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DIVINE EVOLUTION AND THE EMERGENCE OF MORAL ABSOLUTES IN JAKOB BOEHME'S "KYSERIUM MAGNUM" AND "VON DER GNADENWAHL."

RICE UNIVERSITY, M.A., 1981

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DIVINE EVOLUTION AND THE EMERGENCE OF MORAL ABSOLUTES
IN JAKOB BOEHME'S MYSERIUM MAGNUM AND VON DER GNADENWAHL

by

David Mark Duewall

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF ARTS

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:

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HOUSTON, TEXAS

March, 1981
ABSTRACT

DIVINE EVOLUTION AND THE EMERGENCE OF MORAL ABSOLUTES
IN JAKOB BOEHME'S MYSSTERIUM MAGNUM AND VON DER GNADENWAHL

by

David Mark Duewall

In two of his last works, Mysterium Magnum and Von der Gnadenwahl (1623), Böhme sets down an account of a complex evolutionary process by means of which not only the world, but, indeed, the Deity Himself came to be. Specifically, one can reconstruct the first three stages of this cosmogony with the following result: 1) By means of the Eternal Generation ("Die ewige Selbstgebürung"), God evolves from an Abyss or Void ("Ein Ungrund") into an Eternal Mind ("Eine ewige Geist"); 2) In the Eternal Nature ("Die ewige Natur"), the Eternal Mind of God transforms itself, by means of seven forces or qualities ("Qualitäten"), into a spiritual and creative Persona; 3) In the first act of creation, the Creator fashions angelic beings in His own image, one of which (Lucifer) rebels against the Divine Will, and, by means of a self-caused metamorphosis, becomes the very nemesis of all that is good. Particularly this last stage is of interest, insofar as it forms the basis of Böhme's understanding of the nature of sin and evil.
TO MY WIFE, LOIS
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For their aid in the writing of this paper, I wish to acknowledge the members of my thesis committee, especially my thesis advisor, Dr. Susan Clark, whose words of encouragement and constructive criticisms were invaluable to me. I am also indebted to Dr. Hoke Robinson and Dr. Joseph Wilson, who provided much needed counsel and helpful advice.
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INTRODUCTION

Omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent. Practically any attempt to do justice to the Christian—or, for that matter, monotheistic—idea of the Deity must, it seems, necessarily involve one or more of the attributes of all-knowledge, all-wisdom, and all-presence. It is, more generally, difficult, if not impossible, to define the word 'Divine' without alluding to a sum, extreme, or absolute of some kind, be it of power, intelligence, virtue, etc. Accordingly, the Supreme Being appears to be almost universally associated with an 'all': The Almighty, All-Seeing, All-Wise, All-Compassionate, the Summun Bonum or Sum of All Goodness, the Maker and Judge of All Men. In view of the totality associated with God, it seems only natural that those who reflect and meditate upon the Divine Nature see in it at once the source and sum of all things. Particularly for the Christian philosopher or mystic, the Deity is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning, End, and Center of the universe. This view was held by Jakob Böhme (1575–1624), no less than by others that preceded him and succeeded him.¹

From the viewpoint of the cobbler from Görlitz, Silesia, the cosmos was inseparably bound up with the Spirit of God, indeed, sprang from same and found its sustenance therein. For Böhme, the Deity did not so much create the universe as give birth to it, and one would not exaggerate in claiming that in every drop of water and blade of grass, in every ray of sunshine, animate, and inanimate thing, this man saw nothing less than a Divine incarnation. So intimate, in fact, did the shoemaker-philosopher hold the connection between God and creation to be, that he could not long speak of one without mentioning the other: In the former, the latter found its necessary source and sustainer; in
the latter, the former found its necessary mode of expression. It was
primarily to develop and expand upon this idea that Böhme spent the
latter half of his life writing (twenty-six works in all) and attempting
to defend what he wrote, often in the face of severe persecution.
Beginning with *Aurora oder Morgenröthe im Aufgang* in 1612, he struggled
to explain how the Infinite One creates and nurtures the finite uni-
verse, and how, in particular, everything visible and temporal springs
from an invisible and eternal source. This proved, of course, to be no
easy task, especially since Böhme felt compelled to pull all the astro-
logical, alchemical, religious, and philosophical ideas of his time
into a single, coherent 'theosophy' that would explain the world and
'justify the ways of God to man.' In making this grandiose attempt, the
author came up with a number of interesting and novel ideas, ideas which
he continued to develop and refine throughout his literary career.
Among these one finds: a concept of a Divine Evolution, i.e., of God as
an evolved being; the notion that all things living and non-living
derive their 'signatures' or constitutions—both temperamental and
physical—from a set of seven alchemical components; the theory that
growth and development come about due to the interaction and synthesis
of antithetical elements or forces. Clearly, Böhme was no mere Christ-
ian apologist, but a thinker in his own right. Despite the logical and
linguistic difficulties he encountered in trying to communicate his
insights, he nevertheless succeeded in producing a fairly coherent body
of argument that stimulated not only the best minds of his generation,
but those of later generations as well.²

Before proceeding with our analysis of Böhme's cosmogony, we should
allude briefly to the difficulties involved in such an undertaking, as well as to some of the more valuable Böhme scholarship now extant. Others have, to be sure, also wrestled with the works of the Silesian philosopher, and it is from this fertile background of critical literature that this paper draws much of its inspiration.

With regard to the reconstruction of Böhme's genesis of the universe, it must be admitted that a number of obstacles hinder such an endeavor. There is, first of all, the problem of language, for the mystic Böhme did not always use language as his countrymen did, but, indeed, was continually intent upon understanding words in new (and mystical) ways, and on inventing new terms to convey his insights. While we will, here, elaborate only on some of the more difficult terms, one might well, in attempting to decipher Böhme's idiolect, consult a number of works, especially two excellent treatises by Steven Alex Konopacki entitled "Frustration and Promise: Jacob Boehme's Language Theories in the Aurora oder Morgen Röte im Aufgang" and The descent into words: Jakob Böhme's transcendental linguistics. While Konopacki is unsurpassed in his in-depth treatment of Böhme's phonology, morphology, and semantics, a variety of shorter linguistic pieces also prove informative, among them those of Arno Heller, Peter Schnäublin, Ludwig Völker, and Klaus Klostermaier. For that matter, the works of H.H. Brinton, Hans Grunsky, and Paul Hankammer can also be of assistance in fathoming Böhme's peculiar terminology.

A second obstacle that hinders any attempt to recreate Böhme's "Weltanschauung" derives from the distance between the philosophical, religious, and scientific ideas of his day and those of the present.
Here, again, we have, for the sake of space, opted not to go into a
detailed analysis of the author's intellectual background, but can
recommend several helpful studies. Among them, there are those which
deal with the alchemical ideas of Böhme, such as Erich Worbs' "Gib
der Erde des Himmels Speise," and Grunsky's Jakob Böhme, those that
concern themselves with religious influences—Heinrich Bornkamm's
Die Jahrhundert der Reformation, Gerhard Schmolze's "Jakob Böhme und
die Theologie des Neulutherums," Arlene Miller's "Jakob Böhme from
Orthodoxy to Enlightenment"—and those which address various philosoph-
ical elements in the Böhmean system of thought, e.g., W.A. Schulze's
"Jakob Böhme und die Kabbala," Hans Tesch's Ein geistiges Porträt des
Mystikers Jakob Böhme, and the writings of Brinton and J.J. Stoudt.⁶

Having alluded to the linguistic and ideological difficulties in-
herent in any treatment of Böhme's works, we might also mention a by no
means lesser obstacle, namely, the sheer number of these volumes. As
noted above, the philosopher-mystic of Görlitz wrote no less than
twenty-six individual treatises in his life, some of which are quite
long and involved. Moreover, there is also the problem of consistency
within these writings, for Böhme modified his views with age, amending
and sometimes discarding old notions. Fortunately, however, this
latter problem proves to be a blessing in disguise, for, because Böhme
progressively developed his 'theosophy,' one can justifiably consider
his later works to be a more authoritative expression of his theories
than his earlier ones. It is, in particular, the case that the author
gradually abandoned the attempt to integrate all knowledge—alchemical,
astrological, philosophical, etc.—into a single system, and wrote, in
the closing years of his life, more and more about those ideas that he intuitively felt to be true. With this in mind, we have selected two of the last works that Böhme wrote and used these in the subsequent discussion.

What this paper will attempt to do, then, is the following. On the basis of the cosmogonical scheme outlined in the *Mysterium Magnum, oder Erklärung über das erste Buch Mosis* (1623) and in *De Electione Gratiae, oder von der Gnadenwahl* (1623), we will reconstruct the stage by stage 'evolution' of the Deity from a void into a well-defined personality, and relate this development to the origin and nature of evil. In so doing, it will be necessary, of course, to rely on some of the more prominent authorities in this area of Böhme scholarship, authorities such as Howard Brinton, Hans Grunsky, Sunoon Kim, Wilhelm Knevels, Herbert Deinert, Paul Hankammer, and John Joseph Stoudt—all of whom tried to do much the same thing attempted here, i.e., to find a clear sequence of events in the Böhmean genesis of the cosmos. In making this attempt, we hope to throw new light on Böhme's often misunderstood conception of evil, as well as to furnish a clearer interpretation of his notion of Divine Evolution.
CHAPTER I
FROM WILL TO MIND: THE ETERNAL GENERATION

The cosmogony outlined in the Mysterium Magnum and Von der Gnadenwähl begins with an attempt to describe what for Böhme constitutes the Cause of All Things, namely, the Supreme Being, or, more simply, God.¹ Specifically, the author attempts to tell his readers what the Deity most essentially is, i.e., what He is when considered apart from—or prior to—the tangible, perceptible universe in which He manifests Himself.² Not surprisingly, Böhme can separate God from the world only with great difficulty, and must arrive at his conception of the Deity by means of a negative definition, by telling us, that is, what God is not. The Mysterium Magnum opens by contrasting the Deity with any time- or spacebound creature or thing:

Wenn ich betrachte, was Gott ist, so sage ich: Er ist das Eine gegen der Kreatur, als ein ewig Nichts; er hat weder Grund, Anfang noch Stätte; und besitzt nichts, als nur sich selber: er ist der Wille des Ungrundes, er ist in sich selber nur Eines: er be- darf keinen Raum noch Ort: er gehört von Ewigkeit in Ewigkeit sich selber in sich: er ist keinem Dinge gleich oder ähnlich, und hat keinen sonderlichen Ort, da er wohne: die ewige Weisheit oder Verstand ist seine Wohne: er ist der Wille der Weisheit, die Weisheit ist seine Offenbarung (MM., i, 2).

A somewhat different, yet complimentary, description appears near the beginning of Von der Gnadenwähl. This sketch is also negative in tone, attempting to describe by means of contrast:

Denn man kann nicht von Gott sagen, dass er diess oder das sei, böse oder gut, dass er in sich selber Unterschiede habe; denn er ist in sich selber naturlos, sowohl affect- und kreaturlös. Er hat keine Neigungheit zu etwas, denn es ist nichts vor ihm, darzu er könnte sich neigen, weder Böses noch Gutes: er ist in sich selber der Ungrund, ohne einigen Willen gegen die Natur und Kreatur, als ein ewig
Nichts; es ist keine Quaal in ihm, noch etwas, das sich zu ihm oder von ihm künde neigen. Er ist das Einige Wesen, und ist nichts vor ihm oder nach ihm, daran oder darinnen er ihm künde einen Willen schöpfen oder fassen; er hat auch nichts, das ihm gehäre oder gebe; er ist das Nichts und das Alles, und ist ein Einiger Wille, in dem die Welt und die ganze Creation liegt, in ihm ist alles gleichewig ohne Anfang in gleichem Gewichte, Maass und Zahl; er ist weder Licht noch Finsterniss, weder Liebe noch Zorn, sondern das ewige Eine; darum sagt Moses: Der Herr ist ein Einiger Gott. Deut. 6,4 (Gw., i, 3).

As to a positive conception of the Deity, we can, from the above two passages, draw a number of conclusions. First, God, as Böhme conceives of Him in His original, unmanifested state, is pure will, the Will of the Abyss ("der Wille des Ungrunds"), to be exact. This Will exists in utter isolation ("Er ist das Einige Wesen, und ist nichts vor ihm oder nach ihm"), as the very opposite of any creature or incarnate being ("Er ist das Eine gegen der Kreatur"), and independent of either locality ("er ... hat keinen sonderlichen Ort, da er wohne") or source ("er hat auch nichts, das ihn gebäre oder gebe"). Moreover, this Will has always existed ("er hat weder Grund, Anfang, noch Stütte"). As though the task of imagining a disembodied, isolated force were not already difficult enough for his readers, Böhme further complicates matters by insisting that God is both nothing and everything ("er ist das Nichts und das Alles"), a Void containing the whole of creation ("er ist in sich selber der Ungrund ... in dem die Welt und die ganze Creation liegt"). The implied equation of the concepts of everything and nothing appears an irresolvable paradox, until one considers the illuminating remarks that almost immediately follow the above quotation:

... es ist ein Einig Leben, und ein einiger Wille ohne Begierde, und ist weder Dickes noch Dünnes,
weder hoch noch tief; es ist kein Raum, besitzt
auch in sich weder Dickes noch Dünnes, weder Höhe
noch Tiefe, noch Raum oder Zeit noch Stätte, son-
dern ist durch alles in allem, und dem Allen doch
als ein unfasslich Nichts (Gw., i, 7).

What Böhme's saying that God is all and nothing apparently means, then,
is that the Divine Will permeates and, as we will later see, emanates
the entire universe, yet constitutes a Nothing apart from it, i.e.,
apart from its perceptible manifestations. Hence, the term "Nichts"
signifies a Something that seems a Nothing from a creaturely point of
view, an unknowable Absolute not identifiable with any being or qual-
ity in its creation: "es ist ... weder Dickes noch Dünnes, weder hoch
noch tief"; "er ist keinem Dinge gleich oder ähnlich." Hans Grunsky
arrives at the same conclusion in his analysis of Böhme:

Der Ungrund ist das, was nirgends einen Grund hat,
was sich auf nichts und in nichts gründet. Also
ein Unendliches; denn alles Endliche hängt von-
einander ab. Daher ein Tranzendentes, das über
alle angebaren Dinge hinausliegt, mit keinem von
ihnen verglichen werden kann und darum relativ
zur Kreatur ein Nichts genannt werden muss.²

Assuming, now, that the Abyss ("Ungrund") is a 'nothing' only in
comparison with the 'somethings' of the known/perceptible world, the
idea that it might form the source of the cosmos seems natural enough,
especially since it pervades and precedes the same in time. For this
reason it comes as no surprise when the author hints that all created
things lie dormant in the Will: "... in ihm ist alles gleichewig
ohne Anfang in gleichem Gewichte, Maas, und Zahl." Here, one must
note the use of the qualifiers "gleichewig" and "gleich" with parti-
cular care, for neither time nor contrast exists within God, who
remains an eternal One ("er ... ist das ewige Eine; darum sagt Moses:
Der Herr ist ein Einiger Gott"), devoid of any internal differentiation ("man kann nicht von Gott sagen, ... dass er in sich selber Unterscheid habe"). Since the Will admits of no differences within itself, and contains all things in equal weight, measure, and number, we might hypothesize that it constitutes a perfect blend of the essences of all things, a balancing out of all opposing impulses and contrasting qualities. Paul Hankamer advances a similar theory:

Der ewige Gott umfasst und umfährt alles was im Denken der Menschen als Gegensatz einander wider spricht. Unverwüstlich ist er lauterer absoluter allumgreifender Geist: "Er ist weder Licht noch Finsterniss, weder Liebe noch Zorn." Im Vordergrund des Lebens entgegen und bekämpft sich was im hintergründigen Chaos ungeschieden und befriedet sich eint. Kampflos und ohne Bewegung hat hier der Streit alles Lebendigen sein ursprüngliches Ende. 4

