

Cusanus and Eriugena

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We can base our study of the relationship of Nicholas Cusanus to Eriugena — effective despite a time distance of six hundred years — upon a solid historical foundation: Cusanus had quite an intensive and accurate knowledge of a large part of Eriugena's work. This he documented less in direct quotations than through occasional references and marginalia to Eriugena's texts. In the 'Apologia doctae ignorantiae' (1449) for example, he recommends John Scotigena alongside Maximus Confessor, Hugh of St. Victor, Robert Grosseteste and Thomas Gallus as commentators of the "Mystical Theology" of Dionysius for the enlightenment of those who are 'blind' to the mystical principle of the coincidentia oppositorum.¹ On the other hand, in the same treatise he warns his readers against showing books which contain daring, 'unusual' material (*insolita*) to 'men of small spirit' or to 'weak eyes of the spirit' — therefore to such as do not understand the principle of coincidence and have not achieved "docta ignorantia" — because such "ignorantes" could easily misunderstand these books as error or heresy. Among the texts which ought to be reserved for the initiated [those with understanding, 'sapientes'] are, besides Dionysius, the 'Ad Candidum' of Marius Victorinus, the 'Clavis physicae' of Honorius Augustodunensis, David of Dinant and the Proclus commentary of Berthold of Moosburg: Περὶ φουδεως of "Johannes Scotigena".²

The fact that Cusanus thoroughly worked through at least the first book of 'Periphyseon' is witnessed by his Marginalia in the Codex Additivus 11035 which was originally in his possession and is now in the British Museum. These marginalia clearly came into being in two or even three periods of work.³ The present state of our knowledge of the texts bearing Cusanus' Marginalia (apart

1. *Apol.* h II 20, 21-21,4. — The commentary on the 'Mystica Theologia' of Dionysius in the Eriugena edition published by Floss in PL 122, 267-284 is since then, on compelling internal and external grounds, deemed inauthentic: G. Théry, "Inauthenticité du Commentaire de la Théologie Mystique, attribué à Jean Scot Érigène", in *Supplément de Vie Spirituelle* 8, 1923 [137]-[153]. The same in *Arch. d'histoire doctr. et litt. du Moyen Âge.* 10, 1935/36, 210ff. F.Ruello, *ibid.* 27, 1952, 148f.163f. — For the abbreviations see p. 150-151.

2. *Apol.* 29,15-30,3. See further footnote 5 (the letter to Bernhard von Waging).

3. *Cod. Addit.* 11035 contains fol.gv — 85 v *Johannis Scottigenae Liber physiologiae* (1st book). R.H. Kliblansky identified a part of the marginal

from those in the library at Kues) does not permit us to say with certainty whether Cusanus also knew the other books of 'Periphyseon' directly from Eriugena's texts. Certainly in an indirect way he encountered further sections of Eriugena's work (right up to and including part of the fifth book) in the form of excerpts in the 'Clavis Physicae' of Honorius Augustodunensis (12th century). We have witness of this from the numerous marginalia of Cusanus in the Cod. lat. 6734 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.⁴ Nicholas had recognized the fact that this text was identical in character with that of Eriugena as far as content was concerned, so that he could now include both of them amongst the list of works which it would be meaningful to conceal from the men of small intellect ("viri parvi intellectus"). Cusanus knew furthermore that there were several translations of the Corpus Dionysiacum, amongst which he knew also that of Eriugena.⁵

My reflections on precisely this link between the two thinkers

notes as those of Cusanus (*Deutsche Lit. Zeitung* 56, 1935, 2283). They were transcribed by J. Koch and published in the '*Kritisches Verzeichnis der Londoner Handschriften aus dem Besitz des Nikolaus von Kues*', investigated by the Institut für Cusanus-Forschung under the direction of R. Haubst: *Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanus-Gesellschaft* (MFCG) 3, 1963, 86-100. Henceforth I shall quote the marginalia according to the folio numeration in the work mentioned above. For the marginalia of the X and XI centuries in the same codex see P. Lucentini, "Platonismo Medievale." *Contributi per la Storia dell' Eriugenismo*, Firenze 1980, 113.

4. P. Lucentini edited them loc. cit. (footnote 3) 77-103. Cod. Cus. 202 contains the 'Clavis Physicae', without, however, Cusanus' marginal commentary. The critical text: *Honorius Augustodunensis, Clavis Physicae, a cura di P. Lucentini, Roma 1974 (Temi e Testi 21)*. In addition Cusanus' knowledge of Eriugena's homily on the Johannine Prologue: Cusanus quotes (under Origen's name) a long and characteristically Eriugenian passage from the first chapter of this text in the sermon 'Verbum caro factum est' of the year 1438 (sermo XIX 5, 4-27; h XVI 294). Compare É. Jeauneau, *Homélie sur le Prologue de Jean*, Paris 1969, 54 (Origenes); 146-148 (Cusanus). G.A. Piemonte defends the Cusanean reading of 'obtusus' instead of 'obtusibus' (Jeauneau 204 [I 8]): "*Más allá de la contemplación. Observaciones sobre el capítulo I de la Vox spiritualis de Eriúgena*," in: *Patristica et Mediaevalia IV-V*, 1983/84, 3-22, esp. 14.

5. Compare L. Baur, "*Nicolaus Cusanus und Ps. Dionysius im Lichte der Zitate und Randbemerkungen des Cusanus*," in: *Cusanus-Texte*; III. Marginalien. *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist.-Kl.* 1940/41. 4. Abh. Heidelberg 1941, 10ff. Cusanus attests to his knowledge of different Dionysius translations, e.g. in *De non aliud* 14;30,4: *Alii aliter eius verba latine reddiderunt*. He used frequently the latin translation of his friend Ambrosius Traversari (completed 1436), and he knew at least indirectly, of Johannes Saracenus' translation from the Albertus Magnus Dionysian Commentary, along with the translation of Robert Grosseteste which displays a marked similarity to the Saracenus and Eriugena translations. With the *Eriugena* translation Cusanus came into demonstrable contact with Dionysius' *De Mystica Theologia and De*

do not aim at a comprehensive comparison of thought-structures, but are concentrated on specific questions of content and methodical aspects through which Cusanus is connected with Eriugena's thinking in a way which is thoroughly objective and historically verifiable. My reflections could, of course, prepare the way for a general analysis of a structure-analogy between early mediaeval and early modern thinking in decisive points, since they are aimed at revealing the dialectical movement between tradition and innovation in Cusanus' work by use of an impressive paradigm. If I underline specific "parallels" the intention is not in every case to suggest a direct dependence of Cusanus on Eriugena, a dependence which would have led Cusanus to the insight and to the development of particular conceptions in the sense of a cause and effect relationship with Eriugena: the intention is rather to reflect in particular and in general, on the productive interplay between Cusanus' own intention and the appeal of Eriugena's compelling thought which leads to a felicitous union. It is precisely this which, in a different historical context and despite commitment to the old or the past, produces a new or newly convincing thought constellation capable of coming to life in itself.

