers were still religious. They were pantheists. For them nature was a deity, a divinity. Only since the event of modern science a kind of metaphysical naturalism has taken place in modern thinking for which, though it is metaphysical naturalism as well as the old Greek thinkers were metaphysical naturalists and Lucretius was a metaphysical naturalist, but those new ones for them nature is not a deity any more. It still was

for Spinoza — it was no more for Karl Marx. The difference between the old metaphysical naturalists and the modern ones is one that has almost gone unnoticed because we like so much in history to develop always concepts of progress. We think everything progresses and we think therefore that everything goes in approximately a straight line so when real breaks occur, where one fundamental thought is absolutely abandoned and replaced by a much more shallow one we do not even notice it. The cosmos, though Karl Marx still as a metaphysician thinks he knows that the All is a whole and that he can discover the laws of this whole, we do not notice that for him it is not a living whole any more. For Lucretius and for Spinoza it was. It is a dead whole; it is a mechanical whole. So, all modern ideologies of which we in our loose kind of talking talk today as religions and say those are the modern religions, have one thing in common: they are all mechanical in thinking; they all have even such a crude and apparently mythical myth as Hitler's with the laws of nature and the race soul and so on has still that in common with all the others; the myth of the sociologists as far as that is an ›ism‹ — there is not only sociology as a possible science, there is also ›sociologism‹ and ›sociologism‹ is a movement and one of the mightiest movements of our time. There is not only the development of modern psychology as a science and a science in its infant shoes, there is also ›psychologism‹ as a movement in our world and one of the most dangerous, crude, most flatly metaphysical movements we have ever witnessed, a movement of the possibilities of loose talk all around about indecent matters under the pretext that they belong to human life. All those ›isms‹, modern ideologies have one thing in common: they suppose a certain set of iron laws — be they iron laws of history, of society, of nature, of men's mentality, of whatever laws. But those laws are not laws. It is again loose talk. When Heraclitus, as we will see when we consider him, talks about the law and the law of nature and the law of the cosmos then he means laws set by somebody creative: namely laws set by —

he could almost have said like Zarathustra [Ahura-Mazda](#), the Well-Thinking One, the Divinity absolutely apart, the one great Divinity-Creator, and these laws have been set by this divinity. That means they aren't really laws – they have a meaning. They involve teleological possibilities; they involve possibilities of finding answers to the question: Why? There's purpose in it, creative purpose in them – as there is in well-considered human political laws set by a free community of men. There are ultimate motives behind them not only ulterior ones; there are motives behind them, let's say to create justice on earth; they are laws made – laws made by persons responsible; laws made so that they can partly give answer to the question: why? But what we call nowadays since we have the modern ideologies and ›scientism‹ – not science because the scientists, and the best scientists of our time, the atomic physicists were the first who went away from this modern superstition and fight it most bitterly – but the ›scientism‹ of our time made possible all those ideologies and those ideologies have all one thing in common: namely they are not based on laws; they are based on supposed observed behavior patterns that are mechanical and we are supposed to conform to them. So, we can give the abstract formula: In every ›ism‹ there is hidden a mechanism and every ›ism‹ will finally reduce itself to this mechanism. This mechanism will be after all the trimmings have fallen down, as they have in Bolshevism with Stalin, as they had in Nazism with the advent of killing the Jews in a mass procedure, then they will reveal their inner mechanism and they will reveal it as a deadly one. It is the mechanism of execution of human beings – as all mechanism is. We live in a mechanized age – that does not mean that we have to believe in mechanism, but we mostly do. We can use machines but we don't have to think like machines – but we do. We even make it our ambition to think like machines – and finally we end with the conviction that we can construct machines that think better than we. This inherent