Although pure conjecture, our hypothesis would neatly account for the other characteristics Böhme ascribes to God, namely, non-duality ("er ist weder Licht noch Finsterniss"), inner harmony ("es ist keine Quaal in ihm, noch etwas, der sich zu ihm oder von ihm künde neigen"), and moral neutrality ("Er hat keine Neigung zu etwas, ... weder Böses noch Gutes"). In addition to conforming to the conception of the Absolute developed thus far, the idea of the Will as a balance or blend gives a new insight into how it can be all and nothing at the same time. An analogy will serve to explain this insight. Suppose one takes a disc and divides it into equally sized sectors, one sector for each of the basic non-white colors. If, after coloring the sectors accordingly, the disc is set to rotating rapidly enough, it will appear white. In this way several hues merge into a single one unlike any of them. Consequently, white qualifies as both an
all and a nothing, an all in the sense that it blends all the various colors, a nothing in the sense that it corresponds to none of them. In a similar fashion, the Will assumes no worldly form or character while nevertheless comprehending the essence of all worldly things within itself, for which reason Bühme describes it as the "Alles und Nichts." Further support for this conclusion derives from its value in explaining the proneness of the Will to acts of self-revelation. Granted that God originally possesses neither moral impulse nor emotion, the motivation for acts of any sort seems wholly lacking. A lack of motivation would, in turn, render any Divine action either arbitrary or impossible. The latter alternative must be rejected out of hand, for the Will—by definition an impulse motivating an event—does act: It eternally bears itself within itself ("er gebäret von Ewigkeit in Ewigkeit sich selber in sich"); it reveals itself through its Wisdom ("er ist der Wille der Weisheit, die Weisheit ist seine Offenbarung"). The fact that Bühme devotes so much time and energy to explaining the acts of God to men argues against arbitrary behavior, which therefore must be ruled out as well. It now follows that motivation for God's actions does exist, in particular, that something intrinsic to the Will causes it to act, there being nothing extrinsic to it. A second look at the Will as an All and a Nothing now proves instructive. Indeed, the assertion that God contains the essence of the universe in His unknowable Will provides the sought-for motive for creation by suggesting that He creates in order to manifest the only potentially knowable part of Himself, the All. Grunsky writes:

Und dieser Urgegenstand ist eben jenes Alles in der Form des Nichts, das Bühme bereits in der Sphäre
Creation may thus fulfill a Divine need for self-revelation, i.e., a need to reveal the All contained/hidden in the nothingness of the Will. If, as Grunsky implies, the hidden All goes by the name of Eternal Wisdom ("die ewige Weisheit") in Böhme's cosmogonical system, then the statement that the Will reveals itself through its Wisdom acquires meaning. A clearer understanding of Böhme's vision of God now becomes possible. God, as the author of Mysterium Magnum and Von der Gnadenwahn sees Him, is a solitary, supernatural, eternal One possessed of two aspects, an overt aspect and a covert aspect. Overtly, God exists as a formless or empty Will, an apparent Nothing nevertheless capable of motivating events. Covertly, God exists as an unmanifested All or potential creation, a hidden essence which the Will strives to reveal. In this way the Deity appears as two opposites while remaining an undivided One: The All constitutes the essence of the Nothing, the Nothing the form of the All. If we may go so far as to conceive of the First Cause/Being as an uncreated cosmos moving toward creation, we can understand why Böhme stresses the aspects of unknowability and emptiness, as well as why he refers to God as a Will.

Having now arrived at a partial understanding of God as Böhme conceives of Him, we turn to the event(s) with which the cosmogony properly begins, namely, to the eternal self-generation alluded to in the first quotation on the first page of this chapter. The next few
paragraphs will concern themselves with the nature of this perpetual 'birth,' by means of which the primordial One Will of the Abyss transforms itself into the triune God of Böhme's Christian-Lutheran background.

God, as the One Will of the Abyss, begins His eternal self-generation by bearing or finding within Himself a Son, who takes the form of a second Will. In contrast to its morally neutral Father, this Son-Will exists as an eternal Good, a tangible Something in which the Abyss discovers an ability to experience and find:

Als nählich: der erste unanfängliche Einige Wille, welcher weder bösse noch gut ist, gebiert in sich das Einige ewige Gute, als einen fasslichen Willen, welcher das ungrundlichen Willens Sohn ist, und doch in dem unanfänglichen Willen gleichwieg; und derselbe andere Wille ist des erstens Willens ewige Empfindlichkeit und Findlichkeit, da sich das Nichts in sich selber zu Etwas findet ... (Gw., i, 5).

The above lines imply that the Son actually consists (rather than merely partakes) of the attributes and abilities latent in the Father, e.g., goodness, the ability to feel ("Empfindlichkeit"), and find ("Findlichkeit"). For this reason the 'birth' of the second Will constitutes a process whereby the first Will develops-discovers certain of its capacities, capacities which were somehow always a part of it. This interpretation explains why the Son is both born of and co-eternal with the Father, as well as the use of adjectival nouns in reference to the former. Böhme's occasional use of the terms "Gemüt" and "Herz" suggest that the capacities embodied in the born Will are of an emotional nature:

Dieses Herz oder Centrum des Ungrundes ist das ewige Gemüt, als des Wollens, und hat doch nichts vor ihm,
Das es wollen kann, als nur den einigen Willen, der sich in dieses Centrum einfasset ... also ist der erste Wille der Vater seines Herzens, oder der Stätte seines Findens, und ein Besitzer des Gefundenen, als seines eingeborenen Willens oder Sohnes (Gw., i, 10).

Der Vater ist erstlich der Wille des Ungrundes, er ist ausser aller Natur oder Anfänge der Wille zum Ichts, der fasset sich in eine Lust zu seiner Selbstoffenbarung. Und die Lust ist des Willens oder Vaters gefassste Kraft, und ist sein Sohn, Herz und Sitz ...

(MM., vii, 6, 7).

The use of the verb phrase "sich (ein)fassen in" in the above passages conveys the impression that the Will actually draws in upon itself and becomes the Son, whom it contains. It seems, specifically, that the Will's "Selbstfassung" amounts to an act of grasping and then compressing itself into a Heart/Seat/Center of Desire: "Dieses Herz ... hat ... nur den einigen Willen, der sich in diess Centrum einfasset";

"der Wille des Ungrundes ... fasset sich in eine Lust .... Und die Lust ist des Willens ... Herz und Sitz." Given the mechanical nature of Böhme's language at this point, it is hard not to conceive of the Will as having substance and, moreover, as undergoing processes of a transmutative nature. Although it has been established that the Will remains utterly unknowable apart from its tangible effects, one might nevertheless attempt to visualize it as animate matter, as say, a cloud or nebula in which certain powers or capacities exist in vaporous form. Such a visualization would reduce the Divine birth to a kind of chemical/physical reaction: The Will condenses about a central point where it leaves a residue of Desire, the visible trace of its otherwise invisible powers. Just as a condensing cloud gathers water molecules together in the form of liquid water, so, too, does the self-compressing One gather its powers together in a more tangible.
form: "Und die Lust ist des Willens oder Vaters gefasste Kraft." This process of manifesting a previously unmanifested quality brings to mind the two-fold nature of the Will. If we recall that the Deity acts to reveal the All hidden in His Nothingness, it becomes apparent that the contraction of the Will constitutes the starting point of this action. By compressing itself into a Desire for self-revelation, the Will prepares to reveal the unrevealed part of itself. In this act of preparation one can discern an evolutionary trend: An inactive Will develops a motivating Desire, metamorphosing, in the process, from an amoral Unknown into a tangible Good, from an Abyss or Void into a Ground or Source of Being:

Der ungründliche Wille ... gebiert in sich selber zu einer Stätte der Fasslichkeit oder besitzt die Stätte, und die Stätte ist der Grund und Anfang aller Wesen ... (Gw., i, 11).

While Bühme never explicitly refers to the Father as unconscious or non-living, he hints that the begetting of the Son heralds an evolution toward life and consciousness:

... mit des Willens Lust nimmt seinen Anfang in des Willens Fassung, darum heissets Herz als ein Centrum oder Lebenscircul, darinnen der Urstand des ewigen Lebens ist (M.M., ii, 1).

Und der Sohn ... wird recht des Vaters Lust oder Begierde zur Offenbarung der Kräfte genennet, als des Vaters Geschmack, Geruch, Gehör, sein Fühlen und Sehen (Gw., i, 23).

By forming a Desire to reveal to itself its potential for feeling and sensing, the Will demonstrates the ability to act and want, and indicates that it possesses powers of perception, as well. The exhibition of abilities normally associated with sentient beings makes the Deity appear less like a force and more like a person. John Joseph Stoudt
writes of the "tendency of the Will to draw in upon itself in self-subjectivation," and Böhme, himself, of "der Infassung des Willens zur Stätte der Selbheit" (MM., "Kurzer Extrakt," 4). Self-subjectivation, personification, evolution of consciousness—however one labels it, the action of self-compression clearly corresponds to either the revelation or production of a life within the Will. This life, or rather, living Being, consists of the Will and its Desire for self-revelation, of Father and Son. Here, we should emphasize what the discussion thus far has merely implied, namely, that the first two persons of the Trinity are integral parts of a developing (via the process of self-generation) Godhead. Böhme asserts that Father and Son form a single God, and refers to the pair as complementing each other like body and soul:

Also ist der Vater und sein Sohn (als die Stätte zu einer Selbheit) ein einiger Gott, eines einigen Willens ... (Gw., i, 12).

Der erste Wille, so Vater heisst, liebet seinen Sohn ... gleichwie die Seele den Leib liebet, also auch in gleichem ist der gefassete Wille des Vaters seine Kraft und geistlicher Leib ... (Gw., i, 22).

Whether, at this stage of the Eternal Self-Generation, the Will yet qualifies as self-conscious or not, it has undeniably made progress in that direction. Having begun its "Selbstfassung" as a blind force, the Deity emerges from it as the embryo of a creative and purposeful intelligence, as a proto-Mind endowed with rudimentary emotions and powers. This becomes even more apparent in light of the further development of the Trinity.

Given the designations "Vater" and "Sohn" for, respectively, the Will and its Heart of Desire, it seems only natural—in view of Böhme's Lutheran upbringing—that God's Eternal Self-Generation yield a (Holy)
Spirit, too:

In dieser ewigen Gebührung sind uns drei Dinge zu verstehen: als 1) ein ewiger Wille, 2) ein ewig Gemüt des Willen, 3) der Ausgang vom Willen und Gemüth, welcher ein Geist des Willens und Gemüthes ist (MM., i, 3).

Also heisset der ungrundliche Wille ewiger Vater; und der gefasste geborne Wille des Ungrundes heisset sein geborn oder eingeborn Sohn .... Und der Ausgang des ungrundlichen Willens, durch den gefassten Sohn oder Ens, heisset Geist ... (Gw., i, 6).

Interestingly, the term "Geist" denotes an action, and not a derivative, of the Will. Unlike the Father and the Son, the other member of the Trinity constitutes a process and not a thing, an issuing forth or exiting of the Will from the center created by its self-compression.

Indeed, the Spirit exists as the inverse and consequence of the action preceding it: After contracting into a Heart, the Will expands again. Böhme likens this second stage of the Eternal Self-Generation to an exhalation or ray, in which God, Who has taken form in the breathing/radiant Son, first realizes a true life:

... also ist derselbe Ausgang ein Strahl der Kraft Gottes, als ein bewegend Leben der Gottheit, da sich der ungrundliche Wille hat in einen Grund eingeführet, als nämlich in eine wallende Kraft: dieselbe haucht der Wille zur Kraft aus der Kraft aus, und der Ausgang heisset der Geist Gottes, und macht die dritte Wirkung, als ein Leben oder Weben in der Kraft (Gw., i, 13).

The repetition of the word "Kraft" in this passage suggests that the persons of the Trinity correspond to three different stages in the manifestation of Divine Power. In the first stage, God's Power lies dormant in the Will as (part of) the unmanifested All. With the self-compression of the Will, the Divine Power is gathered or concentrated within the Divine Heart, existing there as a kind of potential energy.
The third stage of manifestation occurs when the Power leaves its point of concentration in 'kinetic' or manifested form. Looking at these three stages as one process, we can state that the Father or primordial Will forms the basis of manifestation, the Son the tension or state of preparedness immediately preceding manifestation, and the Spirit the act of manifestation itself. Obviously, the key word in this definition is manifestation. In order to manifest the Power—i.e., the All-latent within Him, the Deity evolves from a Will only capable of, into a Will both capable and desirous of, and finally into a Will engaged in self-revelation. To the question of why the Will chooses to reveal itself to itself we might answer: For the sake of self-knowledge, to know what it is and can become. Böhme says as much when he equates the Will's "Lust"/Son with a Desire for self-contemplation, and indicates that the "Ausgang"/Spirit results in the satisfaction of this Desire:

... so führt sichs in sich selber in eine Lust ein, zu seinem Seltschauen oder Sehen, was es sei ...
(MM., iii, 4).

... und das Unfindliche, als der ungrundliche Wille, geht durch sein ewig Gefundenes aus, und führet sich in eine ewige Beschaulichkeit seiner selber (Gw., i, 5).

According to Grunsky, God goes out of His Heart for the purpose of confronting and recognizing Himself:

Nun ist aber die "Empfindlichkeit" im Wesen des Sohnes noch kein Erkennen seiner selbst, der Vater und der Sohn "sehen" sich dabei gewissermassen selber noch nicht, das Wesen des Sohnes, seine Kraft, ist noch kein "sichtbar Wesen" .... Es -- das Wesen -- muss aus sich ausgehen, um sich selbst gegenübertreten zu können und in diesem Gegenübertreten sich selbst zu erkennen.9

Despite the difficulty of imagining an entity ("Wesen") capable of 'going outside of itself,' the idea that the Will flows forth from the
Son as part of the act of self-discovery has a certain kind of logic about it. It seems, in particular, that the Deity simultaneously performs two actions: As the Son, He sends forth the (compressed) power or essence of the Father, which He then, as the Spirit, reveals to Himself. The result of the action of emanation and revelation is self-recognition/discovery/knowledge, i.e., the Will's awareness of the potential heretofore concealed within it. In light of His self-knowledge, we can no longer deny the Deity the status of a sentient being. An astonishing thing has happened. By first going into, then out of itself, the Will has transformed itself from a Void into a Mind. With the birth of the Son the Godly Mind begins to form; in the Spirit it attains completion. Böhme explains this as follows:

Denn der einige Wille fasset sich in der ewigen Kraft, da alle Verborgenheit innen lieget, und hauchet oder spricht sich durch die Kraft aus in Beschaulichkeit; und dieselbe Weisheit oder Beschaulichkeit ist der Anfang des ewigen Gemüthes, als der Umblickung seiner selber, das heisset nun: Das Wort war im Anfang bei Gott und war Gott selber (Gw., ii, 8).

By way of realizing His potential for consciousness, God speaks or breathes forth His apprehended essence in the form of a Wisdom or Word. He thus creates for Himself an object of knowledge by making visible ("beschaulich") what was previously hidden ("verborgen"). One can hardly overemphasize the significance of this act. Before the Deity 'exhales' His compressed substance, He possesses, at most, only an unused capacity for knowledge. The drawing in of the Will produces, to be sure, a mind of sorts ("Dieses Herz oder Centrum des Ungrundes ist das ewige Gemüth," Gw., i, 10) yet fails to activate it. Not until the Son beholds the Wisdom of the Father revealed by the Spirit can a
knowing, fully conscious Godhead, a Mind engaged in eternal self-contemplation, be said to exist: "... und dieselbe Weisheit oder Beschau-
lichkeit ist der Anfang des ewigen Gemüthes, als der Umblickung seiner selber." Consequently, the completion of God's metamorphosis from a
Will into an intelligence coincides with the completion of the Trinity, i.e., with the appearance of "der Geist Gottes."

As pointed out earlier, Böhme's use of the terms "Vater," "Sohn,"
and "Geist" is misleading. Since the first two persons of the Trinity
represent the Will and its Heart, one would expect that the third
person also correspond to some derivative of the Abyss, which it does
not. Rather, the Spirit personifies an outward movement of the Will,
an expansion supplementing the earlier self-compression. Like the term
"Selbstfassung," "Ausgang" denotes one of the two component actions--
and not, as does "Lust," a product--of the Eternal Generation.