Taking into consideration the specific relationship of Cusanus' thought to that of Eriugena which I have already referred to, I do not intend to focus on certain elements which Cusanus 'saw' in Eriugena himself or in the Eriugena he was familiar with through Honorius — elements he was *also* (or primarily) aware of

Coelesti Hierarchia (Cod.Cus. 45 fol. 79-86. 89v — 182 $\bar{\text{P}}$ L 175, 923-1154) through his reading of Periphyseon I, the *Clavis Physicae* of Honorius and Hugh of St. Victor's commentaries on Dionysius' *De Mystica Theologia*. Compare on this point G. Santinello in '*Nicolai de Cusa "Tota pulchra es, amica mea"*', Padova 1959, 12ff. Cusanus' remark about Eriugena in a letter to Bernhard of Waging (9. Sept. 1454; E. Vansteenberghé, *Autour de la docte ignorance*, in: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters XIV*, Münster 1915, 150f): *Puto ex Iohanne Scotigena, qui primo transtulit Dionysium tempore Karoli magni, in libro perifiseas esse abstracta; memor sum me illa ibi ad litteram legisse*. 'Scotigena' [agreeing with the quoted passages in n. 1 and 2 from the *Apologia*] and 'perifiseas' in Clm 19677, fol. 65v — differing from Vansteenberghé, refers not directly to the Dionysius translation, but to a work which appears to have been sent to him by Bernhard; he thanks him in the above referred to passage in the immediately preceding sentence as follows:

'Ago gracias pro muneribus, et maxime pro munusculo precioso, nam complectitur omnia quam breviter.' What sense we should make of 'munusculum preciosum' is not directly clear in the context. The characterisation 'ex Iohanne Scotigena . . . abstracta' and 'illa ibi ad litteram legisse' fits Honorius' '*Clavis Physicae*' most exactly. This is suggested by É. Jeaneau in the discussion during the Eriugena-Colloquium 1985 in Bad Homburg. This would further imply that Cusanus recognised the generally literal correspondence between the '*Clavis*' and '*Periphyseon*'.

through other areas of tradition: through Augustine or Dionysius or through Neoplatonic, above all Proclean, ideas. We can mention in this context amongst other things the notion that recurs in Eriugena *and* Cusanus: God is in himself (An-sich-Sein) not knowable, not conceivable in categories of being (Sein), because he is above the realm of being with its specific categories, and is therefore in this sense not 'privative', but the non-finite nothingness *per excellentiam* of everything: super-esse, superessentialitas, nihil; corresponding to this super-esse ('Über-Sein', transcendent Being) is also the intention to transcend, or to intensify into super-esse the positive divine predicates such as "bonitas" or "veritas", (which would be quite suitable for application to the dimension of being, so that the characteristics just mentioned could be applied to God only in an excessive, incommensurable and absolute sense: "deus plus quam bonitas" etc.,⁶ this brings with it essential modifications of philosophical and theological speech: in accordance with the inconceivable and unspeakable (super omne nomen) character of the highest object, a negative and limiting way of thinking and speaking is required. In this regard, according to the principle "nil de deo proprie posse dici", *metaphor* ('translative', 'per metaphoram') becomes an avenue of meaning (a function disclosive of meaning, eine sinnerschließende Funktion) but remains nevertheless, like the way of negation, in the realm of knowledge which is not genuine (uneigentlich) but provisional.

Besides this common ground in their fundamental thinking which is based on the relatively rich context of tradition there are characteristic conceptions — quite central to Cusanus' thought — which in their content and in their historical origin are best disclosed by the link with Eriugena. Firstly, they differentiate the concept of God as a creator *in* himself and in his relationship to a world constituted *by* him as the development or manifestation of his own self (theophany). Secondly, they thematise the structure of created being and the measure of its knowableness by man; and thirdly, they see God as the attracting 'place of places' that gives rest and initiates the return of reality as a whole to himself as a centre belonging at least to the perspective of our vision. These three clearly distinct aspects follow the basic movement of Eriugena's 'Periphyseon' — his system itself, in other words: 1. the "super-esse" [supra-ontological Being] of the God who has existence in himself; 2. the inner and outward procession or the two-fold unfolding of God and 3. the general and individual "reditus" of the

6. P I 14; 78,12ff.84,2.47;144,8.71;204, 12ff.Cus d.i. I 24; hI 50,8ff. Marginalia to P fol. 25r.29r.33v; to Honorius 78. Compare further footnote 29.

world to the goal seen as salvation, to the original conserving and receiving source of the theophany.

I

1. In the discussion of the question whether categories are valid to describe the essence of God, Eriugena's thesis of the contemporaneous causality (Gleichurprünglichkeit) of being and creating in God appears as an argument for a negative answer to this question. If "esse" were to precede "facere" then the latter would be an "accidens", i.e. something added afterwards to "esse", and thus time, and along with it also differentiating relationality and change, would be posited as constitutive of God. This is contradicted by the principle which determines all category analyses and which such analyses in turn confirm, namely that God is the "principium" that according to his absoluteness is also "sine principio" or "finis sine fine", thus *in-finitus*,⁷ non-finite, unrelated to a beginning *prior* to himself and unrelated to an end coming after him (in the temporal and ontological sense). In the wake of this intensification or negation of concepts which were once fixed but now have any suggestion of category or accident removed from them once and for all, the infinity becomes the "infinitas infinitorum" through the "index" of self-transcendence ("more than").⁸ This "infinitas infinitorum" can be understood in the sense of the "via eminentiae" as the infinite horizon of all that is infinite, or as infinity as such. Starting with the Dionysian idea: "In Him (God) are a 1 1 things [is a 1 1]" or "He himself is [as *essentia omnium*] a 1 1",⁹ because all is *in* him, our gaze moves on to the *contrary* (das Gegensätzliche) and the *contradictory* (das Widersprüchliche): God also contains these in himself so that there can be no opposition to himself either within himself or outside (ambitus omnium quae sunt et quae non sunt etc.). At the same time he resolves into harmonious unity all that is contrary and dissonant in the being of the world which originated out of him. In the context of these ideas,

7. Concerning 'principium sine principio', 'numerus sine numero' as divine predicates: Eriugena PI 11; 58, 22ff.71;204,7.II 21;82,19ff (principium).III 16; 140,23.Praed.II 3,97. Cus. vis.dei 13;106r22ff. princ. 10,18. The transmission of this thought to Cusanus is also conceivably via Eckhart or the Liber XXIV phil. prop.7 (ed. Baeumker 209,19): Deus principium sine principio, processus sine variatione, finis sine fine. For the triad 'principium-medium-finis' compare below p. 146.