mechanism in ›isms‹, in ideologies divides them absolutely from everything we call religion. We cannot afford loose talk any more. Religion originally in the Roman term ›religio‹ means only awareness, attention – attention of man to the higher powers, to the divine powers. It means also in later interpretations to be rooted commonly in a certain belief. Those are two sides of religion. Now whatever religion we might consider in the history of man from the most primitive ones, animistic religions, via the most complicated mythical religions like Hinduism up to the highest developed metaphysical religions like Judaism and Christianity and Buddhism, Taoism, we will always find that mechanical laws – namely behavior patterns – are entirely absent from them. This distinction holds true all through. Our inclination to call modern ideologies religions comes from the fact that we had to fight in the 10th Century and still in the 19th Century and sometimes until yesterday Christianity, and especially Catholicism in Protestant countries especially Catholicism, as here, as a belief – a belief that had become so to speak outdated and showed itself in an alliance with the powers of society that did not want freedom and were in the way of freedom and also a religion – a belief now – a religion as a belief that had become an obstacle to the development of clear, reasonable modern science. We are so used by our forefathers to this fight that we do not see that we have won this fight long ago, but as a kind of [Phyrrus-battle](#) – one more such victory and we will be entirely lost because we have destroyed something with it which we were not aware of: namely, the last friend of faith that was in the modern world. We have not seen that a religion could be compared best to the comparison that Plato's [Alcybiades](#) in ›The Symposium‹ makes in order to explain Socrates. He says, ›Socrates is like those old idols we have in our household, wooden ones that show a very ugly satyr – he has an ugly face and looks poor and reject-able, but he has doors in his chest, hidden doors,

and if you open those doors then you find inside this statue of the satyr, you find a wonderful golden statue of a God.¹ So, religion, true religion not ideology, has within the ugly wooden statue that always has to be destroyed and burned again and again because it is a statue built by ulterior motives, it is a statue built for social purposes and it will never endure long and it cannot. Within that statue, that ugly statue, if it is a true religion, has always been hidden a spark of pure faith. How can we recognize it? As I said in the beginning, the reason that those modern ideologies can only come to mechanical laws, behavior patterns, and make us real conformists of them – that means slaves of machines, slaves of nobody, let alone slaves or servants of God, not even slaves or servants of definite men – that is all an illusion. When [Hegel](#) said ›in an oriental despotism one man is free, then in Western communities a few were free, then finally all became free;‹² though we can say of modern societies when they have accomplished their way, in totalitarianism, they have accomplished a society where nobody is free and this nobody rules. This Mr. Nobody – nobody is free because everybody is a slave of mechanical laws. That was already inherent in the answer of the great [Napoleon III](#)³ when he was asked about his power. He said, ›I rule all, but my master is the nature of things.‹ The nature of things, a slave of things, a slave of mechanical behavior patterns. That was only the opportunism of business men of the 19th Century – of which he was the greatest though – he was a man with a thought – he was the greatest business man of all time in the modern sense. Opportunism – namely, absolutely only ulterior motives, only ulterior motives – today that way, tomorrow that way – the opportunistic because the situation we know always changes, we have to change with the situation, we have to be absolute conformists. There is no possibility of man's inner strength and power, nobody can develop his own continuity, his own consistency, he can never become a person, he is only

¹ Plato: Symposium, 215b.

² »In the East only one individual is free, the despot; in Greece the few are free; in the Teutonic world the saying is true that all are free, that is, man is free as man.« Hegel, G.W.: Lectures on the History of Philosophy. B. Relation of Philosophy to Other Departments of Knowledge. 3. Commencement of Philosophy and of its History. c). Beginnings of Philosophy in Greece. 1805/06, trans. 1892-96.

³ Out of the transcript it is not obvious about which Napoleon Bluecher is talking. It could be also [Napoleon I](#).

a function that now has to behave this way and tomorrow that way according to a changed situation as an opportunist. The totalitarians draw only the iron conclusion from that – by saying let's set iron patterns for behavior once and for all. You do what you are told to do; you have not even the possibility any more to maneuver yourself; we will maneuver you – but the maneuvering is the same; it is always only a maneuvering pattern and nothing else. With that the modern ideologies as mechanical, inherently mechanical powers have proved to be the most overwhelming powers man ever met, overwhelming powers that make him a slave of mechanics: and crush him and take out of him any trend of personality. Man has been ruled and had Himself ruled by many, not mostly higher but mostly only overwhelming powers, but still those overwhelming powers had an indication of higher powers in them because they at least were believed to be that. Only in our time we are ruled by powers that can be proven, qualitatively inferior to man – namely mechanical powers. We can be mechanics; mechanics are [directing] us – we are ruled by our artificial slaves and by their ideas. We have established the most overwhelming power over us ourselves. That explains why not progress but a going upwards of the human mind in creative performances has always been possible under any religion from the most primitive on until as long as Christianity prevailed. That from the moment on where we went after a brief interlude of pure philosophy trying to take over and to keep us to ultimate motives with Kant and a few of his successors, that with the victory of 'scientism' in our age, we lost the last of those possibilities and with that we have destroyed the possibility of faith. We have lost faith, not only belief. What is the distinction? Now we have to consider what all those religions even the best ones of them, the most highly developed metaphysical religions like Judaism and Christianity have in common with modern ideologies. They have in common that all of them, the religions as well as the ideologies, can be described as definite systems