Insisting on a trinity of "Wille," "Lust," and "Ausgang" (= "Geist")
only serves to obfuscate this fact. While we cannot change Böhme's
terminology, we can, in this instance, compensate for the confusion it
causes by thinking of the Eternal Wisdom (revealed by the Spirit) as
a possible third member of the Godhead. Such a substitution seems
logical enough: Together, Will, Desire, and Wisdom comprise the three
forms of Divine manifestation, Wisdom succeeding Desire as the second
and final product of the Eternal Generation; She--Böhme sometimes
personifies Wisdom as a woman §10--emerges from the Son, just as the
Son emerges from the Father, as a derivative of the Will and an integ-
ral part of the Eternal Mind ("das ewige Gemüt") of God. This last
statement requires elucidation. Before pondering further the triune
structure of the Godhead, we would do well to analyze, in a bit more detail, the nature of what Böhme refers to as "die ewige Weisheit Gottes."

It should be almost immediately evident that, for Böhme, the Eternal Wisdom embodies the revealed content of the Will. Having already established that the Will 'needs' to reveal that which is hidden within it, and implied that it does so by 'exhaling' this essence from the Son, we cite the following passages as almost superfluous pieces of evidence that the All and the Wisdom are one:

Das Ausgegangene heisst die Lust der Gottheit oder die ewige Weisheit, welche ist der ewige Urstand aller Kräfte, Farben und Tugenden ... (MM., i, 6).

... [Gott] will auch in sich selber nichts mehr, als nur sich selber finden und fassen, und aus sich selber ausgehen, und sich mit dem Ausgehen in eine Beschauielichkeit einführen ... darinnen alle Kräfte Farben und Wunder und Wesen, in der ewigen Weisheit, in gleichem Gewichte und Maass, ohne Eigenschaften verstanden werden ... (Gw., i, 9).

According to the above, the Eternal Wisdom contains all powers, colors, virtues, and beings—in short, the whole of creation—in equal measure and weight, i.e., in an as yet unmanifested state. The existence of a similar statement describing the All argues for the synonymity of the two terms, "Alles" and "Weisheit":

... er ist das Nichts und das Alles ... in ihm ist alles gleichewig ohne Anfang in gleichem Gewichte, Maass und Zahl ... (Gw., i, 3).

Granted that Böhme uses the phrase "die ewige Weisheit Gottes" to denote the (first) manifestation of the hidden All/Totality of Being, the question arises as to why he does so. Does, in particular, the fact that the All assumes the form of Wisdom in the course of its revelation have
some special significance? It would seem so. Specifically, the revelation of the All as Wisdom involves a sort of thought process, the first spark of activity in the nascent Mind of God. In order to know the only thing it can know, i.e., itself, the Will transforms Essence into Idea.

Howard H. Brinton describes this process in the following manner:

As a result of this creative process [the interaction of the Father and the Son to produce the Holy Ghost] Wisdom reappears not as at first an empty structure, but now as a world of forms or the Divine Imagination. The blank mirror of consciousness has filled up with images. The empty three-fold will has acquired a body of Idea. Will, by turning back on itself, has become aware of its possibilities.\[11\]

Apparently, Brinton feels that the Eternal Wisdom constitutes a kind of mental image of the Will's potential, i.e., of what it can cause, create, or become. Such an interpretation would explain Bühme's reference to "die Lust der göttlichen Beschaulichkeit"—a synonym for "Weisheit"—as an imagined picture from which creation springs:

Und dasselbe eingemodelte Bild ist die Lust der göttlichen Beschaulichkeit ... daraus die Creation ihren Anfang und Urstand genommen hat (Gw., i, 14).

Visualization or no, the Divine Imagination obviously functions as a necessary prerequisite for the subsequent events of the cosmogony. By making the Will aware of what it contains/can reveal, Wisdom sets the stage for acts of a creative nature. She thus plays the role of an intermediary between the hidden content of the Will and the multitude of 'powers, colors, virtues, wonders, and beings' this content is destined to become. As an unrealized Divine Idea, Wisdom stands a step closer to manifestation than the unknown, unrevealed All, a step further than the universe itself. Hence the significance of "Weisheit" in
Böhme's cosmogonical scheme.

Given the above argument, we may, with justification, characterize Wisdom as 1) the (sole) content, and 2) the creative potential of the Eternal Mind. Without Wisdom, the Will would not have anything to either know or manifest, hence, could not function as a creative intelligence. For this reason we consider God's Knowledge to form an integral part of His Mind, more specifically, to form an objective element in the Godhead, without which neither consciousness nor creativity would be possible. The rationale for describing the Deity as a Trinity of Will, Desire, and Wisdom should now be clear. By giving birth to Desire, the Will, as noted above, also acquires a capacity for knowledge and perception, i.e., realizes a subjective element within its corpus. Having thus laid the basis for Mind, God next completes it by revealing Himself as Wisdom, the objective complement of His Desire/Son. Together, Son and Wisdom form an inseparable subject-object pair eternally generated—via the actions of "Selbstfassung" and "Geist"—by the Father/Will. Through them, the latter realizes Himself as the Knower of His Knowledge, as an active, purposeful Intelligence. In this way the One evolves by engendering two, Unity becoming Trinity as part of the development of God the Creator.

Despite the importance of the Eternal Generation in the Divine Evolution, we should not lose sight of the fact that it gives rise to intellect rather than personality. The transformation of the Will into Mind results in just that, a state of awareness or knowing, but not in a living, feeling Being. Böhme makes this clear when he insists that the Trinity (of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), alone, can neither love
nor anger:

Da kann man nicht sagen, ein zorniger Gott, auch nicht ein barmherziger Gott, denn hierinnen ist keine Ursache zum Zorn, auch keine Ursache was zu lieben, denn er ist die Einige Liebe selber, der sich in eitel Liebe in Drei-faltigkeit eingeführet und gebieret (Gw., i, 21).

Apart from experiencing self-love, the self-contemplating One does not, as yet, feel. Inasmuch as Mysterium Magnum and Von der Gnadenwahl concern themselves with a God of love and wrath, indeed, with the Biblical Jehovah in whose image man was made, it follows that the Eternal Mind must develop an emotional dimension. Hence the need for a second evolutionary stage to follow and complete the Eternal Generation. Böhme does, of course, describe such a stage, which he refers to as "die ewige Natur." This Eternal Nature, and the seven subprocesses of which it consists, forms the subject of the next chapter.
CHAPTER II
FROM MIND TO PERSONA: THE ETERNAL NATURE

In describing the Eternal Nature, Böhme uses language quite different from that used to describe the Eternal Generation. Whereas the evolution of Will into Mind gave rise to Divine persons, that of Mind into (creative) Personality involves forms ("Formen") or qualities ("Qualitäten"). Utterly unlike either birth or respiration, the Eternal Nature resembles, if anything, an alchemical process\(^1\): Each of the qualities generated in its seven successive stages constitutes a kind of metaphysical substance which 'reacts' with those producing it to form all subsequent ones. Beginning with the quality of Astringency ("Herbe"), Böhme derives a second quality, Compunction ("Stachel," "Rügung"), which interacts with the former to yield Anguish ("Angst").\(^2\) Anguish, Compunction, and Astringency next combine to produce a fourth quality, Fire ("Feuerschrack"), and so on, until a fifth, sixth, and seventh form—respectively, Love ("Liebe"), Divine Sound ("Göttliches Schall"), and Body/Form ("Leib")—have been produced.\(^3\) Despite the differences between this terminology and that of the Eternal Generation, the two processes are fundamentally the same. In particular, the Eternal Nature also consists of an in- and outgoing movement, a contraction followed by a revelatory expansion. Moreover, the generation of the seven qualities has a cumulative effect, much as the actions of the Eternal Generation did, but with one important difference. Whereas the earlier developmental stage paralleled—however remotely—the action of thought, the latter rather resembles an emotive process. It is not Mind, but feeling Being—a God of Love and Wrath—that emerges from the
Eternal Nature.

The Eternal Nature begins where the Eternal Generation ends, in the Mind of God. Although he never explicitly says so, Böhme seems to think that the Eternal Mind (and/or Wisdom) consists of an essence he refers to as "eine freie geistliche Lust," possibly the Desire for Manifestation referred to in the last chapter.\(^4\) Whatever it may be, this "Lust" initiates the events of the Eternal Nature by spontaneously producing a craving ("Begierde") or hunger for a sensual mode of existence. Having acquired knowledge, the Will-Mind longs to experience/sense the various powers, colors, etc. that it knows as Wisdom:

... und so sich dann die Lust also siehet, was sie ist, so führet sie sich in eine Begierde ein, zu empfinden was sie sei, als zu einer Fühlung des Geruches, des Geschmacks, der Farben, Kräfte und Tugenden, und möchte doch auch keine Fühlung in der freien geistlichen Lust entstehen, wenn sie sich nicht selber in eine Begierde (gleich einem Hunger) einführete (MM., iii, 4).

In order that the Eternal Mind 'feel' what it imagines, its Free Spiritual Desire fills up with Hunger, the precursor of sensory faculties. In Hunger, the Deity manifests a need for emotional and sensual development, a need to evolve from Mind into feeling Being. Like its predecessors, this 'need' for sense and feeling constitutes an entity capable of acting and being acted upon. Unlike either the Will or its other derivatives, however, Hunger exists as something merely associated, rather than identified with the Deity. God hungers—by producing Hunger within Himself—but is not Hunger. For this reason Böhme distinguishes between "Lust," a manifestation of God, and "Begierde," a Divine characteristic:

\[
\text{Denn die freie Lust ... ist keine Eigenschaft, sondern ... ist mit Gott eins; aber die Begierde ist eine Eigenschaft (MM., iii, 6).}
\]
Hunger is not a part of the Eternal Mind, but rather exists within it--i.e., within the Free Desire--as a foreign 'substance.' Though we may justifiably conceive of "Begierde" and "Lust" as interacting elements--indeed, Böhme's narrative leaves little other choice--only the former actually qualifies as material. Hunger comprises the primal matter or prima materia, Desire, the spiritual essence permeating and sustaining it. Despite (or perhaps because of) this fact, the two cannot be regarded as separate entities, but exist as parts of a whole. When, due to its very nature, Hunger draws in upon itself, it compresses Desire, as well:

\[\text{Nun entsteht aber die Begierde aus der Lust, darum so faset auch die Begierde die freie Lust mit in der Compaction in Fassen, und führet sie mit in die Empfindlichkeit und Findlichkeit ein (MM., iii, 6).}\]

The above-cited passage refers to a grasping action similar to the one that initiated the Eternal Generation. Like the Will before it, Hunger contracts in order to transform, specifically, to bring itself and the Free Desire into a state of sensitivity ("Empfindlichkeit"). Given this parallel, we might think of Hunger as another Will, as a Will to the Eternal Nature, to be precise. Such a designation would put the events chronicled thus far into an interesting perspective: The Mind of God, having evolved from His Will, produces a new Will within it, which motivates further evolution by repeating the action of its predecessor. In view of this basically cyclical pattern of development, it seems only logical to expect that the Eternal Nature proceed in much the same fashion as the Eternal Generation, that, in particular, the above-mentioned "Compaction" create new entities, just as the "Selbstfassung" did. These entities are, of course, the forms mentioned above.
Böhme associates three forms or qualities with the contracting mass of Hunger-Desire. The first of these, "Herbe," denotes an astringency, i.e., a tendency to solidify or cohere. Apparently the consequence of Hunger's in-drawing action, Astringency causes the Divine substance to coalesce and assume properties resembling those of ordinary matter:

Die erste Eigenschaft der Begierde ist herbe, strenge, impressend, sich fassend, sich beschattend, und macht erstlich die grosse Finsterniss des Abgrundes; zum andern macht sie sich wesentlich, nach geistlicher Art, ganz rauh, hart und derb, und ist eine Ursache der Kälte und aller Schärfe ... (MM., iii, 9).

As a source of darkness, density, and texture, the first form of the Eternal Nature provides Hunger-Desire with a physical dimension, albeit in a spiritual manner ("zum andern macht sie sich wesentlich, nach geistlicher Art"). Specifically, Astringency makes its object seem corporeal—i.e., like an actual, tangible body—without depriving it of its supernatural status. Though a good deal more substantial than anything before it, the astringent Hunger-Desire does not constitute earthly matter, but, rather, the heavenly prototype thereof. For this reason Böhme's description of the action of "Herbe" and all subsequent forms must not be interpreted too literally.

Were it the only force operating on the Divine 'matter,' Astringency would make it ever more hard, dense, and dark, resulting, ultimately, in an inert and lifeless mass. Such an outcome does not, of course, occur, for Hunger-Desire eventually evolves into living spirit, indeed, into the Creator of the universe. Rather than continue unchecked, the crystallizing action of the first form meets with the arrestive counterforce of the second form of the Eternal Nature. Böhme describes this second form as a compunctive sting ("Stachel") or
stirring ("Rügung") within the astringent mass. In contrast to "Herbe," the hardening tendency in Hunger, "Stachel" represents a resistant quality in the Free Spiritual Desire, which cannot easily submit to the material imprisonment forced upon it. As an internal resistance to further solidification, Compunction (= "Stachel") plays the role of "ein Wüther, Tober und Zerbrecher" continually at war against Astringency:

... denn je mehr sich die Herbigkeit impresset, je grösser wird dieser Stachel, als ein Wüther, Tober und Zerbrecher (Gw., iii, 4).

Was die Begierde, als der Magnet, hart macht, das zerbricht das Ziehen wieder ... (MM., iii, 16).

Though it tries with increasing vehemence to do so, "Stachel" cannot effectively break the grip of "Herbe." On the contrary, Astringency reacts to this mounting resistance by growing even stronger, which results in an escalating tug-o-war. Böhme writes of a contest between father and son:

Es ist allhie wie Vater und Sohn: der Vater will stille und hart sein, und der Stachel, als sein Sohn, zeucht im Vater, und macht Unruhe; das kann der Vater als die Herbigkeit nicht erdulden, und zeucht viel heftiger in der Begierde an sich, den ungehorsamen Sohn zu halten und einzuschliessen, dadurch der Sohn nur stärker im Stachel wird ... (MM., iii, 11).

The fact of a struggle between Astringency and Compunction indicates that the former does not reduce Hunger to an inert piece of matter. Rather, the tendency to coalesce produces and interacts with the resistant Compunction in an ever more frenzied pattern of activity. Because the two opposing forces 'feed' each other, instead of cancelling, this pattern of activity gives rise to growing inner turmoil. Hunger, in a manner of speaking, tears itself apart by trying to move in two
directions at once. Bühme designates this state of unrest "Angst," a term better rendered by English 'anguish' than 'fear.' As the product of the first two forms, Anguish constitutes the third form of the Eternal Nature.

In contradistinction to Astringency and Compunction, Anguish represents a condition within, and not a force operating upon, the mass of Hunger-Desire. Briefly, the third form of the Eternal Nature is a state of violent activity and instability resulting from the clash of the first two. Unable to either draw completely into itself or refrain from trying to do so, Hunger falls prey to a torturous ferment, to an increasing and, peculiarly enough, painful inner strife. Having heretofore written of a seemingly mechanical process, Bühme now describes the beginning of feeling:

Die dritte Gestalt in der Scienz ist die Angst, welche in der Widerwärtigkeit der Herbigkeit und stachlichen Bitterkeit entsteht, als ein Eins des Fühlens ...
(Gw., iii, 5).

Die dritte Eigenschaft ist die Angst oder Quaal, oder das Quellen, welche die zwei ersten Eigenschaften machen; wenn sich der Stachel ... die Härte zerbricht, so entsteht in dem Zerbrechen der Härte die erste Fühllichkeit ...
(MM., iii, 12).