8. P I 72; 206,26f. II 28; 136,17f.

9. PI 71;204,29 (Dion.coel.hier.IV 1;PG 3,177D).72;208,19. For this web of ideas which derives from I Cor 15,28 consider the article of K. Kremer, 'Gott — in allem alles, in nichts nichts. Bedeutung und Herkunft dieser Lehre des Nikolaus von Kues', which is equally instructive for the Cusanean sources and their development: MFCG 17, 1986,188ff.

as a continuation of "infinitas infinitorum" we find the sentence: "Est enim ipse similitudo similitudo et dissimilitudo dissimilium, oppositorum oppositio, contrariorum contrarietas." "He is himself the similarity of the similar and the dissimilarity of the dissimilar, the opposition of the opposed and the contrariness of the contrary, and the contradiction of that which is contradictory."¹⁰ Through the introduction of the contrary or the contradictory it is scarcely possible to interpret this sentence in the sense of the "via eminentiae" referred to above — God would then be the most contrary or the most contradictory in himself. Starting with the idea that "God is himself all things", in so far as he is *in* everything (omnia in omnibus), the sentence can be understood as follows: God is the contrary of contraries in so far as he is the *foundation* (Grund, ground) of the individual contrariness of the contraries and in so far as he is the contrary which is at work in every contrary and which gives every contrary its definition. But because nothing can be conceived which is contrary to the universal foundation of contraries and contradictions, that which constitutes their harmony, *he is* — in apparent contradiction to the first aspect — *himself* the active contrary *to everything else*. He thereby of himself negates all contrary being so that he, precisely *as* contrary to the contrary, is himself not affected or defined by this contrary (cui nil oppositum).¹¹ This interpretation is to be taken as a clarification of the concept central to both Eriugena and Cusanus: namely the concept based on Neoplatonic thought that God is, despite or perhaps even precisely because of his being in (In-Sein) in every being, apart from this kind of being, exalted above it (absolutus ab omnibus, exaltatus); God is paradoxically all and nothing at once.¹² In the "nothingness of all" is also implied, however, the thought of absolute "being other" and thus also the thought of being contrary to everything which is in itself contrary. The possible abstractness of this absolute contrast (contrariness) to all that is "finite" is of course limited by the fact of its foundation (as its ground) *in* the contrary. Only the unity of both aspects allows the phenomenon of "being" at work in itself and in the other to appear meaningful. This unity documents a coincidence (Zusammenfall) or a negation of contraries which adds up to a *supra*-contrary absoluteness of the divine principle. In-finity negates together with the finite also the being contrary — and the being other *in* the absolute itself which constitutes the finite. So Eriugena's concept of the absolute unity

10. P I 72; 206,32f. Also for the following: Cus.Marg.ad locum 80r (twice).

11. P I 14; 76,19.

12. For documentation and further explication of this thought see: Werner Beierwaltes, *Denken des Einen. Studien zur neuplatonischen Philosophie und ihrer Wirkungsgeschichte*, Frankfurt 1985.

or simplicity — analogous to the Proclean One — paves the way for Cusanus' name for God: "non aliud".¹³

Cusanus tried to characterize God as the Non-other — the absolute unity without opposition *and* the foundation of all that is "other" — precisely through the formula: "oppositio oppositorum sine oppositione". As with Eriugena the basis of this idea is in-finiteness (*infinitas*) as the cancellation or negation of the finite and thus of the opposition in the divine being itself. This cancellation, immanent to God as very principle, is to be understood also as the coincidence of all opposition in the sense of a unity or equality which excludes any possible real difference as such. This unity is the "complicatio" as presupposition of an explication into the many, the finite, the mutually other and opposite. Under the aspect of the 'being in' (In-Sein) of the principle in all things, and under the aspect of its supra-being (Ueber-Sein) above all things, the formula "oppositio oppositorum sine oppositione" has — again analogously to Eriugena — a double meaning. I have dealt with this theme at length in my article: "Deus Oppositio Oppositorum";¹⁴ the following statements sum up this analysis in regard to the two-fold meaning: "Oppositio oppositorum" emerges primarily as the "supra-categorical difference of the divine origin from everything whose origin is characterized by finiteness, otherness and opposition", or — something which throws light on the same aspect — "Oppositio oppositorum" emerges as the "supra-oppositional (supra omnem oppositionem and therefore sine oppositione) unity of the divine origin with itself";¹⁵ this unity is to be understood as the absolute non-*other* in so far as it is *not* everything that is other (or/and opposite) in the way as *this* other (or/and opposite) is as *itself*, i.e. namely as finite. "Oppositio" formulates here therefore absolute transcendence, negativity and otherness as the opposite to all opposites. "Oppositio oppositorum" reveals itself, secondly, — under the aspect of being-in (In-Sein) as the foundation or *origin* that creatively posits the contrariness of the contrary — as the contrary *in* all contraries or as that which is the prime origin of all that is contrary. The absolute opposition is accordingly the reason that existing things (*Seiendes*), in so far as they are opposed to one another, are what they are. This opposition is opposition at work in all that is opposed (*opposita oppositione opposita*); it is thus at the same time the reason for the distinguishing *self-identity* of everything that exists (*jedes Seiendes*).

13. 'non aliud' as the characterisation of the identity of all the predicates in God: P III 17; 150,19.158,7.

14. *Deus Oppositio Oppositorum* (Cusanus, *De visione dei XIII*), in: Salzburger Jahrbuch für Philosophie 8, 1964, 175-185.

15. W. Beierwaltes, *ibid.* p.181.

den). Here we see also the second aspect of the non-other: it is *not* other than the other, that is nothing other than the other: as its foundation which brings out the non-otherness of existing being (des Seienden) and thus constitutes and conserves the being (Sein) of this *other*. In the other this non-other is precisely this *other* through its *non*-otherness.

"Sine oppositione" again includes both aspects of "oppositio oppositorum": as the supra-oppositional unity or as the *non*-other per se the divine origin can have no opposite to itself on the same level; as the universal foundation it cancels it out by merging it with itself as it were from outside, because it is "all in all" things; and at the same time it negates the opposite *in* the foundation itself, which is itself coincidence or the supra-oppositional absolute. "Sine oppositione" therefore emphasizes both: the transcendence and the immanence of the principle: opposition that contains nothing oppositional distinguishes it from all that is other and makes it capable of playing its role in universal activity and conservation.