of belief. That means what they have in common is their either mythical in the beginning or [after that] metaphysical structure. They all have, and also have the religions, not only the ideologies, they require a fundamental belief, a belief in an assumption that cannot be proven. The assumption can be the highest assumption – namely, the assumption of the existence of a God-Creator, – or it can be the lowest assumption – namely the assumption of the necessity of the belief in mechanical laws. They are all systems of belief – at least they have functioned as such. The decay of religions, especially if religions had certain definite purposes that reveal themselves more and more as ulterior purposes like Judaism, then we find that in order to preserve a people as a people, as a nation – though this might be a righteous purpose (I am not judging; I am only analyzing) – more and more the ritual will become complicated and finally the system of beliefs – namely that this kind of food is almost poisonous in the sense of your happiness or blissfulness with God – overgrows the original content of faith that made this religion spring into the world, that this is entirely buried and overshadowed by it. That is the way great religions die. The Christian religion is dying the same way revealing more and more its possible ulterior motives. A religion gets entirely destroyed and can be made a fake of as soon as society meets a situation as we meet in our society: namely when a dim awareness of this fact that we have lost faith with belief creates a hysteria of going back to belief – to any belief – or forward to the ideological beliefs and then we get conversion phenomena like people who, like T. S. Eliot, say, ›We must believe in God because otherwise we wouldn't be able to create good poetry.‹⁴ That means using the Christian God for the sake of literature – or – and I do not see the difference – some misguided patriots who do not know what patriotism is but think themselves patriots who say, ›You must believe in God because God is good for America.‹ And I do not see the

⁴ Reference unclear.

difference either if psychologists come and say to us, ›You must believe in God because God is good for your health.‹ It means to reverse the original purpose of all religions and what makes religions religions, destroying this almost invisible nucleus of faith because to this existence of faith one thing is bound, (?): If there are gods we are there for them and not they for us. As soon as we reverse that at the same moment we destroy most entirely that most valuable content of any religion. That is what we are doing today to Christianity. Those are the people who want us to go back to Christianity. They are the destroyers of Christianity. They are really a phenomenon like the anti-Christ. The anti-Christ was prophesied as a being that comes pretending to be Christ. This is not a personal being; this is a trend in our society. People come pretending they are Christians and they do the most anti-Christian work imaginable. They try to destroy the real faith content of the Christian religion. So, philosophy has to defend religion today. This is a funny situation; because since the Greek thinkers the philosophers have tried their best to find their own position as distinguished from religion, to keep away from religion as much as possible, reason always distrusting faith and saying, ›Too much belief bound up with faith. Let's cut down all those unnecessary and foolish, beliefs first and see what remains. Perhaps there might remain faith, but we are not very much interested in it. We want to see how far reason can lead.‹ We do all that fine business for millenniums and then we find ourselves in a situation where we have to defend religion and this is again a thing that never happened before. We had to have our modern society in order to bring about such a situation where everything seems to stand on its head.

As systems of belief, religions as well as ideologies, we reject. As to the content of faith in all religions we try to extract this content of faith and then to look at it in the sense, ›Isn't it perhaps really a hidden philosophy. Is it not perhaps the spark of reason that created this

faith — or is there more to it? Is there really something like original religious thinking? Is there a possibility of thinking that goes beyond philosophical thinking? That transcends philosophical thinking? Is there such a possibility. That we can find out when we first preserve this content of faith and not reject it together with all those systems of belief. That is why we undergo this difficult philosophical procedure. To find out about this content of pure faith that might be inherent in all those religions. So, we have a distinction and we want to follow this distinction because distinctions count in philosophy most. Otherwise we get into loose talk. We will not commit the crime because it is a crime to call modern ideologies religions. We will not do them the honor to call them religions. Following this distinction we go now to religions themselves of whatever kind and ask: What is the criterion that in those systems of belief which we can call rightly religions is inherent such a nucleus of pure faith? What can be the criterion? The criterion is that they all contain a certain definite concept of divinity. The question here again is to distinguish that from certain modern ideologies — and this is easy because we are the ones who call them religions. They don't call themselves religions because they are very well aware that they have to reject the insinuation that they might contain a concept of divinity because if they did they cannot proceed in their way. Why? Any concept of divinity — and we will distinguish between concepts of immanent divinities and which we do not value so highly, and concepts of transcendent divinity, which we value much higher — nevertheless both have one thing in common: every concept of divinity reveals itself as a concept of ultimate motives of man, of creative motives of man because those concepts set definite limits to man's performance power, not everything is permitted to man. This means that those religions — primitive as they might be or developed as they might be — have all one thing in common with