That torment, a psychological state, can result from two apparently physical actions seems strange, until one realizes that Astringency and Compunction are more than mere forces of attraction and repulsion. In point of fact, the first two forms of the Eternal Nature also represent conflicting wills. Through Astringency, the Deity wills matter, through Compunction, a spiritual freedom therefrom. As these two wills wrestle, they plunge the germinating Divine psyche--which cannot satisfy either impulse wholly--into a state of acute discomfort, of 'anguish.' The
third form of the Eternal Nature thus plays a seemingly twofold role, namely, that of a physical as well as a psychological disturbance within the evolving Hunger. Increasing, as it does, in intensity, this turbulence does not last indefinitely, but gives way to yet another form, "Feuerschrack."

In a sense, the fourth Natural form functions as a climax to the events caused by the other three. As noted above, the inimical forces of Astringency and Compunction produce a state of growing Anguish in Hunger-Desire, of mounting instability and volatility. Unable to tolerate an infinite amount of such stress, the Divine substance eventually reaches a critical or kindling point, at which it erupts into flame. Böhme calls this flame "Feuerschrack," and classifies it as the fourth form of the Eternal Nature. Like an actual fire, "Feuerschrack" both consumes and illumines, though not, of course, in an ordinary manner. 

Fire's consumptive action, for instance, corresponds to the working of Divine Anger ("Zorn"), while its luminous aspect represents a Godly Kingdom of Joy ("Freudenreich"). These two emotions arise, respectively, from the elements Hunger (sometimes referred to as Darkness) and Desire (infrequently equated with Love):

Nun theilet sich der Wille im Feuerschrack in zwei Reiche, da ein jedes in sich selber wohnet: als der Schrack in der Finsterniss ist Gottes Zorn; und der Schrack ... wird in der freien Lust die hoch-triumphirende göttliche Freudenreich (M., iv, 6).

Dieser Schrack macht ... nach der finstern Impression in sich das feindliche, schreckliche Leben des Grimmes oder Zornes Gottes, des Fressens und Verzehrens; denn es ist des Feuers Anzündung .... In der Liebe ist der Schrack ein Anfang des Blitzes oder Glastes ... als der Anfang der Freudenreich, auf Art wie das Licht im Feuer scheinend wird (Gw., iii, 15, 16).
In Hunger, a dark and angry burning develops; from the Free Desire a triumphant Joy shines forth. By effecting this transmutation, Fire creates the two sides of the Divine Personality,\(^{13}\) thereby acting as a revelator of God’s Spirit:

Wir reden allhier nur, wie sich der unsichtbare unempfindliche Gott in Empfindlichkeit einführe und offenbare (MM., iv, 7).

Concerning the division of God’s revealed Spirit into Anger and Joy, we should emphasize that these two Divine emotions constitute self-contained worlds. As indicated above, "Zorn" is a dark and fiery world of wrath, "Freudenreich," a world of light and love. While the hellish Anger and the heavenly Joy do not intermix—as did Hunger and Desire—they nevertheless depend on one another for their existence:

In diesem Schracke oder Feuersanzündung scheiden sich zwei Reiche ... werden auch einander unsichtlich, keines begreifet das andere in seiner eignen Quaal, und sind doch aus einem Urstande, hängen auch einander, und wäre Eines ohne das Andere ein Nichts ...

(MM., iv, 1).

Apparently, Anger sustains Joy and vice-versa, even though the two exist as poles of the Divine psyche. Of further interest concerning these emotion-worlds is the fact that each sustains three of the Eternal Nature’s forms, just as Hunger-Desire did. As an astringent, compunctive, and tormented burning, Anger perpetuates the three forms that preceded "Feuerschrack," while Joy brings the number to seven by producing Love, Divine Sound, and Form. Because it completes the Eternal Nature, this latter triad also completes the evolutionary process described thus far, and so merits closer attention.

In contrast to the first three forms of the Eternal Nature, the last three occur as consequences of an outflowing movement. Whereas
Astringency, Compunction, and Anguish were generated by the mechanics of dark Hunger's contraction, Love ("Liebebegierde"), Divine Sound ("Göttliches Schall"), and Form ("Leib") operate within an expanding sphere of Light. This Kingdom of Light and Joy emerges from the raging Fire as a derivative of the "Freie Lust":

Nun ist aber die Theilung im Feuer der Verzehrlichkeit also zu verstehen ... aus der freien Lust geht aus ein geistlich Mysterium, ... und ist das englische Leben und Licht ... (MM., iv, 13).

Also verstehts recht! Aus der feurischen Eigenschaft geht itzt im Aushauchen aus der Lebensqual nach der freien Lust Heilig und Freudenreich ... (MM., iv, 19).

Released from its material bondage by "Feuerschrack," the Free Spiritual Desire leaves the burning Hunger ("die feurische Eigenschaft") and flows outward as a Divine radiance. Unlike ordinary light, however, that of the "Freudenreich" bears a spiritual fruit, namely, the Love, Creative Power, and Body/Form of the Living God. As derivatives of the Divine Joy, these three forms do not oppose, as did the first three, but cooperate to achieve a mutual aim, the manifestation of a higher life. For this reason it seem appropriate that the unifying and harmonizing emotion of Love is the first member of the Light triad.

Like the forms preceding it, Love plays two roles at once. It is, superficially, just what its name implies, an outpouring of benevolence and affection, an emotion whereby God affirms, sustains, and nourishes all that He creates. Not so obviously, however, Love also exists as an essence of sorts, whence the designation "Liebebegierde." Like Hunger, Love constitutes the basis of a new element, albeit an element radically different from the dark and indrawing mass with which the Eternal Nature began. As Grunsky notes, "Liebebegierde" distinguishes itself from
"Begierde" by appearing as outflowing Light:

Diese Begierde zielt genau wie die finstere Begierde darauf, sich selber Wesen zu machen, freilich mit einem Erfolg, der polar entgegengesetzt ist: das Ergebnis ist diesmal nicht ein dunkles, finster einschliessendes, sondern ein sich aufschliessendes, sich verstrümendes Wesen, ein Lichtwesen ....\(^{15}\)

In order to avoid confusing Love with the Light World as a whole, we ought to interpret it as rather the content—as opposed to the form ("Leib," "Form") or internal energy ("Schall")—thereof. Such an interpretation would explain why Böhme sometimes equates Love with Light, also a giver of substance:

\[
\text{Die fünfte Gestalt oder Eigenschaft ist die Liebe-}
\text{begierde, ... [welche] aus dem Feuer scheinlich}
\text{[wird] ... und giebt Wesen (MM., v, 1).}
\]

The fifth form shines forth from Fire to lend substance ("Wesen") to the Divine Kingdom of Joy, i.e., to become the very stuff of which the latter consists, the medium in which the two other forms arise. Insofar as Böhme equates the "Freudenreich" with the revealed Spirit of God, it follows that He is essentially Love, a conclusion which tallies nicely with New Testament theology.\(^{16}\)

Surrounded and interpenetrated by its Love-filled radiance, Fire proceeds to emit a Divine Sound ("Göttliches Schall"). In this, the sixth natural form, the Deity's ongoing evolution finally realizes two of its fundamental aims by producing an instrument of sense and creative power. By means of Sound, God is able both to create and to perceive His Creation, thus becoming a Living, Almighty Being. This statement requires explication. It would, for one thing, appear that Böhme understands the five senses ("die fünf Sensibus," Gw., iii, 31) as going out of the Deity—rather, out of the Fire in which He reveals
Himself—in much the same manner as sound emanates from a vibrating object. Indeed, *Mysterium Magnum* contains a reference to "dieser Schall des Hörens, Sehens, Fühlens, Schmeckens und Riechens," while *Von der Gnadenwahl* equates Sound with "ein geistlich Sehen, Hören, Riechen, Schmecken und Fühlen." In both works, the sixth form appears as the source of Divine sensory perception, as the means by which God acquires "Verstand" (i.e., becomes aware):

Die sechste Gestalt der Natur ... ist der Natur Verstand, Schall, Rede und alles was lauert, es sei im Lebhaften oder Unlebhaften .... Dieser Schall des Hörens, Sehens, Fühlens, Schmeckens und Riechens ist das wahre verständliche Leben ... (MM., v, 11, 14).

Die sechste Gestalt ... ist in der göttlichen Kraft das Sprechen, als der göttliche Mund, der Schall der Kräfte .... welches wirkende Sprechen in den fünf Sensibus recht verstanden wird als ein geistlich Sehen, Hören, Riechen, Schmecken und Fühlen ... (Gw., iii, 31).

The Divine 'peal of powers' ("Schall der Kräfte") encompasses both sensory and vibratory energies, i.e., functions as a source of sound and sense. Insofar as it embodies a spiritual sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell, the Sound of Sounds brings about a truly conscious life ("das wahre verständliche Leben"), a life based on something more than mere knowledge, alone. It seems, in particular, as though the heretofore self-knowing Mind of God had, in Sound, at last developed a means of directly perceiving itself. Indeed, Bühme writes of mutual recognition among the outgoing sonic powers, in which a new self-perception arises:

... denn so eine Kraft in die andere eingehet, so empfängt sie die andere im Schalle; wenn sie in einander dringen, so erweckt eine die andere und erkennt eine die andere. In dieser Erkenntniss steht der wahre Verstand, welcher ohne Zahl, Maass und Grund ist, nach Art der ewigen Weisheit, als des Einen, welches alles ist (MM., v, 14).
The above reference to "Kraft" and "Weisheit" brings the Eternal Generation to mind again. Specifically, one cannot help but notice a parallel between the "Verstand"-producing sixth form and the Wisdom-bearing Holy Spirit.\(^\text{17}\) In both cases, an outgoing action results in a heightened awareness of self. Whether He does so by means of "Geist" or "Schall," the Deity must obviously 'exhale' His powers from some focal point--be it the Son or Fire--in order to recognize them and so progress to a higher stage of self-realization. Given, now, the fact that Sound enhances the introspective process begun by the Holy Spirit, we might reasonably expect that it complement the latter in other respects, as well. Moreover, consistency demands that self-realization involve self-revelation, just as it did in the Eternal Generation. In view of this, it should come as no surprise that the sixth Natural form does, indeed, manifest (as well as sense) God's powers. It does so by acting as a creative Word ("Wort göttlicher Kraft"). While Böhme uses the term "Wort" differently in different contexts, he is, at this stage of his cosmogony, writing of a source and channel of constructive energies.\(^\text{18}\)

The Divine Word, in particular, accomplishes three things: It embodies all creative powers, activates these in some sort of mystic 'pronunciation' ("Aussprechen"), and then directs them in such a way as to reveal itself in the finished creation. This much we can conclude from passages like the following:

\begin{quote}
Dieses ist nun das geoffenbarte Wort, welches in sich nur eine Kraft ist, da alle Kräfte innen liegen; offenbaret sich also durch die ewige und auch zeitliche Natur, und führet sich also in Formen zum Aussprechen (MM., v, 18).
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Die ganze Creation, beides der ewigen und auch der zeitlichen Kreaturen und Wesen, stehet in dem Worte göttlicher Kraft (Gw., iv, 3).
\end{quote}
Evidently, the universe begins as a concretization of the Word/Sound—a fact with enlightening implications. If, indeed, Sound actually becomes Creation, it must also contain the 'seeds' of same, i.e., must hold the uncreated universe within itself. This would, of course, certainly explain the statement that Creation 'stands' within the Word. But such was also true of the Eternal Wisdom, in which the All first appeared in the form of an Idea. Consequently, one might plausibly argue that Sound includes and works to reveal the All/Eternal Wisdom—presumably embodied in the sonic powers. The link between the sixth form and the Holy Spirit now becomes clear. After the eternally generated Spirit manifests the All as Wisdom, Sound takes this Wisdom, 'knows' it by means of sense, and transforms it into actual being. "Schall" thus acts to deepen and express the Divine self-knowledge that began in the Eternal Generation. Hence, Charles Muses correctly notes that, "expression, fuller self-perception, and consequent understanding is the characteristic activity of the sixth form (Jupiter)." Insofar as this is true, it may, in the final analysis, be primarily due to the outgoing Sound that God can manifest Himself as a creative and omniscient Being.

Despite the importance of Sound in the Divine evolution, it does not, in and of itself, constitute the end product of this process. Rather, the sixth form of the Eternal Nature brings it to a close by producing a seventh form. This other form, the spiritual body ("geistliches Leib," "Wesen") of the Deity, arises as a dwelling place wherein the various sonic powers and senses move and have their being. Böhme relates that Sound's energies shape themselves into an entity neither corporeal nor incorporeal, into "ein geistliches Wesen":

... also auch imgleichen formiren sich die geoffenbarten Kräfte Gottes in einen Husserlichen Grad, als in ein Wesen oder Leiblichkeit, gegen dem Geist zu achten, da doch auch nur ein geistlich Wesen sollte verstanden sein ... (MM., vi, 4).

In its first creative act, the Sound/Word of God molds itself into a supernatural corpus, a substantial, yet not truly material vessel. Said vessel, in turn, houses its creator, as well as Love, Fire, and the other Natural forms:

... was die ersten sechs Gestalten im Geiste sind, das ist die siebente im begreiflichen Wesen, als ein Gehäuse der andern allen ... (MM., vi, 20).

In "Leib," every product of the Eternal Nature finds itself circumscribed and contained. Since the same holds true for the "Freudenreich" as a whole—all other forms operate within this sphere of light—it and the seventh form may actually represent the same thing. For that matter, the Spiritual Body produced by Sound may be thought of as a physical aspect that the Light World heretofore lacked, e.g., the property of having dimension and form. If so, we might assume a scenario like the following: Out of the all-consuming Fire, Love first shines forth to provide the essence of the "Freudenreich," and is followed by Sound, which 'shapes' the Divine Light into a supernatural Body, and endows this Body with "Verstand" and creative powers. Though purely conjecture, this interpretation fits in nicely with the facts thus far, and explains why Böhme depicts "Leib" as a heavenly paradise:

... diese siebente [Gestalt] ... heisset billig die ganze Natur, oder das geformte Wort, das ausgesprochene Wort, als nämlich der innere göttliche Himmel ... und heisset das Paradies ... (Gw., iii, 37).

The Body of Light, also referred to as the formed or spoken Word, qualifies as a 'paradise' because, in containing, it also unifies and brings
the other six forms into harmony with each other. Within the seventh form, everything works toward the maintenance of the whole: Astringency and Compunction cause Anguish; Anguish causes Hunger-Desire to burn; Fire sends forth Love and Sound to build the "Freudenreich." Appropriately, Böhme refers to the Divine "Leib" as "die ganze Natur," thereby stressing the fact that it not only culminates the Eternal Nature, but also perpetuates all products thereof within itself. The Body is, to put it simply, both the product and sum of all that comes before it, the perfect One in which the totality of Natural forces and elements combine in a single, harmonious Life.

Given the correlation between the seventh form and the cumulative effect of the other six, it would seem a foregone conclusion that the Eternal Nature occurs for the benefit of the Body of Light. While, to be sure, the Divine evolution may be regarded as leading up to an incarnation, one would nevertheless falsely assume that embodiment constitutes its sole purpose. The transcendental Mind, in particular, undergoes the actions of the seven forms for two reasons: to become tangible, and to acquire emotions. Through the Eternal Nature, the Deity transforms Himself into a more or less substantial, potent Being, and also into a Psyche. The Creator God who emerges in the "Freudenreich" is more than an omnipotent spiritual 'organism'—He is a living, feeling Person, a Divine Personality. Indeed, the product of the evolutionary process described thus far bears the stamp of a particular character, which, not surprisingly, has traditionally been ascribed to the Christian Deity. This becomes especially evident if one considers the functions of the last three forms. Through "Liebe," the Spirit described by Böhme mani-
fests itself as an all-encompassing Love, through "Schall," as a creative and all-sensing Force, through "Leib," as a Being of Beings in which all things reside. In view of the parallel between the God of New Testament teaching and the characteristics exhibited by the Kingdom of Joy, it would be difficult to argue that the latter does not represent the Being adored in the Christian Church. Certainly Böhme feels that God reveals Himself as a transcendental Love-Sound-Form, and identifies Him with the "Freudenreich":

 Er heisset allein Gott nach dem Lichte, als in den Kräften des Lichtes ... (Gw., ii, 35).