There are two particular texts of Cusanus which make both aspects of the formula appear as one thought; as evidence for this I shall quote them to show their mutual coherance: "This coincidence is contradiction without contradiction like an end without an end. And you, Lord, say to me that as otherness in unity is without otherness because it is unity, so contradiction in infinity is without contradiction because it is infinity. Infinity is simplicity itself, contradiction is not without change. But otherness in simplicity is without change, because it (otherness) is simplicity itself. Everything that is said about absolute simplicity coincides because in it having and being are one and the same thing. The opposition of opposites is opposition without opposition because the "finis" of the finite is an end without end. You, God, are therefore the opposition of the opposites because you are infinite. And because you are infinite you are infinity itself. But in infinity the opposition of opposites is without opposition".¹⁶ "We do not understand that something is opposite when it is not opposite through opposition. Opposition is therefore the coincidence and

16. *vis. dei* 13 105v 19-27: Coincidentia autem illa est contradictio sine contradictione, sicut finis sine fine. Et tu mihi dicis, Domine, quod sicut alteritas in unitate est sine alteritate, quia unitas, sic contradictio in infinitate est sine contradictione, quia infinitas. Infinitas est ipsa simplicitas, contradictio sine alteratione non est. Alteritas autem in simplicitate sine alteratione est, quia ipsa simplicitas. Omnia enim quae dicuntur de absoluta simplicitate, coincidunt cum ipsa quia ibi habere est esse. *Oppositio oppositorum est oppositio sine oppositione*, sicut finis finitorum est finis sine fine. Es igitur tu Deus oppositio oppositorum, quia es infinitus. Et quia es infinitus, es ipsa infinitas. In infinitate est oppositio oppositorum sine oppositione.

equality of opposites. God, we say, is the opposition of opposites; he is all in all. And this is no different from when we say he is the comprehensive origin, the absolute coincidence or the infinite equality".¹⁷

As a source of the formulation "oppositorum oppositio" Cusanus names Dionysius,¹⁸ in whose work however the term is not to be found literally but is to be reconstructed out of a variety of elements of thought. This is also suggested by the editors.¹⁹ In the article mentioned above I have drawn attention for the first time to Eriugena as the probable source of the thought and of its formulation. Through one of his marginalia (to 80r) Cusanus drew particular attention to the corresponding passage in the first book of 'Periphyseon' (I 206, 33) and in the 'Clavis physicae' he was able to read the passage again.²⁰

2. Another element essential for Cusanus' concept of God is intensely related to Eriugena: the characteristic of the God-creator that he *creates himself* and that this creation of himself is identical with his awareness or creative vision of himself (Sich-selbst-[Er]-Sehen).

17. *compl. theol.* 13; Par. II b 100r 16-20: Nec concipimus aliqua esse opposita, nisi sint oppositione opposita. Oppositio igitur est oppositorum coincidentia et aequalitas. Deum esse dicimus oppositorum oppositionem, qui est omnia in omnibus. Et non est hoc aliud nisi ipsum dicere principium complicativum, coincidentiam absolutam seu infinitam aequalitatem esse. For the formula compare further *Apol.* 15,15f. non aliud 19;h XIII 47,9f: Deum oppositorum vidit (sc. Dionysius theologicus) oppositionem sine oppositione. Oppositioni enim ante opposita nihil opponitur. — For the *type* of formulation compare for example *de mente* IV 74,20; h V 114: complicationum complicatio (deus). *vis.dei* 2, 100r 37-39: sunt enim in absoluto visu omnes contractionum modi videndi incontracte. omnis enim contractio est incontractibilis in absoluto, quia absoluta visio est contractio contractionum. — The marginalia to Proclus' *Parmenides Commentary* and the opusculum '*De Principio*', philosophically a particularly rich fruit of Cusanus' intensive Proclus reception, spring from an analogous chain of thought about the concept of opposition and its pre-oppositional ground (Grund): unum omnium simpliciter (causa), quod autem omnium opposicionum causa ipsum ad nichil opponitur (Cod.Cus.186, fol.103r to Procl. in Parm.1077 Cousin). In omni oppositione necessarium est unum exaltatum esse ab ambobus oppositis (fol.114r, 1123 Cousin). Oportet ante omnem opposicionem esse unum (fol.115r, 1127). princ.23 (ipsum ante).26.34.

18. In the passage noted in footnote 17 in the *Apologia* and *non aliud*.

19. Klibansky und Wilpert ad loc. Also L. Baur, *Nicolaus Cusanus und Pseudo-Dionysius im Lichte der Zitate und Randbemerkungen des Cusanus*. (compare Footnote 5) 51f.

20. fol.27r, l.2 of the Cod.Par.Lat.6734.

a) The formula: "Deus se ipsum fecit" or "Deus a se ipso creatur"²¹ is by no means intended to signify a distinction between 'before' and 'after' in God, a distinction between 'creating' and the being that follows from it; or a distinction in being which *through creation* of the already existing being (seienden Seins) is now added to this as an accident; but rather a dynamic unity, 'in itself' a timeless process unfolding itself into its own unity. The model of the "causa efficiens — effectum" in the original Aristotelian sense is not applicable here. *Absolute* causality is rather a simultaneous act that is unified in itself and that as 'subject' already has its 'object' or result in itself; absolute creation (Schaffen) is accordingly the original creation (Er-schaffen) of the Absolute itself — in the sense of a unity of *subjective* genitive and *objective* genitive; or: the absolute foundation (gröund) is nothing other than the foundation (gröund) of itself. Creation of itself or the foundation of itself implies for Eriugena from a trinitarian point of view: 'Self' as "Filius", "Verbum", "Sapientia" and primordial causes, so that this apparent self-differentiation can only be thought of as the unfolding of the remaining unity. To this can be applied the proposition of the identity of creator and creature²² primarily as the expression of a process that is independent of time and immanent to the principle itself. This inner going forth within itself, the transition *out* of its own "super-esse" or nothingness *into* its own being, the self-negation of the nothingness into its own affirmation, the self-determining of its own 'previous' (vorgängig) in-determination as execution and perfection of true infiniteness: this creative act of God's self-constitution is the ontological presupposition of his 'outward' creative unfolding or, in other words, the implicative foundation of theophany.

Cusanus incorporated this notion of absolute creation in his conception of divine unity or the coincidence of the different and the opposite in the absolute. 'Self-creation' denies the distinction (Differenz) between creative being and its result just as it denies the distance of possibility and actuality in an absolute "actualized-possibility" (possest) and thus points, positively stated, to the "coincidentia ipsius creare cum creari in deo" or to the coincidence of the "posse fieri" and the "posse facere" in God.²³ Precisely the identity of creating [Schaffen] and seeing [Sehen] (which is

21. For the complex meaning of the formula in Eriugena's work see my analysis in 'Denken des Einen' 353ff. For the passage referred to in footnote 45 see further: P 13; 66, 15 ff. III 23; 186,11ff. A possible influence of Eriugena's concept: Richard of St. Victor, Benjamin major IV 18; PL 196,158 C (on the Trinity): nunquid eadem ipsa gignit seipsam, et gignitur a seipsa?