pure philosophy. Pure philosophy in the way of reason finds, as we will see in Socrates and then again in Kant, by reasoning that the condition of the creative performance of human reason is the self-criticism of reason: namely that human reason remains always and in every moment aware of itself as definitely limited and tries to find out about its limits. [Unlimited] reason would be divine reason; limited reason is human reason. [Unlimited] reason was ascribed by all religious men of all religions to divinities and limited reason by some of them to man. Unlimited reason is described by pure philosophers as an impossibility of human reason and leaves open the question that there might exist an infinite reason, an accomplished reason but would be the quality of God. A Philosopher starts with the negative – with his knowledge of non-knowledge. He first finds out and makes sure to know what he does not know and what he possibly cannot know. By that he sets the limits of reason, of reasoning and that prevents reasoning from becoming inhuman: namely, getting foolish and crazy and staying to be human reason. As soon as this boundary falls – and it falls in the 19th Century with the rejection of the latest two great results of religion and philosophy – namely with the rejection of Immanuel Kant by Hegel, rejecting that human reason has limits and projecting an infinite reason which exists and contains in it human reason so that finally the reason of humanity in all eternity would be infinite and would be absolute reason – which means that we participate in absolute reason – in absolute reason and in divine reason – and that we can go on to overstep our limits every time. With that rationalism in the modern sense arises – namely, the belief in reason – which is one of the greatest monsters to believe in. Reason not as a divinity but reason again as a mechanical power – because the first mechanism of all modern mechanisms is the logic of Hegel, the dialectics of Hegel, which is nothing but a description in human logical words, concepts, so to speak, of the human thinking process as a process of mechanics. This has done immeasurable good to the development of modern mathematics and science – and it has done

immeasurable harm to any concept of free philosophy in modern times and it has helped to destroy religion almost entirely. The second fact was the contemporary rejection of the Christian religion as a religion that had a possibility of pure faith in it – and we rejected not only the belief, we rejected the faith too. With that we entered our dark age because this is a dark age – dark in the real sense of the word: namely, in that sense that neither human reason nor human faith, which both could be described a little poetically as the light that can be given by the human mind to the world and the light that can be given by the human heart to the world. Both lights have been extinguished. That is why I call it a dark situation. That does not mean that it does not have hopes – it has the greatest ones.

Now the inquiry into a phenomenon, a supposed phenomenon, as pure faith is, has first to make a certain evaluation of different religions. We did not take up the question of religion when we took up Zarathustra, when we took up Buddha or Lao-tze because they did not create personally, so to speak, or in their thinking was not involved the creation of a metaphysical religion. It is in Abraham's thinking as it is in the thinking of Jesus of Nazareth. So, those both will be the figures which force us to approach this question of religion at all. Again, we need distinctions in order to understand that there is a certain development of the human mind revealed in the succession of religions built by man. I do not mean progress by that, but since we found that the only factor we really know and which gave us the illusion that there could be development is the human mind because it is a self-developing factor – whatever else it might be. The self-development of the human mind is shown in the development of religion also and we have to trace it there. The most rough distinction we can make is the distinction between immanent concepts of God and transcendent concepts of divinity. Immanent concepts and transcendent concepts are qualitatively distinguished not only in quantity – between them is a jump that the human mind makes. This jump has been done when the