 ... in der Kraft des Lichtes heisset er vor allen andern Eigenschaften Gott, und ist doch nur der geoffenbarte Gott, der sich durch die ewige Natur in eingeführten Eigenschaften offenbaret (Mm., v, 10).

The passage above brings up an interesting point. Namely, while God does reveal Himself, in Böhme's opinion, as a Being of Light and Love, He nevertheless does not limit Himself to such a manifestation. In particular, the Deity described in Mysterium Magnum and Von der Gnadenwahl also has a hidden 'dark' side, a covert destructiveness concealed in the otherwise constructive "Freudenreich." This covert aspect was mentioned earlier: It exists, (meta)physically, as Fire's burning or consuming action, emotionally, as a Divine Anger ("Zorn"). Predictably—in view of the fact that the two spring simultaneously from the explosive "Feuerschrack"—the Godly Wrath constitutes the polar opposite of the Light-Joy World. Whereas the "Freudenreich" combines Love, Sound, and Form in a heaven of light and harmony, "Zorn" forms a virtual Hades in which Asthringency, Compunction, and Anguish perpetually war with one another. Moreover, while the Light World harbors creative and sustaining forces,
its dark counterpart realizes a purely destructive potential, as men-
tioned above. Still another contrast: The Divine Wrath does not assume
'visible' form, but remains the 'invisible' element from which the Joy-
ful radiance flows. In relating how "Zorn" begins as a consumptive
burning in the first three Natural forms, Bühme emphasizes this last
point:

Dieser Schrack macht in den drei ersten, als in Herbe,
Bitter und Angst, nach der finstern Impression in sich
das feindliche, schreckliche Leben des Grimm's oder
Zornes Gottes, des Fressens und Verzehrens; denn es
ist des Feuers Anzündung, als die Essenz der Peinlich-
keit oder Verzehrllichkeit des Feuers, und wird nach der
finstern Impression die Hölle oder Hühle genannt, ... 
welche im Lichte nicht offenbar ist, und doch eine Ur-
sache des Lichtes Anzündung ist. Auf Art zu verstehen,
wie die Nacht im Tage wohnet, und keines das andere
ist (Gw., iii, 15).

Clearly, there can be no Joy without Anger, no Light without Darkness.
This interdependence of two opposite emotions/elements/worlds has
revealing consequences for the Divine Personality as a whole. Briefly,
the God described in the two works under consideration is God of both
the New and Old Testaments, a God of Love, to be sure, but no less a
'jealous' and sometimes angry God. In noting this, one should take care
not to confuse the dark source of Divine Anger with anything malevo-
 lent. The Deity does not, specifically, harbor any evil tendencies,
nor is His Wrath a 'bad' emotion. Rather, "Zorn" functions as a neces-
sary root of the higher Divine Nature, as a 'knowledge' of evil without
which the manifestation of good would be impossible:

Und sollen es an diesem Orte recht verstehen, dass in
der gültlichen Kraft, so viel Gott Gott heisset ... 
kein Wille zum Bösen sein könne ... sondern nur bloss
in dem ist die Erkenntniss Gutes und Böses ... (Gw.,
ii, 37).
Die Grimmmigkeit und peinliche Quaal ist die Wurzel der Freudenreich ... dass also ein Contrarium ist, dadurch das Gute offenbar und erkannt werde, was gut ist (M., iv, 19).

Apparently, the Deity can reveal His loving and creative Self only by also conceiving of its opposite, i.e., of an angry and destructive nature. Insofar as this other half remains hidden and supports the revealed good, it need not be thought of as anything more than a mere knowledge of, i.e., potential for an alternate mode of expression. Hence, the 'dark' side of the Supreme Personality exists as a necessary contrast to the light, as an option without which God's identification with the Holy would have little meaning. Add to this the alchemical interdependence of combustion and light, and Anger's raison d'être becomes clear.

Having ascertained that the God of Joy must necessarily be a God of Wrath, we might briefly reflect on the more general interdependence of opposites in Böhme's cosmogony. Briefly, there would seem, from the beginning on, to be an overriding principle at work in the Deity's evolution, to wit, that a thing requires its opposite. Consider the primal Will. Originally, the Will exists as an utter blank or "Ungrund," as maintained in the first chapter. Now, were this "Ungrund" truly empty, it would tax even Böhme's imagination to derive anything from it. Indeed, neither Mysterium Magnum nor Von der Gnadenwahl goes as far as to attempt to derive the cosmos from an absolute nothingness. What Böhme does describe, rather, is an apparent nothing, "ein Nichts" which contains "das Alles." The primeval void, one will recall, bears within it the seeds of the cosmos. Interestingly—and herein lies our point—the association of All and Nothing makes sense, for the reason that the Will
seems to require something to act upon, the All, something to spring from. God's Will, in particular, could hardly exist as such if it had no actions to cause, and actions would be inconceivable without some sort of object(s). The totality of objects (=All), likewise, must derive from something, and if this something utterly transcends it, what else could it be, save a 'nothing'? However we reason, it remains the case that "Nichts" and "Alles" are, for Böhme, interdependent concepts. They would, in fact, appear but two different 'sides' of the same thing, the overt and covert aspects of the primal One. Significantly, the One evolves through the combined action of these opposites, the All generating the Will as its revelator, the Will struggling to bring the All forth from within itself. Given the nature of their interaction, we might think of "das Alles und Nichts" as producing a creative tension, a motivating force which drives the Eternal Generation along. Such a conception enlarges upon our basic premise in an interesting manner—particularly, it would appear that a thing not only generates its opposite, but interacts with it in order to evolve. Nowhere does this fact become more apparent than in the Eternal Nature. Having contracted and expanded again to become the (trinitarian) Eternal Mind, the Wisdom-knowing One realizes within itself a Free Desire, which, like the Will, cannot help but bring its antithesis into being. Originally an infinite, unbounded "Lust," the essence of the Eternal Mind/Wisdom surrounds itself with a dark Hunger for the purpose of developing into a living Being. As the material and spiritual essences wrestle and contract, they generate the warring forces of Astringency and Compunction, whose synthesis, Anguish, succeeds in triggering a transforming Explosion. Nor does this Explosion
end the ever-present tension of antithetical forces. Rather, "Feuerschrack" gives birth to a double world, a world described in the previous paragraph and referred to, by Böhme, as the Joy and Wrath of God. Given the fruitful interaction of the antitheses that preceded it—All and Will, Hunger and Desire, Astringency and Compunction—one might suspect that the pair "Freudenreich"—"Zorn" also serves to promote the further unfolding of the cosmic drama. This it does, but with the difference that subsequent events are not purely mechanical in nature, but the results of conscious action by the Supreme Personality, God, and the lesser personalities created by Him. It is, in particular, immediately following the Eternal Nature that the Divine Evolution ends and creation proper begins. That, as has been indicated, Böhme's perpetual struggle of opposites plays a role in the emergence of the cosmic order need only be reemphasized, as it is, ultimately, from the opposition of the Light-Dark forces in created souls that a new and sinister duality arises.
CHAPTER III
FROM ONE TO MANY: THE CREATION AND FALL OF ANGELS

We have, up to this point, been engaged in describing a more or less mechanical process, a series of 'automatic' stages in which the Divine Life unfolded--first in the activity of Mind, then in that of (feeling) Soul/Nature. This being the case, it has not heretofore appeared necessary to question the events of the cosmogony, either with regard to purpose or responsibility therefore. One can hardly ask why God evolves as He does--this process occurring, apparently, out of sheer, blind necessity--nor can one adjudge this development as either good or bad. So much for the first two phases of the Böhmean Genesis. In the events that follow the Eternal Nature, the rationale is often more difficult to see, for we are no longer dealing with the mechanical evolution of an (albeit spiritual) 'organism,' but with the willful acts of a conscious and responsible Being. There arises, in particular, the question of why the perfected Deity feels compelled to create others in His own Image, and why He eventually allows some of these others to be corrupted and imprisoned by the forces of evil, indeed, of how such forces can arise in the first place. In dealing with the origin of evil, Böhme does not, of course, attribute the responsibility for the same to the Deity, but relies on the familiar and biblical argument of free will and Luciferian rebellion. In relating how this rebellion begins amongst angels, Böhme arrives at a rather interesting and unique idea of evil, an idea we will deal with, at some length, in the discussion below.

Briefly, Böhme's account of creation picks up where his ontogeny leaves off, with the operation of the Divine Word in the Divine Body.
The Word/sixth form of the Eternal Nature acts, as explained in the last chapter, as both an organ of sense and a creative force, as, to put it differently, a kind of conscious energy capable of calling whole worlds into being. We might, for this reason, think of the Word as a creative Spirit—recall the parallel between it and the Holy Spirit—through which and to reveal which the universe comes to be. Böhme certainly gives this impression when he writes that the world arises that the Word might become incarnate ("kreatürlich") and visible ("bildlich"):

> Das ist, diese wussere Welt mit ihren Heeren und alle dem was darinnen lebet und webet ... das ist zu dem Ende also offenbar worden, auf dass das ewige Wort in seiner wirklichen Kraft kreatürlich und bildlich sei ... (Gw., iv, 19).

The Word, God's creative Power/Spirit, brings forth from itself the 'outer world' for the sake of assuming 'creaturely' and visible form.

Again, it appears that the Divine Sound actually enters into that which it creates.¹ Consequently, and in view of the fact that the Word and Divine Spirit/Soul are closely related, if not identical, it does not seem unreasonable that the former 'gives birth' to living (and immortal) beings. In God's first creative act, His Word/Spirit—metaphorically referred to as an Eternal Harmony—divides itself into a multitude of individual 'voices':

> Gott, der ein Geist ist, hat sich durch und aus seiner Offenbarung in unterschiedliche Geister eingeführt, welche sind die Stimmen seiner ewiggebärdender Harmonie, in seinem geoffenbarten Worte seiner grossen Freudenreich; sie sind Gottes Instrument, in welchem der Geist Gottes in seiner Freudenreich spielt ... (MM., viii, 2).

The 'voices' alluded to above are, of course, the Biblical angels, the multitudinous individual incarnations of the greater Spirit of God.

Through them the Deity experiences and rejoices in His Kingdom of Joy,
revealing the glory of His perfected form unto Himself. Significantly, this 'division' into countless souls does not disrupt the essential unity of the Godhead, any more than did the earlier emergence of the Trinity. On the contrary, the heavenly messengers are—though not, perhaps, in as strict a sense as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—manifestations of God, microcosms attuned to the will of the Macrocosm. To emphasize their (original) subservience to and oneness with God, Böhme refers to the angels as His 'instruments':

\[
... \text{und ob sie wohl ihre hochfürstliche Regimenter haben, so sind sie doch allesamt nur ein zugerichtetes Instrument des einigen Geister Gottes in seiner Freude, welche er mit ihnen offenbart, denn er offenbart sich selber durch sie (Gw., iv, 22).}
\]

Despite their status as manifestations/instruments of the Creator, one must not suppose that the angels lack identity or autonomy. True, each represents an offshoot of the Divine Soul, but an offshoot with free will and a personality of its own. Here we find ourselves confronted with something of a paradox. While, according to Böhme, the denizens of the Light World mirror its perfection and conform to the Will of God, they can nevertheless choose not to do so. An angel, that is to say, though created as a part/expression of the Deity's higher Nature, has within it an element of will and power that allows it to determine its own destiny, even if this involves breaking with the harmony of the Kingdom of Joy. ² Such a break would entail, in particular, an act of self-transformation, an 'entering into'—"sich einführen in" is the construction used by the author—or taking on the image of either Fire or Darkness. Böhme feels that such a peculiar power/choice accrues to the angels by virtue of their descent from the Will:
Gleichwie Gott selber in derselben freien Willen frei
und alles ist, und sich im selben freien Willen in
der Natur im Feuer, Licht und Finsterniss, in Pein
und Qual, sowohl in Liebe und Freude eingeführet; also
auch hat das Particular Macht, aus dem ganzen freien
Willen sich in kreatürliche Eigenschaft einzuführen
in den drei Hierarchien oder Principien, wie sie
wollen (Gw., iv, 26).

God's instruments/'particulare' can, it would appear, either remain so--
presumably by affirming their Light World existence—or enter into the
other 'principles' of Fire and Darkness. Given this option, the ques-
tion arises as to why a creature of Light would desire to become a
creature of Fire or Darkness, and what consequences such a choice would
have. This brings us, as well as Böhme, to the subject of Lucifer.

Sparse though Böhme's remarks on the subject of fallen angels are,
they nevertheless include some salient points. First, and not surpris-
ingly, the author's views on the matter correspond, in the main, to
those traditionally espoused by Christian dogma. Lucifer was, original-
ly, a being of great beauty, "der schönste Fürst im Himmel" (MM., ix,
7). This prince of angels sprang, moreover, from the purest Light, in
which he revealed himself, as did the others:

Waren doch die Engel ... allesammt in das Licht ge-
schaffen, das Licht war in allen offenbar, und hatten
freien Willen aus dem geoffenbarten Willen des Willens
Gottes (MM., ix, 5).

The mention of free will here suggests another important point, namely,
that the fairest prince of Heaven fully controlled his own destiny.
Lucifer never lacked either the ability or power to choose his own fate,
and could have remained in the "Freudenreich" had he so willed. In
insisting on this, Böhme emphasizes that the Rebellion and Fall did
not occur through Divine ordination:
Der Fall Lucifers ist nicht aus Gottes Fürsatz oder Verordnung geschehen .... Lucifer wäre wohl ein Engel blieben, hätte ihn nicht sein eigner Wille in die Feuersmacht eingeführet .... (MM., ix, 3, 6).

Clearly, selfish will, and not the Will of God, formed the ultimate cause of Lucifer's corruption. As to the more immediate cause, Böhme speculates that the angel's downfall began with a glance into its fiery center—the angels, like God, consist of the seven Natural forms—a glance which, by making Lucifer aware of his own great beauty, caused him to turn inward:

Sprichst du: was verursachete ihn [den Hoffart/Fall] in ihm selber? Seine grosse Schöne. Dass sich der freie Wille im Feuerspiegel besah, was er wäre, dieser Glanz machte ihn beweglich, dass er sich nach den Eigenschaften des Centri bewegte ... (MM., ix, 10).

... seine eigene Begierde ging ins Centrum, er wollte selber Gott sein, er ging mit dem Willen ... in das Centrum der Natur, als die Eigenschaften, darinnen wollte sein Wille Herr im Hause sein (MM., ix, 7).

Here we gain insight into the particulars of the Fall. It would appear that the Rebellion in Heaven began on two levels, as a) a welling up of egotistical pride and selfish desire for power, accompanied by b) an attempt to move inward to the 'center.' This last assertion requires, of course, explanation. Basically, Böhme contends, as already noted, that every heavenly being is (originally) God in microcosm, hence, carries the entire Eternal Nature within itself. Each angel has, in particular, a center or core of fire—"ein jeder guter Engel hat das Centrum in sich" (MM, ix, 4)—within which the first three Natural forms lie hidden, and from which the individual's power and splendor flow outward. Granted this, it makes sense that Lucifer, obsessed with his own "grosse Schöne," should turn his attention toward the source of
same. But there is more to his introversion than this. Given the
nature of the fourth form, it should be apparent that the rebellious
angel saw in it a source of power; power, because Fire arises as an
explosive release of the tension accumulated by the contracting Hunger,
as an outpouring of energies that become Love, Light, and Sound. In
Fire, Lucifer perceived no mere flame, but a burning power ("Feuermacht") in which lay the essence of Divinity. (Recall that God reveals
Himself by first gathering his "Kräfte"/"Eigenschaften" together, then
releasing them from a central point.) Consequently, his inward move
stemmed from a desire to usurp Divine might, to rule in the Fire rather
than serve in the Light:

... seine Erhebung war nach dem ersten Principio
[Feuer], dass er möchte ein Herr über und in allen
Wesen, auch über alle englische Heere sein. Und
darum wandte er sich von der Demuth der Liebe ab,
und wollte in Feuermacht darinnen herrschen ... (Gw., iv, 31).