22. P III 17; 160,37f.

23. *vis.* 12; 105r10.16. 15; 106v34. Cusanus records the concrete con-

soon to be explained more in detail) shows that self-creation is also for Cusanus primarily a process which is immanent to the principle: the realisation of *absolute* causality which *has* woven all *possible* difference into itself; but this latter forms the foundation of a creative self-communication of God outwardly: “nec est aliud creare pariter et creari quam esse tuum omnibus communicare, ut sis omnia in omnibus et ab omnibus tamen maneat absolutus”.²⁴ The act of absolute self-constitution is for Cusanus also accessible from the concept of the *Non-other* — as the enigma of God. The proposition: “The *Non-other* is nothing other than the *Non-other*”²⁵ is in Cusanus’ sense the clearest sign of the fact that the *Non-other* “defines” itself. If therefore the *Non-other* is to be thought of as the ‘name’ or enigma for the divine principle and on the other hand ‘definition’ is not primarily thought of as the formal logical operation but as the dynamic structure of the principle itself, then the *Non-other* is the *absolute definition of itself* or self-definition in an ‘ontological’ sense. Definition as absolute act does not simply note what already is, but constitutes or creates itself. Since God’s vision of himself is identical with “constituere” and “definire” (hoc videre definire est), the thought of the *Non-other* as self-definition refers to the inner creative self-unfolding of God. The ultimate perfecting [end vollendende Ende] of this unfolding is the trinity as the non aliud that repeats itself three times — an index of the “divina foecunditas”: “When the first principle designated as the *Non-other* defines itself, the *Non-other* arises in this defining movement out of the *Non-other*: from the [first] *Non-other* and the *Non-other* which derives [from it] the definition in the [third] *Non-other* is brought to a conclusion.”²⁶ Self-definition as self-creation²⁷ makes the *Non-other* in itself into a presupposition of a definition of the other: in defining itself, at the same

nection between his thought and that of Eriugena in the emphasis or marginalia to P I 20r 79r (quomodo deus dicitur fieri) on the identity of *facere* and *esse* dei. In Honorius’ *Clavis* 156,19 he could draw the same concept out of the III. book of *Periphyseon*, for 171,8f he clarified it through a gloss reading (Marg.111 in Lucentiui, *Platonismo* 107). Here, further, Cusanus could recognise in Eriugena’s thoughts concerning ‘*oppositio*’, the identity of rest and motion in the Absolute (Footnote. 59), of origin and goal (section III), his own principle of coincidence and the conception of an absolute unity, as the coincidence *above* the oppositions.

24. *vis.* 12; 105r 14f.23: absolute superexaltatus. Compare footnote. 35 and 83.

25. *non aliud* 1; 4,29f. 5; 12,18ff. 13,15.

26. *Videre-definire: non aliud* 23; 54,27. *Ibid.* 5;13,17-20: Quando enim primum principium ipsum se definit per ‘non aliud’ significatum, in eo definitivo motu de non alio non aliud oritur atque de non alio et non alio exorto in non alio concluditur definitio.

27. *non aliud* 23; 54, 25-28.

time it defines everything else or itself *in* or *as* other. The non-otherness appearing in the individual is the creative and constitutive foundation of *its* existence and identity.²⁸ Cusanus' concept of absolute self-definition has in common with Eriugena the idea of God creating himself but cannot simply be numbered amongst the analogies between Eriugena and Cusanus arising out of the concept of creative vision (Sehen): to speak of a *de*-finition of God which both relates to himself and is made by himself would for Eriugena necessarily result, 'by definition', in conflict with God's *in*-finity.

With regard to the subject under discussion, namely that of the self-creation and of God's creation as it unfolds itself "outwardly", the following may be said about Cusanus: there is a tendency in the treatise "De visione dei" to raise God above the coincidence of all thinkable opposites in him in order to highlight his supra-oppositionality, his pure and absolute infinity. Basically even the concept of "creator" would also have to be sacrificed to this intention — "non es igitur creator, sed plus quam creator"²⁹ — since it could suggest the direct relationship to the finite. This seeming 'abstractness' of God — his supra-oppositionality — is modified through the immanence aspect of the names for God: "idem", "non-aliud" and "posse ipsum": absoluteness and creative activity in the "Other" remain in dialectical balance.

b. The specific characterizing of the divine creation already referred to is now to be more accurately analysed for both thinkers.

Taking up an old tradition³⁰ and intensifying it, Eriugena equates the divine creation with vision (*videre, visio*): creation [*Schaffen, Er-Schaffen*] through or as vision (*Seeing, Sehen*). Vision does not therefore mean receiving, passively becoming aware of, grasping, discovering, observing or also seeing into (*speculari, er-spähen*), but is to be understood as an act which constitutes, which grounds and produces being: vision [*Sehen*] as an active intuition (*Er-Sehen*) of being. In the intuition (*Er-Sehen*) vision (*Sehen*) remains itself, i.e. pure activity in which the intuited (*das Ersehene*) comes to the intuition *and* to itself and thus becomes a unity grounding itself and at the same time being an object for itself. This unity, as a divine act, is firstly (immanent to the act) *vision of itself* (*Sehen seiner selbst*) or, as grounding intuition (*als gründendes Er-Sehen*), identical with the process of *creating itself* (*Sich-selbst-Schaffen*) in its word, in its wis-

28. P II 28; 142,30ff.

29. *vis.* 12, 105r24.

30. See the reference to this tradition in the *Visio Absoluta* chapter in my book *Identität und Differenz* 146ff, 163f and the supplementary remarks to the concept 'deus videns' below footnote 52.

dom, in its primordial causes. Also that which later appears as “temporalis conditio”³¹ “outside” of the creative going forth which is immanent to the principle has its ground and origin in precisely this self-intuition (Selbst-Er-Sehen) of God. Presupposing the unity which is not characterized by ‘before’ and ‘after’ or by a distance like that between cause and effect, and presupposing a unity which therefore consists of a timeless process, it seems legitimate, even taking into consideration the thought of the self-founding intuition, to think of the creator and the creature as the *identity* already mentioned above: “proinde non duo a seipsis distantia debemus intelligere Deum et creaturam, sed unum et id ipsum”.³² In the vision of itself which grounds its own being the creator sees and wills “simul et semel” or “semper”, at one and the same time, all that may be created or that is to be created.³³ The clearly perceivable tendency of Eriugena to extend the inner divine identity of creator and creature to an identity or at least the most intense unity of creator and his theophany (in creatura mirabili et ineffabili modo creatur seipsum manifestans, invisibilis visibilem se faciens. . .),³⁴ has its immediate counterpoint in the affirmation of absolute transcendence.³⁵ This fact

31. P III 17;158,15.

32. *ibid.* 160,37f. The notion of an identity between Creator and created may be best analysed in terms of the transcendence — immanence issue. Apart from the trinitarian internal identity it means that after the processio ad extra there is no crude pantheistic identity of the created (the world) with its creative ground concerning its essence. This formulation of the issue has its factual analogy in Cusanus in whom the difference of these areas is consciously maintained. See for example: *dat. patr. lum.* 2;97;h IV 72: videtur igitur quod idem ipsum sit deus et creatura, secundum modum datoris deus, secundum modum dati creatura. *Apologia* h I 16,10ff.17,16ff.25,8ff: Cusanus’ apologetic, within which he includes Eckhart, against the charge of Pantheism (creaturam cum creatore coincidere). The subtly conceived identity formula should be considered in conjunction with the difference formula, as in for example *De Principio* 38,26-28, where the Proclean thought concerning the transcendence of the One is developed . . . in omnibus per ipsum constitutis creator non est idem cum sua creatura, sicut nec causa cum causato. While immanent in the created, the creative principle remains transcendent itself: *non aliud*.

33. P III 17;156,12ff. 158,6. 160.23ff.

34. *ibid.* 162,2-4.