human mind broke the framework of myth, as we have seen. It is a most amazing affair that happened with all the great thinkers we considered in different countries, but almost in one time; if we take the period a little large, where this jump came about – a jump upward. In the mythical context from the most primitive on we have originally every power that is stronger than man, that can kill man, can overwhelm him, taken to be a divine power, a higher power; every natural event – and to natural events in the philosophical sense, physical events in the philosophical sense, means an event that happens to man, everything that is given and where he himself is not engaged with his will and reason to bring the event about, everything that just occurs to him, happens to him, in the Greek sense of ›[physis](#)‹ – that we call physical events or we can also call it natural events. It includes the mental events and [animism](#). The myth of animism takes every appearance, figure or happening in a dream also as the appearance of a divine power, of a higher power, so originally overwhelming power is identical with higher power. We should have never dreamt that this same identification in a more deadly way – namely, going backwards – would occur again in modern times but it has. Now it is so that higher powers are not recognized at all anymore because man himself is the highest power. Whatever one can talk about nature, if one talks about it not in a divine sense as the [pantheists](#) and the old philosophers did, it still means that man finally is the highest power in it. So only overwhelming powers – namely, behavior patterns – are recognized by man. The primitives recognized every overwhelming power because they didn't know if it could not be a higher power which had to be approached with devotion and magic in order to convince it to be nice to man and not to destroy man and then comes this long way of the human mind to find out possibilities of distinction between really higher powers and merely overwhelming powers. This long way where they tried by mythical speculation in which reason is contained, to invent gods, to create gods that are [person] of powers, not this

thunderstorm is any more the power itself but there is a kind of a dim perception of a person, some mythical person like Woton⁵, who is the master of the thunderstorm and handles the thunderstorm. All those step-by-step attempts to get at a distinction between higher powers and overwhelming powers in that long process of the human mind are in danger to be destroyed at once - all of them - and their results by our modern predicament not even to raise the question any more - Because power is overwhelming power and overwhelming power is always right. That is the belief of the opportunists and the belief of the totalitarians who are both alike in that respect. But all this was done in order to free man, to give him the possibility really to gain insight into higher powers and to gain power over overwhelming powers. To take a late formulation of religious-philosophical a nature both together:

it is [Pascal's](#) saying: »Man is the most inferior being in all creation, in the All, the most fragile one, a bubble of air injected into his veins will kill him - and yet he is greater than the whole universe because he knows that he dies.«⁶ Awareness, consciousness, the tremendous power of suffering - namely, being the only being in the universe and in all being, that has to cope with the terrible predicament always to know that he dies and has given him his possible greatness: namely, the greatness to say that he is greater than everything else in the creation, making this qualitative distinction, setting up himself as a higher power than all the overwhelming powers of creation together - is in this saying (which is a religious-philosophic saying) brought about by a Christian and that gives us the opportunity to trace back to the source, to the more creative moment, let's say, where this flash of the human mind that he could himself consider to be a superior power to all creation because there is a higher power to all creation and to himself. When this flash happened and this bridge was built, the bridge that man built being himself the bridge between the creative nature and the idea of the creator and recognizing himself man by that as a creative creature. The discovery

⁵ Might be a confusion of [Thor](#) and [Wotan](#).

⁶ »Man is but a reed, the most feeble thing in nature; but he is a thinking reed. The entire universe need not arm itself to crush him. A vapour, a drop of water suffices to kill him. But, if the universe were to crush him, man would still be more noble than that which killed him, because he knows that he dies and the advantage which the universe has over him; the universe knows nothing of this.« Pascal, Blaise: *Pensées* (Thoughts), 1670, [VI](#), § 347.

of his own reasonably limited and human but creativeness by realizing a possible higher power of absolute creativeness. This has been almost approached by Buddha and Lao-tze. They refrained from drawing a conclusion like that because Buddha had too much to do to prove all the immanent gods of the myth who had been supposed to be higher powers as inferior powers to the mind of man and he destroyed all the immanent gods of the Indian myth. He did not set above himself and man a higher power because he did not have to do anything in the world. This was withdrawal of man into himself. Lao-tze who set man apart from all creation and in a way already above all creation did it only in order to help creation, to be good, benevolent, productive, and so he also did not develop a concept of God – This concept was first developed by Zarathustra, of the transcendent absolute God, and we have described that, but it is too much of a pure philosophical concept with Zarathustra if we take away from the whole of Zarathustrianism, which is a very, very inferior religion that has been built upon him, and take the much higher developed and transcendental and metaphysical religion, Judaism and Christianity, instead . If we take only Zarathustra, then he gives only the most bare concept of God as it can be conceived by a pure philosopher who wants to set an example: namely, the example to limit human reason, keeping it to be merely human, by setting a concept of an absolute reason, the Well-Thinking One, Ahura-Mazda, the absolute well-thinking one, beyond creation – beyond creation. This can be described, and I think it should be described, more as a philosophical deed, and a philosophical creation than as a specific religious one, but it approaches and is most near to the religious creation, out of religious thinking, of the same concept in religious terms that we have to bind up with the name of Abraham. The concept of God, as far as philosophical value goes, of Zarathustra and Abraham, is the same, but the religious value and religious significance of Abraham's concept of God is a much greater one and will help us more to pursue our inquiry: What is religion? Is there such a thing as original, creative