Having ascertained the motive behind, the question remains as to the
actual mechanics and consequences of the Fall. Briefly, Lucifer's bid
for power occurred as an attempt to change his internal (al)chemistry,
to affect the balance of forms within him in such a way that one of
these, Fire, would become predominant. In outright defiance of a Divine
order that hides the fiery Darkness in the splendor, love, and meekness
of Light, the will bent on self-deification tried to elevate the former
principle over the latter. Specifically, this attempt to invert the
Natural, heavenly order occurred something as follows: Lucifer, in whom
the fiery 'principle' was unusually strong—whence his great beauty and
high rank among angels—willed the revelation or enhancement of this
component of his being. In so willing, however, he caused the forms
that 'feed' the fire—Astringency, Compunction, and Anguish—to become unusually strong ("zu qualificiren"), whereupon they began to transform him into a being of darkness:

Die feurische Lust, welche in ihm stark war, reizte ihn, denn sie wollte gern ... offenbar sein .... [darum bewegte] er sich nach den Eigenschaften des Centri ... welche zu hand anfingen zu qualificiren. Denn die herbe, strenge Begierde, als die erste Ge-stalt oder Eigenschaft, impressete sich, und erweckte den Stachel und die Angstbegierde: also Überschattete dieser schöne Stern sein Licht, und machte sein Wesen ganz herb, rauh und streng; und ward seine Sanftmuth und recht englische Eigenschaft in ein ganz streng, rauh, finster Wesen verwandelt: da war es geschehn um den schönen Morgenstern, und wie er that, that auch seine Legionen: das ist sein Fall (MM., ix, 9, 10)

In attempting to reveal/enter into the fiery powers hidden within his luminiferous body, Lucifer 'awakened' the forces of the lower ternary within himself. These, in turn, 'overshadowed' his Light and made him, instead, rough, dark, and bitter, much like the turbulent Hunger with which the Eternal Nature began. Were this outward ruination all, the once splendid being would have paid dearly enough for his hubris, but the transformation did not end there. No, the former prince of heaven lost far more than mere beauty, he lost his right to dwell in the Divine Kingdom of Joy, in the love and tranquility of God's Countenance.

Having embroiled himself in the first four Natural forms, Satan (at this point no longer an angel) becomes oblivious to the World of Light:

... so stiess ihn die heilige Kraft ... im Lichte Gottes aus sich, und verbarg sich vor ihm. Das ist, der innere Himmel beschleusst ihn, dass er Gott nicht siehtet, welches so viel gesagt ist, er starb am Himmelreich, des guten Willens, und ist anitzo in Gott gleichwie die Nacht im Tage ist, denn sie ist am Tage in der Sonne Glanz nicht offenbar ... (Gw., iv, 46).

In making themselves something other than images of God, the fallen
angel and his legions attuned themselves to something other than heaven, to the Dark World described earlier. In particular, the devil is henceforth aware of the Divine Wrath alone, whereas the remaining angels of Light know only the Divine Joy. But even here, the disastrous effects of the Fall do not cease. Not only did Satan imprison himself in the Divine Anger, but he also took on the characteristics of same. From the Fire, the denizens of Hades acquire anger, from the first two forms a prickling envy, from the third form despair:

Denn der Grimm der ewigen Natur, welcher Gottes Zorn heisst, offenbarte sich in ihnen, und führte ihren Willen in die Phantasie [Finsterniss], und darin leben sie noch ... [und] ihr Wille ist eine lautere Hoffart, item ein Geiz zur Vielheit der Eigenschaften, ein stachlichest de Ex fei, ein Zorn aus dem Feuer, ein Verzweifeln aus der Angst (Cw., iv, 30).

Clearly, the attempt to gain power for power's sake proves costly, for power free of Divine control brings ruin, both outwardly and inwardly. We might, in view of this fact, go as far as to equate evil with power run rampant, though only at the risk of oversimplifying a complex ethical problem. Power corrupts, true, but only if given the chance to do so. Consequently, the origin of evil cannot be attributed to alchemical processes alone, and so deserves closer investigation.

Despite the importance of the first four Natural forms in the Rebellion and Fall of Lucifer, they do not, in and of themselves, constitute the root of evil. Nor can any one of them—even Fire—be exclusively associated with the devil. Were this the case, it would follow that the Creator, who reveals Himself by means of these forms, harbors "die Bösheit" in His own Being, a conclusion Böhme flatly rejects:
Denn Gott kann nichts als Gutes geben, denn er ist allein das einige Gut, und wandelt sich nimmermehr in einiges Böse: er kann auch nicht, sonst wäre er nicht mehr Gott; aber in dem Wort seiner Offenbarung, da die Gestalt nisse urständen, als da Natur und Kreatur urständet, allda entstehet die Wirkung in Bösen und Guten (Gw., vi, 28).

Without a doubt, the source of evil does not, even in the most tenuous sense, lie in the Creator, but in His creations, specifically, in those which rebel against His Will. But this raises the question of how and for what reasons such a rebellion occurred in the first place. Did not the Luciferian Fall stem from the peculiar nature of this angel (and his legions), and come about, therefore, due to factors largely beyond his control? Was not the "schönste Fürst im Himmel" compelled to act as he did by the unusual strength of his internal 'flame,' by his superb beauty? And, if so, would it not follow that evil arose from an imbalance/flaw in the Divine order, or, indeed, as an intentional element in the Divine plan? Böhme will have none of this blasphemy.  

Lucifer was tempted, true, but could have resisted by willing himself into the meekness and harmony of God's Love. Had he done so, his craving for power and burgeoning ego would have surely been diminished. That he did not do so can only be attributed to an arbitrary act of will, to a conscious choice. The Son of the Morning fell, quite simply, because he so willed:

So spricht die Vernunft: er konnte nicht [in der Harmonie Gottes bleiben]. So sage mir, wer zwang ihn? ... hätte er seinen Willen in Gottes Sanftmuth eingeführt, so hätte er gekonnt; so er aber nicht wollte, so konnte er nicht ... (NM., ix, 7).

Obviously, Böhme feels that Lucifer was not wholly determined by his alchemical structure, that he had a will of his own and cannot, there-
fore, be absolved from responsibility for his actions. Nor does the author of Mysterium Magnum and Von der Gnadenwahl accept the argument that Divine foresight could have prevented the Fall. Had God attempted to quench the fires of Lucifer's ambition with the 'waters' of His Love, the reasoning goes, it would only have made the angel more beautiful, hence more vain, hence more thirsty for power, etc.:


In addition to stressing the Divine lack of responsibility for Lucifer's act, Bühme makes said act seem all the more heinous by pointing out that its perpetrator knew of its possible consequences before he committed it. This knowledge did not stop him because it was just that, mere knowledge ("Wissenschaft") without a true feeling ("Empfindlichkeit") for the consequences:

Nun spricht die Vernunft: Wie kam das? Wusste er denn nicht Gottes Gericht und den Fall? Ja, er wusste es wohl: aber er hatte den Fall nicht in der Empfindlichkeit, sondern nur als eine Wissenschaft (MM., ix, 9).

Granted, now, that the fallen angel(s) was not compelled to fall but chose to do so, that he knew the consequences of his rebellion but chose to ignore them, and that he could not have been restrained by the Creator, it follows that any responsibility for evil is his, and his alone. So much for the question of fault. Returning to the question of the 'root' or cause of evil, we reiterate what was stated above: Evil resulted from an act of rebellion against the Divine order/plan,
from a desire to subvert this order to selfish whims. Particularly this latter observation sheds light on the discussion thus far. It was, specifically, not rebellion per se, but the attempt to subvert the higher to the lower, to invert or pervert the natural structure of things that brought about the damning effects of the Fall. The Böhmean notion of evil, it would appear, revolves around the idea of a corruption or inversion of the good. Take the case of the two ternaries, the dark or lower ternary of Astringency, Compunction, and Anguish, and the light or higher ternary of Love, Sound, and Form. Now, despite the impression one gets from the author's terminology, neither world can be exclusively associated with a moral absolute. True, God does reveal Himself by means of forms 5, 6, and 7, while holding forms 1, 2, and 3—the attributes or components of Fire—concealed within Himself. Satan, on the other hand, brings forth the dark ternary, and 'overshadows' (i.e., hides) his Light. But this is not to say that Love-Sound-Form is good, Astringency-Compunction-Anguish-(Fire) evil. To assume so would imply, as already argued, that the Deity harbors evil within His Being, His adversary, good, a notion directly contrary to Böhme's pious way of thinking. No, it is rather in the balance between these two sets of forces that good or evil consists. The word "Gut," in particular, applies to the natural order which hides Wrath-Darkness in Joy-Light, the word "Böse," to the inversion or perversion of this order. Insofar as God cloaks His inner Wrath and (potentially destructive) Power in Love and Meekness, and harnesses these forces to constructive ends, He is good. Insofar as the devil enhances or releases the naked powers within him, removing them from the discipline/sovereignty of Light in
order to use them for selfish purposes, he is evil. Consequently, the
two moral poles are associated with an alchemical balance or order,
rather than with any specific set of forms. Indeed, we might even add
that every form of the Eternal Nature ideally functions as an element
in God's perfection, as a necessary part of an absolute Good. In the
stormy Astringency, Compunction, Anguish, and Fire, the Light World
finds its necessary backdrop, the base or source from which it springs
and without which it could not exist. Conversely, the lower ternary
does not constitute a purely destructive force, but flowers in the
higher ternary. In view of the interdependence between the higher and
lower ternaries of the Eternal Nature, it becomes all the more apparent
that the Light-Darkness duality is quite distinct from, and does not
necessarily imply, the conflict between good and evil. The Creator did
not, to put it differently, create a universe of visible good and hidden
evil, but a wholly good order in which all opposites worked, in delicate
balance, toward a common end. With the Rebellion and Fall of Lucifer
this situation changed, of course, and evil—a willful perversion of the
Divine order for selfish purposes—emerged as a new and destructive
force, a source of strife and corruption.

It should, at this point, be apparent that the Fall and emergence
of the infernal order opens a new period in Böhme's cosmic drama, a
period utterly unlike those that preceded it. Whereas the first two
stages of the cosmogony involved the more or less mechanical evolution
of a single Personality, this new 'era' revolves around the actions and
interactions of myriad conscious and self-aware beings, beings capable
of choosing and shaping their individual destinies. While, moreover,
the Eternal Generation and Nature occurred in accordance with the One Will of God, those events that follow the Fall reflect a strife between the forces of good/God and those of evil/the devil. We might generalize the difference between Post- and Ante-Fall as follows: Prior to the Luciferian Rebellion, everything happened in such manner as to preserve and enhance a state of absolute Oneness; those trends that begin afterward tend to run in the opposite direction, i.e., toward a state of multiplicity and, in particular, strife and growing polarization in the cosmic order. But such a broad and general statement requires elucidation and supportive argument. One might, for instance, object that duality exists in the Godhead itself, and that the ensuing conflict between good and evil resembles, however remotely, the earlier 'opposition' of Wrath and Joy, the dark Hunger and the Free Spiritual Desire, or even the All and the Will/Void. If Bühme’s cosmogony includes, from the beginning on, a 'struggle' between thesis and antithesis, how can we defend our assertion that a state of Oneness exists prior to the Fall? In answering this question, one must first realize that the words 'opposite' and 'antithetical' may be used in different senses. There are, in particular, opposites that complement one another, and opposites that clash, antitheses that combine to produce a synthesis, and those which remain locked in unproductive struggle. The difference, for instance, between male and female—who cohabit to create new life—is not the same as that between day and night, which exclude each other. A bit more specifically, the 'pairs' All and Will, Hunger and Desire, Wrath and Joy are just that, couples interlocking in productive union, and not antagonists, as are good and evil. When the Will/Void brings
forth the All in the form of the Eternal Wisdom, for instance, it does so by way of revealing its hidden aspect—the other side of the coin, as it were—and does not, therefore, produce something truly other than (and conceivably opposed to) itself. The emerging All, more simply, represents the objective element of the One, the Will its subjective element, the two interacting as parts of an evolving Whole. A similar argument holds for the contracting Hunger—the material impulse in the Eternal Mind—and the Free Spiritual Desire—the Mind's spiritual impulse.

Hunger contracted to become matter, Desire resisted to remain spirit, and yet the two are but components of a Will to Life, to a perfect synthesis of matter and spirit. As to the 'antithesis' of Wrath and Joy, we have already indicated that they appear as two manifestations of Divine Power, a Power that has its 'roots' in the Darkness and blossoms in the Light. Insofar, now, as Wrath and Joy, Hunger and Desire, All and Will appear as parts of a greater Whole, it should be apparent that their successive emergence does not disrupt the Oneness of God, but, by motivating further evolution, only serves to enhance it. Not so, however, with the moral poles of good and evil. While, to be sure, the latter does emerge from the former—as All from Will, Hunger from Desire, Joy from Wrath—said descent does not constitute a true 'birth,' but rather an unfortunate ruination of an originally perfect order.

Good and evil do not, moreover, depend upon, complement, or combine with one another in a higher order, but perpetually clash in irresolvable conflict. Still further, the opposites do not arise as parts or expressions of God, but as God and something other than God, or rather, a distortion thereof. Given, now, the contrast between good versus evil,
and Will, Desire, and Joy 'versus' All, Hunger, and Wrath, there seems
to be some justification for dividing (Böhme's) history into an era of
evolutionary Oneness and a period of devolutionary multiplicity. But,
the question arises, is multiplicity really a symptom of decline? And,
it so, why the division Post- and Ante- (Luciferian) Fall, as opposed to
Post- and Ante- Creation of the Angels? Did not the 'division' of the
One into many—whereby the One mysteriously remained—signal the end of
cosmic unity? To this last question we must answer as Böhme does: No.
The creation of the angels did not terminate the state of absolute One-
ness that endured throughout the Eternal Generation and Nature, nor, to
answer the first question, did this (apparent) multiplicity initiate a
decline in God's universe. The reason for this lies, again, in a dis-
tinction between real and superficial dichotomy. Specifically, the
angels arose as incarnations of God, as a multitude of Divine micro-
cosms whose wills were in perfect harmony with that of the Macrocosm.
Insofar as the denizens of Heaven a) sprang directly from God, b) were
'made' in His—i.e., the Eternal Nature's—image, and c) conformed com-
pletely to His Will, no true division can be said to have existed
between Him and them. Consequently, the cosmos did not actually become
divided until after the Fall, at which time Lucifer rebelled against
the Will, broke with the Creator, and took upon himself the image of
Darkness. Whence our assertion that it was the Rebellion and Fall
alone that ended the primal Unity, and divided the cosmos into two
worlds, the world of Heaven and unfallen angels, in which all are still
One—and in which the Creator realizes His highest state of self-
expression—and the dark, fiery Hades inhabited by the devil and his
minions.
CONCLUSION

In seeking to find a single, common theme in the events reviewed thus far, we might well focus on the word 'organic.' While, of course, no one word or phrase can adequately describe an evolutionary scheme as complex as Böhme's, it would nevertheless not be too far from the truth to say that the concept of an organic whole is critical in understanding the connection between the Eternal Generation, the Eternal Nature, and the Creation and Fall of Angels. It seems, in particular, that Böhme viewed the Deity as an evolving organism—a point we have continually stressed—and employed this view to explain the age-old struggle between good and evil. To recapitulate our discussion, then, we ought to reconsider the relation of parts to the whole in the first three stages of the Böhmean cosmogony.