35. *superesse*, *superessentialis*, *superessentialitas* as often recurring designations of the transcendent God (e.g. PI 2; 38,27), to which corresponds equally the immanent effect. PII 23; 108,31: Deus absolutus ab omnibus, P III 20;172, 13f: dum in omnibus fit, super omnia esse non desinit. 174,11ff: super omnia *and* omnia in omnibus. V 38;994 B: totus enim Deus est totus ubique, totus super omne, quod dicitur et intelligitur, exaltatus. Despite the creative emergence: manet in seipso (Ier.I 356f) ἐπέκεινα: P III 16; 140,26 . . . On ‘nihil per excellentiam sive infinitatem’ see W.Beierwaltes, *Denken des Einen* 341ff.

remains neglected in the notoriously recurring pantheism verdict.

The idea sketched above receives frequent corroboration in Eriugena's 'Periphyseon': the creative act of the divine self-vision is, as we said, to be thought of as a *unity*: "divina . . . visio simplex est et una et uniformis". This one vision compels (cogit) all that it sees or intuits (sieht oder er-sieht) together into unity and identity (unum et id ipsum).³⁶ Thus the distinction between will and its "execution" is not thinkable; to want the will or various acts of will directed towards that which is to be created, to see them and to realize them is to be thought of as *one* act in the sense of absolute causality: "voluntas visio eius est et visio voluntas".³⁷ This idea of identity replaces the alternative that God either sees himself or the creature.³⁸ In himself he sees in the vision of what is to be created only himself, but it is just as true that he sees in a vision or intuition of himself all "creanda" or "facienda". Thus God is in this dynamic relationality "totus in toto", "factor" and "factus" or "factura", "videns" and "visus" at the same time.³⁹ Since vision is a vision which constitutes being, i.e. is the foundation of God's own being (as the trinitarian act), *being is immediately vision* and, vice versa, such vision is being (non aliud est ei esse et aliud videre).⁴⁰ Vision and being are as one act conscious of itself and willing through itself and willed as act — this vision and being are *pure activity*, or: the pure activity (Er-wirken) of being *is* its vision: "ipsius visio ipsius (est) operatio. Videt enim operando et videndo operatur".⁴¹ This unity of active vision, of intuited being which also has a vision of itself, identifies all that one could think of as being 'in him' with his inalienable identity of active-being: as the whole and as the one he *is vision* (Visio). Thus, however, that which is created in time and space through and in his vision is that which it is. To say it outright: the world *is* God's *vision*.

In this notion of the self-constituting vision of God — which is central for Eriugena's thinking — is contained also (at least in broad outline and developed above all in the "De visione dei") Cusanus' thought of a "*visio absoluta*". His knowledge of the first book of 'Periphyseon' and of the passages from later books re-

36. P III 17;150, 16.21.

37. *ibid.* 154,5. 150,19f: Voluntas . . . dei factum eius est . . . 150, 29f. 152,24-26; Deus itaque semper voluntates suas habuit easque semper vidit . . . Et habuit et vidit.

38. 156, 20-22.

39. 158, 35f. 156,37.

40. 158, 7. III 28; 220, 11f: visio dei totius universitatis est conditio. Non enim aliud est ei videre et aliud facere.

41. P III 7. 160,28f.III 28; 220,12f: visio illius voluntas eius est et voluntas operatio.

ceived through Honorius, as also his attention to these as documented in the marginalia, give also an historical assurance of the connection of Cusanus with this source which was a continual inspiration.

In my book *Identität und Differenz* I have given an extensive account of the constellation of ideas — in itself very differentiated — of Cusanus' "visio absoluta" highlighting Neoplatonic philosophical ideas and indicating the development of this thought right on into German Idealism.⁴² Thus in this context I need only to underline in a schematic way those basic notions which are especially close to Eriugena even in their formulation.

Cusanus identifies, analogously with Eriugena, God's creation with his vision or creative vision of himself, but he identifies both together with his being or his essence (*videre tuum est creare tuum; creare tuum est esse tuum; visio (or visus) tua, quae est essentia tua*).⁴³ Vision is thus the same as a "vis entificativa"⁴⁴; the force in it that grounds it in being is characterized not only by "facere" and "creare" but also by "constituere", "causare", "essentiare", "mensurare" and "definire" (in the sense of the absolute act of self-definition described above, which implies a characteristic or determination of everything else). Stimulated by other sources as well Cusanus takes up into a theory of trinitarian self-reflection the identification — already to be found in Eriugena — of creative vision with thinking (*intelligere, intellectus, cognoscere, nosse se ipsum, divina notio, qua semetipsum deus intelligit*),⁴⁵ with the utterance of the WORD in the trinitarian opening of itself and with the "vision" of the will. These are aspects of the absolute concept (*conceptus absolutus*) which shows its absoluteness precisely as the concept of itself (*conceptus sui ipsius*).⁴⁶ In this one

42. p. 144-175.

43. *vis.* 12; 105r6ff. 14. For Eriugena compare footnotes 39 and 40. P IV 9; 778 D: (*sapientia creatrix*) omnia, quae in ea facta sunt, priusquam fierent, vidit, ipsaque visio eorum . . . vera et incommutabilis aeternaque essentia est. Cus. Marg. to P I 72, fol.80v: *facere et esse dei sunt idem.*

44. *de mente* 99,7; h V 150, in contrast to the *vis assimilativa* of the human intellectual vision.

45. For the proof of this assertion see W. Beierwaltes *Denken des Einen* 357, especially footnote 57ff. Further P IV 9; 779 A: *ipsa notitia sapientiae creatricis prima causalisque totius creaturae essentia recte intelligitur esse.* II 20; 76,21 f: *intellectus enim omnium in deo essentia omnium est.* 76,29f.III 12; 118,17f: *ipse est enim intellectus omnium, immo omnia.praed.* II 2, 49f: *summus . . . ille intellectus in quo sunt universa-immo ipse est universa.*

46. *vis.* 10; 104r 8ff. *non aliud* 20; 49,20f. *aeq.Par.II a 19r12.vis.12; 104v42: videre tuum est scire.* *compl.theol.* 14; *Par. II b 100r45ff*, a passage where all the identification aspects of *videre* and *visio* are combined. W. Beierwaltes, *Identität und Differenz* 150f.