religious thinking? And is it necessary? Or can we do entirely really without religion including faith? Can we do without faith? Is reason alone perhaps mighty enough if it only would be pursued rightly to keep us human – not only to keep us human but to make us more and more human and to prevent more and more our becoming in-human – because that is what pure philosophy wants to do. But this is also what pure religion wants to do. And so, we can say that we have a strange phenomenon before us at once – the phenomenon is that we can find related roots of all human creative activities, they are all interrelated but each has its own roots. So, has philosophy and religion – but here's a strange phenomenon: religion and philosophy have the same roots. Out of those same roots grow both – a tree, a double tree parting, coming together, sometimes growing together (as in the Middle Ages) parting again, driven back to each other again by a funny situation as today's situation is, where suddenly the philosophers have to come forward and defend religion because of the content of pure faith in religion. There we have an illustration, an historical one, of this constant relation between religious and philosophical thinking. So, our questions are: ›Are they one?‹ They certainly have the same root. The root is the existential predicament of man. Just this basic being in the world and not knowing what it is all about; the absolute uncertainty and insecurity of this being that is distinguished from all other beings, that cannot rely on instincts as much as animals can, that feels himself endangered from the beginning, that in addition to that has always the consciousness and awareness that it will die; this being exposed to being, exposed to the all of being and distinguished from it; this being that has to think because otherwise it would not survive for a minute exposed as it is – and this being that can think and can develop thinking. Asking foolish questions, questions [like] why is that? why am I here? why is there anything and not rather nothing? why? Out of this why which is the question of questions – namely, that capability that makes

men a questioning being, spring religion and philosophy at once. Both part very early as soon as the myth breaks up. In the myth the tree is still united because religion prevails in the myth. The answers given to the ultimate question of man (which is the question: Why? in its whole abstractness). The answers given are immediate answers of fear, constructions of artistic imaginations of man's artistic quality to dream dreams that have consistency as dreams and can give peace of mind, can give certainty, can give security; immediate and hasty answers. Then when the myth is broken up by those philosophers and men we consider they part and philosophy comes into its own, and then they grow for ages together again, as we have seen. Common roots, common ways, and different ways all together in this relation of religion and philosophy, which is the relation of faith and reason.

I wanted to go into the question psychologically, but I don't have the time for it. I mean — let's just take up the main argument of anti-religious people — and by anti-religious people I mean now anti-human people because anti-religious in the real sense would mean to deny the possibility of divinity which is against human reason. It would also reveal the necessity to deny that and this necessity would mean as it does in totalitarian regimes the will to overstep human limits every minute, to leave the way open to every inhuman action. That is why they have to be anti-religious — and we are foolish when we call them religious. They have to be anti-religious and anti-human. That again goes together. Again, a common interest at least in our time of real religion (that means only of the content of religion of faith) and reason is revealed to us. Those people started by attacking religion itself by one of those modern [unmasking] pseudo-scientific methods which have one metaphysical assumption — that is: everything is ulterior motive, so if I do somebody some good, that seems only to be good. It all happened because I have a guilt feeling towards my father and I am now somehow

forced, compelled to do something good in order to punish myself. I am just an automaton that reacts. I am not able to do anything out of myself just because I want to do it and thinks it right and good. So religion also must be something that man only needs, only an illusion, only something to get peace of mind – so it springs from fear and hope. Yes, it is true: it springs also fear and hope – but it couldn't spring if there would not be underneath that the other spring: namely, man's unrelenting will to understand the world, his unrelenting will to make use of his freedom to ask the question: why? and to answer the question: why? again and again. If this would not be there, he could be as afraid as he wanted to be – he wouldn't create religion because he could not have hope ... Man, contrary to the animal can hope; man, contrary to the animal has consciousness of the future which means that man can hope as the animal can never (though it is fearful) ...