Beginning with the Eternal Generation, it should be at once apparent that every 'participant' in this process contributes toward the emergence of an Eternal, self-contemplating Mind: The One Will (Father) goes into itself to discover its hidden potential (Son), then flows outward again in an act (Spirit) of self-revelation. By means of this process of self-examination and -realization, God functions not only as a causative agent (Will) but also as a knowing entity. In order, now, that the Will attain self-knowledge, it must contemplate that part of itself revealed by the Spirit from the vantage point of the Son, who arises in the Father, whence the necessity and interdependence of the persons of the Trinity. God the Father, Son, and Spirit are, metaphorically speaking, the 'organs' of God the Mind. Given this logical and functional interdependence of the 'parts' created by the Eternal
Generation, we might look for a similar relationship between the elements and forms of the Eternal Nature. Briefly, the Free Spiritual Desire (impulse toward spirit) and dark Hunger (impulse toward matter) comprise the necessary constituents of the contracting, primeval mass, the two necessary opposites whose interaction forces this mass to evolve into a living being (synthesis of matter and spirit). Just as Hunger and Desire are necessary ingredients in an evolving Whole, so, too, are the various Natural forms integral parts of the total life process of the Deity. Through Astringency, the Spirit coagulates. Through Compunction, it resists reduction to inert matter, becoming, instead, so progressively unstable/anguished as to transform itself in the Fire of self-annihilation. In the first three forms, Fire finds its indispensable basis, and through Fire the Spirit flowers in feeling, potent Life. In so flowering, the Spirit of God acquires Form, the necessary corpus in which the other six processes occur, Sound, the creative power that produces the Body and allows God to express Himself, and Love, the cohering and nurturing force that holds the Light World together and ensures the smooth functioning of the various forms. Insofar as Form, Sound, and Love work together to reveal the higher life of the Deity, they again serve as 'organs' of a Divine Whole, as do Astringency, Compunction, Anguish, and Fire, the necessary basis without which the Light World could not exist. From the dark ternary God derives power and the stuff of his fairer 'Self'; in the light ternary the dark expresses and tames the raw powers that rage within it. Given, now, the interrelatedness of the Natural forms and elements within the Divine Persona, and that of the members of the
Trinity within the Eternal Mind, one might also wonder whether or not this interrelatedness also applies to the results of the first creative act. Indeed, we have already maintained that it does, i.e., that God, while 'dividing' Himself into countless individual beings, nevertheless remains One, and does so, in fact, to further His self-realization. In the angels, God the King of Heaven sees Himself from countless points of view, whence the argument that these beings constitute yet another series of 'components' in a living Whole. This last unity, however, remains so only insofar as each 'component' affirms its connection with the Whole, a power that previous 'organs' did not possess. Here, then, the One is not so much an integration of organically interdependent parts or processes as a voluntary association of sentient beings, an association of free wills. Interestingly enough, though, the development of a rift in this association might be compared to the development of a disease in an otherwise healthy body, the disease originating, of course, in the 'member' of Lucifer. It was, indeed, precisely because Lucifer was created to be a voluntary part of the Divine One that his decision to become otherwise qualifies as evil, and so condemns him. Like the proverbial hand that Jesus spoke of (Matthew v, 30), the rebellious angel is severed from the Body lest he corrupt it, and cast into the fires of eternal damnation.

Obviously, the holistic/organic viewpoint taken above has its advantages, at least where an interpretation of the Bühmeian cosmogony is concerned. And yet, it is not the concept of the Deity as an organic whole that fascinates so much, as as an evolving organism. While the idea of God as One seems universal among mystics, the notion
of God as evolving from Will into Mind into Persona--and the related theory that evil stems from an imbalance in the latter--may well be unique with Böhme. The author's vision of God is nothing if not dynamic, and while the cobbler of Görlitz may not have started a religious or philosophical revolution with his theories, he did, at least, prove himself to be one of the more original thinkers of his time.
NOTES: INTRODUCTION

1. Details about Böhme's life can be garnered from a number of volumes, among them the following: Paul Deussen, Jakob Boehme: Ueber sein leben und seine philosophie (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1911); Elsbeth Ebertin (Schmidt), Jakob Böhme, der erleuchtete Gottmensch und Christusverehrer (Görlitz: Regulus-Verlag, 1924); Franz Hartmann, "Jakob Böhme: the life of a Christian philosopher," Theosophical Forum, 27 (1949), 712-24; Will Erich Peuckert, Das Leben Jakob Böhmes (Jena: E. Diederichs, 1924); Gerhard Wehr, Jakob Böhme in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1971).


NOTES: CHAPTER I

1All text citations are from the following editions:


When referring to the above editions following a citation, Mysterium Magnum will be abbreviated MM., Von der Gnadenwahl, Gw. Passages cited will be identified by a roman and an arabic numeral, corresponding to, respectively, the chapter and verse in which the passage appears. (Like the Bible, Böhme's works are arranged in chapters and verses.) For example, the fifth chapter and first verse of the Mysterium Magnum would be given as follows: MM., v, 1.

2The Deity referred to by Böhme is none other than the (male) Jehovah/Heavenly Father of Holy Scripture: "Gott spricht in Mose, in einer offbarten Stimme zu dem Volke Israel ..." (Gw., i, 1); "dessen eigentlicher Name heisset Gott ... oder Jehovah ..." (MM., i, 8). The fact that Böhme conceives of God as masculine—or, at least, describes Him as such—does not, however, mean that the Supreme Being is without a certain feminine element, as the latter part of this chapter bears out (see note 10).

3Hans Grunsky, Jacob Boehme (Stuttgart: Frommann, 1956), pp. 72-73.

4Paul Hankammer, Jakob Böhme; Gestalt und Gestaltung (Bonn: F. Cohen, 1924), p. 280.

5Grunsky, p. 76.

6The congruence of the terms "Herz," "Wille," and "Lust" in Böhme's vocabulary is not as confusing as it seems. To see this, one need only consider what these words actually denote. Traditionally, the heart has represented the seat of the emotions, i.e., that part of a person where love, anger, desire, etc. originate. Given that desire arises in the heart, it does not require too great a mental effort to understand how the mystic Böhme could use the words "Herz" and "Lust" interchangeably. If one next considers that a desire for a particular thing or event almost always precedes an act of will, the close relationship between "Lust" and "Wille" becomes apparent. The proximity of meaning (and, hence, confusion) of "Herz" and "Wille" now follows, via the relationship of "Herz" to "Lust" and "Lust" to "Wille."

Sunoon Kim--"The Formative Factor in Jacob Boehme's Understanding of God," DAI, 33 (1971), 391A (Temple)--does not view the Father and Son as soul and body, but as a being and its self-consciousness: "... the Son and the Father are in one God of the same essence, for the 'Individuality' of the Son is only the 'Something' which is the 'self-consciousness' of the Father from 'the abstract neutral,' the *Ungrund*" (p. 46). Kim implies that the Will becomes a self-aware 'individual' by means of its Heart/Son, a conclusion borne out in our subsequent argument.

Grunsky, p. 85.

This personification of Divine Wisdom involves the occasional—although, in the works under consideration, infrequent—use of the title "Virgin Sophia" ("Die Jungfrau Sophia"). A particularly detailed treatment of Sophia's function in Böhme's works may be found in a book by Howard Haines Brinton entitled, *The mystic will, based on a study of the philosophy of Jacob Boehme* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930). In the sixth chapter of his treatise on Böhme, Brinton writes: "The form or structure of the Absolute Will by virtue of which this world is planned rather than some other world is called the 'mirror of divine wisdom' or the 'divine imagination.' It is personified as the 'Heavenly Sophia,' the 'Jungfrau der Weisheit.'... This Celestial Maiden is not merely a creature of Boehme's pictorial imagination, however vividly he may personify her. She is a profound and significant philosophical conception. Without her the active will could not create. It would be wholly capricious and would have no material in which to work. Her place in Boehme's philosophical system is difficult to find because she appears in so many roles. She exercises to the full the feminine privilege of changing her mind and name. Thus, we find her appearing as (1) the mirror of Deity, (2) the Mother of God, (3) the Divine Imagination, (4) the idea as the model of the world, (5) as that which is manifested in the Eternal Nature, (6) man's heavenly genius, (7) the bride of the soul, (8) the mother of the reborn. In all these various appearances wisdom plays the same role. She always remains the passive idea which, when wedded to active will, gives birth to new life. She is the given objective element in which the will sees its possibilities reflected" (Brinton, pp. 183-4). In a footnote to this discussion, Brinton goes on to note that the personification of Wisdom belongs to an older Biblical and philosophical tradition: "\(^{13}\)Boehme follows an ancient precedent in this personification of Divine Wisdom. She often appears in Hebrew literature ... [e.g., in Proverbs 8, and in the Wisdom of Solomon, 7: 25-26 and 10: 5] .... In the book of Enoch she descends from heaven to earth, but is rejected of men and returns to await the Messianic age. The Gnostic systems placed her as one of the mediators
between man and God. Sometimes she appears as the lost aeon to be redeemed. She is also the second Sephiroth of the Kabbalah. Boehme may have been influenced by Weigel, who says of her: 'This heavenly Eve has from eternity been mother of the son of God in the Trinity. This wisdom which is there the word of God, is a virgin who, when born in bodily form, has borne Christ in the flesh for us in the world,' Postille II, 286" (Brinton, p. 185).

Brinton, p. 188.
NOTES: CHAPTER II

1 Particularly in his earlier works--e.g., Aurora (1612), Von den Dreyen Principien des Götthlichen Wesens (1619), De Signatura Rerum (1622)--Böhme relies heavily on alchemical concepts and terminology in depicting the events of the Eternal Nature. In De Signatura Rerum, for instance, the process, as described in chapters one through six, goes something as follows: "In the beginning there is "Sul," the Free Desire, in which "Phur," the contracting Hunger, arises. Together, the two form "Sulphur," or Hunger-Desire, whose 'mercurial' property--i.e., Anguish or instability--results in "der Saltürische Schrack" (= "Feuerschrack"). From this saltnitral flagrat there issues forth two basic essences, a watery essence corresponding to the Divine Wrath, and an oleous essence corresponding to the Divine Kingdom of Joy. For more on Böhme's alchemical notions, one might consult Grunsky (pp. 148-212), Stoudt (Chapter XIII), or Wilhelm Knevels' article, "Der grosse Mythos des Theosophus Silesius vom Grund und Sinn der Welt" (Jahrbuch des Schlesischen Fried- rich-Wilhelm-Universität zu Breslau, 7 [1962], p. 42).

2 In giving English equivalents for "Herbe," "Stachel," "Angst," "Feuerschrack," and "Leih"--"Göttliches Schall" and "Liebe" have, in Böhme's works, meanings similar to those they would have in modern German--the emphasis is not so much on a literal translation as on one that is faithful to the author's understanding of these terms. The reasons for the equivalents used are given below.

According to Grimm's Deutsches Wörterbuch, the word "Herbe" signifies "in bezug auf das gefühl, scharf, schneidend .... in bezug auf den geschmack, beissend, zusammenziehend, scharf, sauer...." Given this definition, one might equate "Herbe" with the quality of sharpness, sourness, or astringency. The latter term is used here because "Herbe" (in connection with the Eternal Nature) and "astringency" both refer to an in-drawing, cohering, solidifying tendency.

The second form of the Eternal Nature is denoted by two words, namely, "Stachel" and "Rügung." Grimm defines the first of these as "[ein] spitzes, stechendes Ding," and gives "regung" and "erregung" as synonyms for the second. Insofar as Böhme's second form corresponds to a prickling, stinging, and/or stirring in the astringent mass of Hunger-Desire, we have chosen to render it with the English term "compunction." According to Webster--A. Merriam Webster, Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language, 2nd Edition (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1958)--"compunction" derives from two Latin words, "con" and "pungere," and originally meant to prick or sting.

"Angst" is usually translated as "fear," a term which does not, however, correctly convey the sense of Böhme's German. The author's meaning seems to come closer to that of English "anguish," in the sense of torment and inner tumult. In the third form of the Eternal Nature, the astringent and compunctive Hunger-Desire is, indeed, undergoing an internal unrest and ferment due to the action of the first two forms.

"Feuerschrack" would probably be translated as "a fiery explosion"
3 If such a word were still extant, or had ever been a part of the German language. Since this term is apparently peculiar to Böhme—Grimm merely indicates that it is "[ein] lieblingswort Jacob Böhmels" and speculates that it refers to "[das] aufblitzen, aufflammen des Feuers u. ähnnl."—we have taken the liberty of translating it as "fire." This translation can, of course, be debated. In particular, "Feuerschreck" appears to denote a sudden ignition or combustion in the tormented mass of Hunger-Desire, a bursting forth of flame which transmutes the dark mass into the higher forms of the Eternal Nature. In equating the word with "fire," we thus rob it of the sense of suddenness and dynamism with which Böhme invests it, but not without good reason. It is, in particular, our opinion that "Feuerschreck" does not refer to a one-time and brief explosion, but to an ongoing and eternal process in the Body of God. In view of its permanence and consuming properties, "Feuerschreck" seems better designated "fire" than "fiery explosion."

Grimm offers the following insights into the meaning of "Leib": "[Leib bedeutet] die Hülle eines menschens, corpus ... [und] erscheinet zufällig in gesegnet zu seele, auch zu geist, obschon zu letzterem älter das fremde körper gegensätzlichen gestellt wird"; natürlich auch die seele selbst, ja der mensch wird in seinem leibe wohnend gedacht." According to this definition, one might think of "Leib"—the seventh form of the Eternal Nature—as that which contains the Spirit of God, as that in which the incarnate God moves and has His Being. "Leib" functions as the "body"—whence our use of that term—in which the other six forms of the Eternal Nature exist and function, as the first incarnation of the heretofore wholly intangible Deity. Yet this is not to say that "Body" is a material or mortal vessel, for, as Grimm notes, "[auch den] engeln und geistern, die in menschlichen gestalt gedacht werden, ist ein zarter, ätherischer, lichter leib beigelegt." God's Body is, to put it simply, the form that the Eternal Mind takes in order to manifest itself as a Living Being. The immaterial and luminiferous aspects of the Divine Body will be dealt with in more detail in the subsequent discussion.

4 One might conjecture that the Free Spiritual Desire is a Desire because it emanates from the Son or Desire for Manifestation, Spiritual because it is the product of the Holy Spirit, and Free because it—the essence of the Godhead—has not yet imprisoned itself in any form or person. The Free Desire, in particular, appears the product of the Eternal Generation, for which reason it may be thought of as the Eternal Wisdom, or, what amounts to much the same thing, as the Trinity as a whole. Grunsky takes the latter point of view and equates Desire with what he refers to as "die klare Gottheit": "Und wir begreifen nicht minder, dass auch die klare Gottheit als Ganzes in Kombination mit ihrer Kennzeichnung als 'Freiheit' von Böhmé gerne (besonders in Sg u. Mm) 'die freie Lust' genannt wird" (Grunsky, p. 101).

5 Grunsky also uses the term "prima materia," albeit in a slightly different sense than it is used here. For Grunsky, the original matter arises as a function of what he refers to as an 'astringent matrix' or
"herbe Matrix," as an all-engendering "Urherbigkeit": "Jene universale d.h. auf die Seinstotalität bezogene Urherbigkeit ... nennt Böhme auch die "herbe Matrix" ... oder die "Mutter der Gebärerin" (= Mutter als Gebärerin, gebärenden Mutterschoss) oder auch: prima materia" (Grunsky, p. 139).

Paul Hankammer describes the first form as God's impulse to contain or limit His infinite potential: "Die erste Qualität der sich suchenden Gottheit, ihre beginnliche Stimmung ist die seelische Haltung mit klarem Willen sich aus zerflossener verdrängender Allmächtigkeit zu sammeln abzuschliessen zu beschränken" (Hankammer, p. 289). Certainly, it would appear that the first action of Hunger-Desire comprises a step away from the unbounded and unattached "Lust" toward a more definite—and, therefore, limited—mode of existence. Going a bit further than Hankammer, Howard Brinton suggests that Astringency "is the principle of individuality and concrete being... [the] primordial will to be ..." (Brinton, p. 137).

Hankammer views the second quality as "der notwendige Gegensatz zur ersten" (p. 289); Brinton, as "the outgoing Will at its most primitive stage, physically manifested as expansion" (p. 138). Charles Muses—_Iluminaton on Jacob Boehme; the work of Dionysius Andreas Freher (New York: King's Cross Press, 1951)—opines that Compunction "is a direct result of the desire for freedom against the restraints imposed by Saturn [the first form], and manifests as an egressive and hence separative, centrifugal tendency—an eternal flight from fixity" (p. 135). All of these interpretations say essentially the same thing, i.e., that the second form acts in opposition to the first form.