(trinitarian) act the "subject" of vision — the "videns" and the "visibile" (thinkable and conceivable) — and the activity of the subject — "videre" — are distinguished from one another but are to be thought of as a relationality which is one in itself or as a dynamic unity consisting of the self-creative, intuiting concept. Just as "creare" and "creari" belong closely together (*creari in creare*), so too in this context the idea of coincidence is characteristic.⁴⁷ The cancellation of difference by a three-fold "trinitarian" "non-aliud" points to precisely this unity of the vision.⁴⁸ It is a "visio absoluta",⁴⁹ in contrast to a "visus contractus".⁵⁰ precisely in that it is free of determined modes of vision for which receptivity, relationship to specific objects and a distinction from the object are characteristic. Absolute vision *is* through the cancellation of all inner distance in the having-constituted of the other; it *is* through the founding (grounding) and at the same time internalization in himself of *all* that is thinkable. This act is also for Cusanus the presupposition of a "creatio ad extra": the trinitarian self-intuition (Sich — selbst Er-Sehen) in the sense of a "visio absoluta" is at the same time the constituting and measuring foundation, the origin characterizing the being of the world by vision: "visione tua sunt (creaturae)", or: "esse creaturae est videre tuum pariter et videri", "the being of created reality is your vision and likewise your being seen".⁵¹ — The latter is understood as divine *and* as creaturely act, in so far as the being of man consists in the vision of God (objective genitive); in it he realizes his being-seen-by-God.

c) Corresponding to the inner and outer aspect of the concept of creation both in Eriugena and Cusanus is the differentiating predication of God as "deus videns" (θεωρῶν) and "deus currens" (θέων). The idea derives from a Platonic and Stoic etymologizing which in Greek-Christian late antiquity and in the Middle Ages remained part of a widely influential tradition.⁵²

47. *vis.* 12; 105r7f. *compl.theol.* 14; 100v10f.

48. *non aliud* 23; 54,11ff.

49. Compare *Identität und Differenz* 147ff and *sermo* 263,8; Cod.Vat. Lat.1245,fol.217ra: *visus intellectualis ab ipsa absoluta visione habet esse suum.* The constitutive aspect in *vis.*10; 104r2: *visione tua sunt (creaturae).*

50. *vis.* 2; 99v35f.

51. *vis.* 10; 104r 2f. *compl.theol.*a.a.O.100r45.

52. To the references in *Identität und Differenz* 146 footnote 2 and 3, to the self related *and* constitutive seeing of God, I shall add some examples from the Greek tradition. *Xenophanes* B 24 (of the θεός οὐλος ὄρᾶ, οὐλος δὲ νοεῖ, οὐλος δὲ τ' ἀκούει. This sentence is reflected again in *Ireneaus, adv.haer.* II 15,3: *omnium Pater . . . totus auditus et totus oculus.* II 16,4: *totus visio* (p.282 and 285 Harvey). In this field of thought we also have *Plinius nat.hist.* II 5,14 who, however, sensualises the intelligible see-

Complementary to this creative vision in God himself is his *movement in everything* (all), a movement which constitutes being: "He himself goes into everything and in no way stands still but fulfills everything through his course according to Psalm 145,15: his word runs swiftly."⁵³ This movement or 'coursing' of the divine word should — and this is Eriugena's intention — be thought of as identical with the unfolding of his inner vision; both aspects

ing or observation of God as demonstrated in late Antiquity and in the Christian tradition. This means that pure thought as a basic divine characteristic is not even allowed: *Deus totus est sensus, totus visus, totus auditus, totus animae, totus animi, totus sui.* — The constitutive (creative) function of being and thought of the Demiurge is equated with his self vision by *Proclus*: θεωρεῖ γὰρ ἑαυτὸν, ὥστε αὐτὸς αὐτὸν θεωρῶν καὶ γεννῶν ἅμα καὶ τὰ εἶδη τῶν φαινομένων ἀυλότερα καὶ ἀκριβέστερα ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ ὑφίστησι (*in Parmenidem.* 790,1-4). *Ibid.* 790,16-18: εἶδος ἑαυτὸ αἴτιον ὄν, οἶδε καὶ ὄν ἐστιν αἴτιον, ὥστε περιέξει κάκεινα ἃ γινώσκει. 791.21: τῷ νοεῖν ἑαυτὸν ποιητῆς ἔσται πάντων. Compare also in *Tim.* I 421,27ff-For the *christian* tradition, in addition: *Bernhard of Clairvaux, de consideratione* V 4,10: *Deus totus est oculus* (PL 182, 794A). *Hugo of St. Victor, Expos. in hier.coel.S.Dion.* III; PL 175,976 C/D: *Quid est videre eius (scil.Dei), nisi esse eius? Et hoc quale est? Si autem currentem intelligis, quia penetrat omnia, et apprehendit, et continet omne quod est, currere illi hoc stare est.* *Joh. Duns Scotus, de primo principio* IV 10, 91 (edited by W. Kluxen: "*Abhandlung über das erste Prinzip*", Darmstadt 1974,124): *tu es comprehensio tui ipsius. Tu visio tui clara et dilectio iucundissima.* *Ficino, Plat.Theol.*I 6;I 70 (Marcel): *deus . . . visus seipso lucens . . . sui ipsius visio.* Under 'Orphic' influence: *deus as oculus infinitus* (*ibid.* II 10;I 104). *Franz von Baader* refers in *Bemerkungen über einige antireligiöse Philosopheme unserer Zeit* (1824, see *Sämtliche Werke, Erste Hauptabt.* 2.vol. [Leipzig 1851] 455) to the passage quoted in *Identität und Differenz* 146,n.2 from Eckhart: . . . *mîn ouge und gotes ouge daz ist éin ouge und éin gesicht* (*Pred.*12,DW I 201,5ff Quint). Through Baader's influence: Hegel in his *Vorlesungen zur Philosophie der Religion (Identität und Differenz* 171, footnote 105). In addition to the passages cited there I add *F.C. Oetinger, Sämtliche Schriften* 2.Abt.vol. V 285 (Stuttgart 1863): . . . "wenn die vier auserlesensten Menschen [vier lebendige Gestalten . . . Off.4,6] inwendig und auswendig voller Augen auch in ihrem begreiflichen Wesen waren, so muss vielmehr der allerheiligste Gott in seinem Wesen ein lauterer Sehen seiner selbst, ein ewiges lauterer Auge und Gesicht sein " . . . "lauter Gesicht . . . lauter Gedanke . . ." "In Gott ist nichts, das sich nicht selbst sieht, selbst empfindet, nichts, das nicht zugleich der Spiegel seiner selbst sei" (*ibid.* 287 from the *Anmerkungen von der Central-Schau*). For *Eriugena* compare, apart from Sheldon-Williams' remarks in PI 228, n.62,: P. Lucentini in his review of this edition (*Studi Medievali* 3a Serie XVII 1, 1976, 414. I have further developed my own comments to this metaphysical-theological topos of the self vision as a continuationis continuatio in note 21 to my publication *VISIO FACIALIS-Sehen ins Angesicht. Zur Coincidenz des endlichen und unendlichen Blicks bei Cusanus*, in: *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist.Kl., Jg.* 1988, H.1, München 1988.