Side II

... seize hope at once in order to get out of paralysis, that hope if we indulge too much in it already creates fear because the fear the hope will not be fulfilled which we have now. That is a real dialectical relationship and a mental predicament of man – but a specifically human one. Now to say that religions are only necessary as long as fear prevails and then they wouldn't be necessary anymore and hope wouldn't be necessary any more reminds me of the same statement, though it might not be recognized by most as the same statement in quality, as a statement made several years ago by psycho-analysts whose names I have forgotten because they should be forgotten, who wrote identical books without knowing of each other. Those books had a common thesis. The thesis was: how far we have progressed, now we have psychoanalysis – that means that those people like [Dostoyevsky](#) and [Shakespeare](#) who have only been very, very dilettantish and unaccomplished psychoanalysts, that we don't need that junk anymore; now we, the real psychoanalysts are there, and we will do everything for you. Service with a smile! That is the same statement – yes. When we decide to become inhuman, why art? Those psychoanalysts do not know how much they think like Stalin and Hitler, how much they are already totalitarians, and want to prepare us for that same nice state of inhumanity. That is bound up with the question of the rejection of religion in its inherent qualities of faith – and again, fear and hope are reasons for the development of religious thinking; they are also roots for the development of philosophic thinking. Again, we have the same roots. As much as we would want to go deeper into that which we have not the time to do, we would always find that the roots for religious action and reaction, religious activity are the same as the roots for philosophical action and activity.

The decisive jump out of the mythical framework as far as religious thinking goes has been mainly made by Abraham – or by the man who invented

Abraham, the writer who might have invented Abraham – but that to us is very unimportant. We consider only thoughts – thoughts that are fundamental, thoughts that cannot die, and that have become relevant again in our time. So, this only figure where we cannot prove that the man lived – of all others it is proven now that the man really lived – though it is most probable that he lived. But we have to disregard this fact and take him merely in as he is as an imaginary remembered figure, in his thoughts – merely in his thoughts. The fact that the thoughts of Abraham have been inherent in the whole Judaic-Christian religion up to now (and I am almost inclined to say have always saved this religion up to the 19th Century) is almost a model for the greater fact that in all religions this little image of God, this concept of divinity, that golden little statue, is inherent and saves a religion for a long time from being destroyed – a religion as a system of belief, that outer statue, that worthless one, or that ulterior one. Here we have that in Abraham's thinking – and if we confront that with the permanent attempts of pure philosophy to destroy every concept of divinity possibly – and philosophy did – destroy all those systems of belief and with it if possible the concepts of divinity they contained, proving them to be unreasonable concepts of divinity – which can be done and has been done. But philosophers have been failed up to now to prove that the concept that Abraham had of God – to prove that to be an unreasonable concept. This one has not been destroyed by means of reason – and I think we will find, as we have seen already in Zarathustra, how reasonable this concept of Zarathustra's divinity already was, but this was more a concept of reason than a concept of faith. Now we are grasping a concept of faith which might turn out and shall turn out to be indestructible by human reason because it really transcends in the genuine word really human reason itself

and stays bound to human reason, has its roots in human reason. That is a new concept of God compared to all other concepts of divinity. We will have the opportunity to recheck that when we will talk later about the Greek concepts of Gods and of divinity. Then we will be able to recheck if this concept of Abraham is really so outstanding that it seems to guarantee almost all by itself, if believed in, the prevalence of humanity in man. That is what divinities were supposed to do and this divinity, as a mere idea – we talk only about ideas of divinity here in philosophy – has in itself the capability, if it is believed in, ready to prevent inhumanities almost assuredly. Here we can see already how highly developed this concept as a religious concept might be. Now this concept was hidden in the Judaic and Christian religion in the real sense of the word because already the Mosaic religion does not really have it any more, tries to destroy it, keeps only one feature of it, one little feature. The prophetic religion tries to restore certain other features but does not succeed – only a few of them. Jesus of Nazareth, as we will see, has a full concept of this concept again, but the Christians who built upon him destroy almost all of it again and have one feature left – a little one – and that one little feature inherent in the whole Judaic-Christian religion is the one that until 1900 has saved both from destruction. Here we have a case where I think we can prove it philosophically – and that is, of course, a most interesting case in a religious matter – if one can prove something philosophically in a religious matter.

So, we will approach the meaning of the Bible – that means the book itself in the next session. We will talk about this Book of Books first, and then see how Abraham might fit or not fit into this Book of Books and approach our question of the origin of the highest concept of divinity.