Böhme uses the terms "Vater" and "Sohn" here in a manner reminiscent of their usage in describing the Eternal Generation. In the last chapter, it was established that the Father/Will went inward to gather itself into a Son/Heart, which then sent its gathered energies outward, again, into the infinite Abyss. Here, the astringent 'father' moves inward to draw the Free Spiritual Desire into matter, while the compunctive 'son' pushes outward so as to resist this movement. In both cases, the father goes in toward the finite, with the son acting in the opposite direction, i.e., as an outgoing, freeing tendency to return to the infinite.

The term "Hunger" will, in the subsequent discussion, be occasionally used to denote "Hunger-Desire."

This relationship between Astringency, Compunction, and Anguish resembles, in an odd sort of way, that between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father 'grasped' Himself to create the Son, through Whom He produced the (action of) Spirit. Likewise, Astringency 'grasps' Hunger-Desire and so creates Compunction, with which it interacts to produce Anguish (a turbulent action). Recall Böhme's use of the terms
10 'father' and 'son' to refer to both the first two persons of the Trinity and the first two forms of the Eternal Nature, and the resemblance grows all the more pronounced. And yet, this likeness of the two trinities is merely superficial. While Father, Son, and Spirit cooperate in the harmonious revelation of the Eternal Wisdom, Astringency, Compunction, and Anguish clash in an ever greater disharmony. The Holy Trinity is an integrated whole; the 'trinity'—or, rather, ternary—which opens the Eternal Nature consists of two antagonistic forces and their combined effect. Grunsky makes an interesting point when he refers to Astringency, Compunction, and Anguish as a 'negative unity': "[Die Angst] ist die negative Einheit des nicht voneinander LoskommenBöhmens der beiden ersten Qualitäten. Und so gehören alle drei Eigenschaften ungelöst zusammen, indem sie das bilden, was der auf Böhme fassende Franz von Baader geistreich eine Dreieinigkeit genannt hat" (Grunsky, p. 127).

11 Grimm indicates that "Ens" is the plural form of "Ans," of which he writes the following: "dies uralte, auch mit einer benennung der götter (mythol. 22) zusammenhängende und in viele mannennamen übergegangene Wort hat sich noch in Baiern und Tirol bewahrt, ans pl. ens ..." The word "Ens" does not appear to exist in modern German, and was probably used by Böhme to mean something like "beginning," although this is pure speculation on our part.

12 In describing the intensifying struggle between Hunger and Desire, Herbert Deinert—"Die Entfaltung des Bösen in Böhmes Mysterium Magnum," Publications of Modern Language Association, 79, p. 405—draws this conclusion regarding the significance of the fourth form: "Die Feuerschrank ist nichts anderes als die Entladung der gewaltigen Spannung zwischen finsterer Begierde und freier Lust im Moment der Kollision."

13 Nor does this aspect of Fire's action escape Deinert: "Die Entzündung des Feuers hat die vorläufig schwerwiegenderste Folge im Bereich der ewigen Natur. Es wirkt wie ein Scheidewasser, der das Positive und Negative in zwei feindliche Bereiche teilt. Licht und Finsternis sind getrennt" (Deinert, p. 405). The use of the qualifiers "Positiv," "Negativ," and "feindlich" here should not be misinterpreted. While Joy and Anger are opposites, they do not work against each other, nor do they constitute a 'good' and 'evil' element in the Supreme Being. This will be explained in greater detail at the end of the chapter.

14 Brinton makes the observation that Love "creates unity in difference," a characteristic which sets the last three forms or 'higher ternary' apart from the first three or 'lower ternary.' The lower ternary of Astringency, Compunction, and Anguish, Brinton feels, knows only "unity through external force which is no true unity" (Brinton, p. 153).

15 Grunsky, p. 170.

17. Grunsky also recognizes this parallel: "Indem also die Kräfte im Schall der Sinne sich gegenseitig liebend vernehmen und erkennen, fangen sie auch schon an miteinander zu spielen. Es kommt dabei auf dasselbe hinaus, ob wir sagen, sie spielen miteinander oder der eine H. Geist spiele mit ihnen" (p. 202).

18. At the beginning of the second chapter of Mysterium Magnum, Böhme, in describing the Eternal Generation, uses the term "Wort" to refer to the Son/Heart/Compressed Power of the Will: "Das Wort ist nun das Gefasste, das im Willen ein Nichts ist, und mit dem Fassen eine Geburt wird ... mit des Willens Lust nimmt seinen Anfang in des Willens Passung, darum heisstes Herz als ein Centrum oder Lebenscircul, darinnen der Urstand des ewigen Lebens ist" (MM., ii, 1). Even here, however, "Wort" connotes Divine power, specifically, power that has been gathered up, and, in accordance with the Divine Wisdom, is to be utilized in a creative/revelatory action. Grunsky arrives at much the same conclusion: "In der Tat verläuft der Begriff des Wortes ... genau entlang dem bereits betrachteten Weg der Kraft ... Und wie die fliegende Kraft in der wesentlichen wurzelt, so wird der Sohn als die Stätte oder der 'Mund', wo sich das Wort als Kraft formt, oft schon selber Wort genannt" (Grunsky, p. 88).

Böhme's ideas on the Word are treated in more detail by Grunsky (pp. 88-96), Kim (pp. 55-60, 73, 107-11), and Steven Alex Konopacki in his dissertation, "Frustration and Promise: Jacob Boehme's Language Theories in Aurora oder Morgen Röte im Aufgang" (University of Michigan, 1977, pp. 99-126).

19. Kim, for one, recognizes the link between the Word and the cosmos, between the Word, the Will, and Creation: "The Word is, therefore, according to Boehme's own writings, the foundation or source of all things, the efflux of God's Will ... The Word is the instrument for revealing the deity and creation" (Kim, pp. 55, 59). Konopacki interprets Kayser as identifying the Word as an "objectification of Wisdom": "... the word, an objectification (Objektivierung) of wisdom, is the objectification of God. It depicts a world of ideas, an anticipation of the ensuing created world isolated within the realm of thought, its spiritual essence" (Konopacki, p. 101).


21. While we maintain here that the Divine Anger/Dark World is not malevolent, this assertion is by no means universally accepted. (See footnote 4, p. 69.)

22. We cannot, of course, take total credit for this insight. On
the contrary, it seems to be generally agreed upon that a thesis requires an antithesis in Böhme's theosophical system, i.e., that an entity must have an opposite or "Contrarium" with which to interact. In commenting upon this interdependence of the Light and Dark Worlds—which he refers to as, respectively, the second and first principles—Kim elaborates upon this fundamental truth: "What is meant here is that for anything, including the deity, to be manifested, a Contrarium is necessary. Without the negative there could be no positive, or without the first principle, the Dark, there could be no second principle, the Light. This Contrarium of the two principles, Yes and No or Dark and Light, is analogous to that of the Yin and Yang of Taoism, which characterize the basic opposition in everything" (Kim, p. 77).

Though he does not generalize to the extent that Kim does, Brinton also seems to realize that manifestation is contingent upon opposition: "[Böhme] cannot contemplate anything for more than a moment without seeing it split into two opposing phases .... His absolute is a will. It is never without activity for it is of the essence of will to split into opposites which contend with each other" (Brinton, p. 181).

Nor is J.J. Stoudt ignorant of the role of opposition in Böhme's metaphysics. Indeed, Stoudt goes perhaps further than any other critic in seeking to fathom the significance of dialectic in Böhme's cosmogony: "Here, then, is Boehme's dynamic vision of a living, contending world in which all things are made up of Yes and No. He saw that the world moved by this opposition and he believed that only a surrendered humble understanding could know eternal nature; rational reason could not do this, because, assertive and arrogant, it sought to resolve antimonies and paradoxes. His metaphysics and logic if such it may be called, were founded on paradox; he was a dialectical idealist. Yes and No oppose each other and by opposition define and condition one another .... Dialectic, holding that one form implies another, that being moves by opposition, is Boehme's basic metaphysics" (Stoudt, pp. 239-40).
NOTES: CHAPTER III

1When, in fact, Böhme alludes to the means by which the Word fashions all temporal and eternal creatures, he employs the verb phrase "sich einführen in": "Die ganze Creation, beides der ewigen "n und auch der zeitlichen Kreaturen und Wesen, stehet in dem Worte göttlicher Kraft. Die Ewigern urständen aus ... dem ewigen Willen des Ungrundses, welcher mit dem Worte des Sprechens ... sich hat in Particular einge-

führet. Und die Zeitlichen urständen in dem ausgesprochenen Worte, als in einer Bildlichkeit der Ewigen, da sich das ausgesprochene Wort in seiner Substanz, in eine hüsserlichen Spiegel, zu seiner Beschaulichkeit wieder eingeführet hat" (Gw., iv, 3). The Word, it seems, enters into living forms in order to manifest itself and the eternal Will it arises from.


3The angels, that is to say, physically consist of the seven Nat-

ural forms, just as their Creator does. It would appear that the Word, in 'dividing itself' into smaller conscious units, recreates the struc-
ture of the larger whole in each of these units. Hence, every heavenly being consists of an invisible core of Astringency, Compunction, Anguish, and Fire, from which pours forth the visible Light of Love, Sound, and Form. Böhme indicates the constitutional similarity between God (as embodied in the Eternal Nature) and the angels when he writes: "Ihr Substanz und Wesen, so viel sie ein Eigenthum sind und Kreaturen genannt werden, ist eine Infassung der ewigen Natur, welche ohne Anfang in göttlicher Wirkung, zu seiner Selbstoffenbarung, in der ewigen Gebärerin stehet. Verstehet, nach der Kreatur sind sie der ewigen Natur aller sieben Gestalten ..." (Gw., iv, 23).

4Some would disagree here. Wilhelm Knevels, for one, does, in fact, identify the Dark World as the source of all wickedness. In maintaining this, Knevels reaches a conclusion which the pious Böhme would no doubt have regarded as blasphemous: "Ergebnis: Das Böse und die Qual sind in der Gottheit selbst begründet und stehen im Sinn des Weltganzen positiv drin. Dabei ist es unerheblich, ob das Böse und das Leid aus dem einen Prinzip der Gottheit erklärt und sozusagen auf diese lokalisiert wird, oder ob das Schlimme erst durch die Spannung und den Streit der Prinzipien entsteht ... Es bleibt dabei: Die letzte Wurzel
4. des Bösen liegt in der Gottheit" (Knevels, p. 45). Obviously, Knevels views "das Böse" as rooted in the Godhead itself, a view which appears to run contrary to Böhme's many assertions that the Deity is a wholly good being and not the cause of evil (Gw., i, 19, 25, ii, 12, 28, and MM., iii, 1, ix, 3). Indeed, the author attributes wickedness not to the Supreme Being, but to selfish rebellion against the Divine order, and condemns any contrary opinion as the product of an 'imprisoned' reason: "Es ist nicht genug, dass man mit dem heiligen Geist gaukelt und heisset ihn einen Teufel, wie die gefangene Vernunft thut, welche sagt: Gott will das Böse. Denn aller böser Wille ist ein Teufel, als namentlich ein selbstgesetzter Wille zur Eigenheit, ein abträglicher von ganzem Wesen, und eine Phantasie" (Gw., ii, 12). In line with this attribution of evil to the devil, Böhme makes the statement that the Eternally Good One did not enter Nature---i.e., the seven processes/forms of the Eternal Nature---in order to become something other than good, but to enhance His majesty: "[das ewige einige Gute] führet sich doch nicht darum aus dem ewigen Einen in eine ewige Anfang zur Natur, dass er will etwas Böses sein; sondern dass seine Kraft möge in Majestät ... kommen ..." (Gw., ii, 28). Clearly, the author of Mysterium Magnum and Von der Gnadenwahl would not have agreed that the Divine Anger either is, or in any way initiates, evil, but conceives of the same as the mere (meta-)physical basis for the revelation of good.

5. Deinert: "Man darf nun nicht glauben, Böhme hätte die individuelle Rebellion positiv gesehen, weil sie für die Entwicklung des Ganzen unerlässlich war. Sein religiöses Denken liess ihn nicht über den Aspekt der Notwendigkeit hinausblicken. Jeglicher Determinismus, der die persönliche Verantwortlichkeit des Geschöpfes verneint, ist ihm fremd, und er hätte das biblische Wort voll anerkannt, dass das Übel zwar in die Welt kommen muss, aber wehe dem, durch den er kommt" (Deinert, p. 406). Obviously, Deinert goes a step further than we do in ascribing a certain necessity/inevitability to evil, but agrees that Böhme does not see Lucifer as determined, and, therefore, compelled to do wrong.

6. This, of course, is our interpretation of (Böhmean) evil, an interpretation with which some disagree. The view of Wilhelm Knevels---that evil consists of the Dark forces hidden in the Light World---has already been considered and refuted. A second interpretation at variance with ours may be found in Brinton's Mystic Will. Here, evil is credited to an arrestation of spiritual development, rather than to a willful inversion of the Divine order. From Brinton's point of view, Lucifer---and all other angels---began not as a perfect image of the seven-fold Deity, but as an 'unfinished' combination of the first four Natural forms. Significantly, the angel, like his brethren, had the choice of 'adding' the last three Natural forms to his constitution. Such a choice would have made Lucifer a part of the Light World and a true image of the Creator. Insofar, now, as the angel did not evolve past the stage of fiery Darkness—which Brinton equates with in-going selfishness—he became evil. Brinton concludes that evil is not the
Dark World per se, but the consequence of a failure to develop beyond it: "The dark world known to reason is not evil in itself. The reborn soul must pass through it. Evil is arrested development and arises only when the rebirth does not take place. It is a negative teleological direction. The lower forms of nature, in going over into the higher, become the 'matter' or unseen basis of the manifestation of goodness. They become evil when chosen as an end rather than a means. Evil is actualized only when the evolutionary process halts in the lower ternary" (Brinton, 213). While Brinton's equation of evil with spiritual retardation does seem plausible—especially insofar as it implies a connection between sin and a refusal to comply with the Divine Will—it does not quite jibe with the narrative of either Von der Gnadenwahl or Mysterium Magnum. Lucifer was not an unfinished product who chose to remain so, but a perfected being who willfully reverted to a lower level of existence. Recall the earlier citations from Mysterium Magnum, ix, 5-7: "Waren doch die Engel ... allesamt in das Licht geschaffen, das Licht war in allen offenbar ... Lucifer wäre wohl ein Engel blieben, hätte ihn nicht sein eigner Wille in die Feuersmacht eingeführet ... War er doch der schönste Fürst im Himmel." Böhme's reference to the great beauty and inner light of the angels does not sound as though he were describing mere conglomerations of the first four Natural forms.

A far more acceptable explanation of evil than that given either by Knevels or Brinton may be found in Deinert, who feels that the negative moral absolute originated because the angelic beings had the ability to unleash Divine Power, but not to control it. Deinert opines that it was the duty of every heavenly entity not to awaken the destructive forces within it, even though it has the option of so doing: "Jedem kühnftigen Geschöpf ist ein Platz in der Hierarchie Gottes angewiesen, aber es hat gleichzeitig die Freiheit, ihm zu bejahen oder abzulehnen ... Die Fähigkeit des freien Willens, zu zerstören, ist durch keine im Geschöpf befindliche Heilkraft ausgeglichen ... Die höchste Verpflichtung des Geschöpfes, das allein die Verantwortung für den Gebrauch des freien Willens trägt, besteht darin, nicht Kräfte wachzurufen, die er aus sich selber nicht bändigen kann" (Deinert, 406). Deinert feels, as we do, that the denizens of heaven have the ability to awaken the dormant forces within them, but the obligation not to do so. While the Deity may, for the sake of evolution, justifiably enter into Fire and Darkness, His creations may not. If an angel seeks—in defiance of the Divine Will—to gain power by revealing the hidden ternary, it must necessarily find itself embroiled in an efflux of energies that it cannot control, and whose release results in an irreversible state of disharmony. Thus, selfish aspiration to power must culminate in self-corruption, and the fairest angel of them all can only become a devil through his hubris. Again, evil seems to lie not in an arrestation of spiritual growth or in the first four forms of the Eternal Nature, but in a conscious and deliberate inversion or disruption of the Natural order in attempt to elevate self.
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