53. PI 12; 60,23-25.31f: *non enim aliud est deo currere per omnia quam videre omnia, sed sicut videndo ita et currendo fiunt omnia.*

— inner vision and external coursing as “diffusio” or “extensio” giving the world its foundation — represent the one act of “creatio”.⁵⁴ The manifold identifications of vision (with creating, acting, thinking, willing, etc.) make the ‘coursing’ (Laufen, literally: running) appear as a vision which has an outward effect pervading everything with constitutive activity.⁵⁵ In this dynamic act which is directly bound up with vision, God, in his ‘dis-cursive’ vision, is seen as the *universally* embracing foundation: “ambitus omnium”.⁵⁶

Cusanus was familiar with the etymologizing interpretation from his reading of Eriugena and from Albertus’ commentary on “De divinis nominibus”;⁵⁷ he used both aspects frequently to describe both the divine fundamental acts — quite consistently with the ideas sketched by Eriugena.⁵⁸ Corresponding to these ideas is the connection Cusanus sets up between “status” and “motus” as predicates which are in themselves opposites but which with regard to God nevertheless belong together. Both categories were discussed in Plato’s “Sophistes” and “Parmenides” as determinations of being or as possible statements about the One or the existing One and were passed on via Proclus’ “Parmenides” — commentary to Dionysius who united them in the form of ‘identity’ and ‘difference’ as divine predicates. On the basis of this thought-constellation Eriugena develops — analogously to the ‘constant’ *videre* and the moved and dynamic ‘discursive’ *currere* — the unity of both aspects as the fundamental characteristic of God: God is both constant stance in himself and at the same time a dynamic going out of himself, in himself a ‘constant movement’ and a ‘dynamic stance’ in one: “motus stabilis et status mobilis”. “He stands within himself unmoveable and never abandons the constancy which belongs to his essence; but he moves dynamically

54. P III 9;80,15ff.37f.

55. Compare footnote 53.

56. For example PI 72; 206,29.P III 17;152,34f: Omnium quippe principium et medium et finis est et ambitus et cursus et recursus. E. Jeuneau, *Hom.* p.238,3 refers to Dionysius as the source. In my opinion Proclus seems to be Dionysius’ direct model for example in *Parm.* 1098,32;1118,22ff. in *Alc.*38,5. Cosmologically important also in *Tim.*I 160,9; 247,30. περιοχή as terminus for the enclosure of the (finite) caused in the divine cause: *Elem.theol.*152;134,11 Dodds. Earliest evidence: Anaximenes B 2 (I 95,19 Diels) und A 15 (I 85,18: Aristoteles). *Plat.Tim.* 31 a 4; 33b 3f: of the encompassing of the uranos and the World Soul.

57. See P. Wilpert’s note to *non aliud* 23; 54, 12 ff. Marg. zu Eriugena PI fol.18v: *currere et videre in deo idem.*19r: *quomodo dicitur deus currens.* Marg.Hon.9;10.

58. *de deo abscondito, Opuscula* h IV 14, 1ff *quaer.deum*, *ibid.*19,8ff 31,10f: *deus speculatio et cursus, qui omnia videt, in omnibus est, per omnia discurrit. non aliud* 23; 54,12ff. *possesit* 21,3ff. *sermo* XX 9,15;h XVI 307.

through everything to give being to whatever has its essential subsistence from him."⁵⁹

Cusanus noted this link both in Eriugena and also in Dionysius and Proclus and saw it as a paradigm of the coincidence of opposites in God:⁶⁰ "Infinite movement coincides in the primary being with rest" (quiesstatus). The most rapid and extreme movement appears even to sense experience as rest or as something constant; looked at metaphysically, both, as a unity, are the realization of the highest being and the highest concept.⁶¹ Or: the experience of the "icona dei" (in "De visione dei") which constantly looks at the self-moving observer and which, so to speak, remaining fixed in *one* place, goes with the observer, is indicative of this coincidence: that God sees all things and each individual thing at once, that he moves himself with the things that move themselves and that he stands constant with the things that remain constant: "You stand and move simultaneously, you proceed forth and you rest in yourself at one and the same time."⁶² An adequate understanding of the coincidence principle indeed places the unity of God as a pure in-finite absolute or absolute infinity even *above* these opposites for which "statio" and "motus" serve as a paradigm without God being denied the fundamental characteristic of "being in himself" ["in se esse"] (or stare in se ipso) and of the creative activity which has an effect outside himself. "*Ultra coincidentiam contra-*

59. This corresponds to Eriugena's literal translation of Dionysius' σταθερὰ πρόδος καὶ γόνιμος στάσις (PG 3,916 D): stateralis processio et fertilis status (PL 122,1163,1f), quoted in PI 77; 220,4. The idea of the coincidence of both the categories rest and motion in God (see also footnote 23) and thereby the notion of an absolute relationality, is also an indication of Eriugena's introduction and development of the 'Rehabilitierung der Relation'. Kurt Flasch has shown this to be a Eriugenian correction of the aristotelian doctrine of the categories: "*Zur Rehabilitation der Relation. Die Theorie der Beziehung bei Johannes Eriugena*", in "Philosophie als Beziehungswissenschaft", Festschrift für Julius Schaaf, edited by W.F. Niebel and D.Leisegang, Frankfurt 1971,5-25. As the ensuing considerations show, and most importantly as the Cusanean trinitarian speculation, his theory of transcendence and immanence, and his concept of the universe reveal, Cusanus erects in its basic elements a theory of relations in a context determined, historically as well as in respect of the subject matter, by Eriugena.

60. Marg. to PI fol.18v;25v;40v;84v.vis.3;100r5; movere est stare et currere est quiescere — in the sense of a 'theologia in circulo posita'.9;103r40: stas simul et moveris, progredieris simul et quiescis. The empirically accessible phenomenon of apparent rest (motionlessness) in a very quickly spinning top can be interpreted as an aenigma for the coincidence of motion and rest in the Absolute: *possest* 18,3ff.

61. *coni.* I 6; 23,10f,h III 30. d.i. I 23;47,16: quies maxima, in qua omnis motus quies est. II 10;99,1: absolutus motus est quies et Deus.

62. *vis.*9; 103r40 (compare footnote 60) 43ff.

dictoriorum"⁶³ gives the stimulus to see the "coincidentia" not as a form produced by the differentiating function of the intellect but to think of it as an index of the most intense unity, which *in* the coincidental differentiation transcends this differentiation in favour of an "absolute concept" of itself. The "truth of the coincidence of opposites and contradictions in the absolute consists precisely in *transcending* these.

II

1. The notion of *theophany* shows more clearly in Eriugena than Cusanus⁶⁴ the *transition* from a reflection on the inner motion of the Creator to a reflection on his effect on the outside world and thereby to a reflection on the structure of the world constituted by him. Theophany is therefore to be seen as the active going forth *and* as a result.

For Eriugena this concept which derives above all from Dionysius and Maximus Confessor has become the centre of his conception of reality. It is referred to by the terms "theophania", "divina" or "dei apparitio", "dei illuminatio" or "manifestatio".⁶⁵ It signalizes for Eriugena this fundamental principle: Being (das Seiende)

63. *vis.* 9; 103v19.

64. I maintain this point because for Eriugena 'Theophany' is apparently an inner trinitarian process — the being-created of the self creating God in the Son as the second 'natura', which is created and simultaneously creates. Creatur enim [divina natura] a se ipsa in primordialibus causis, ac per hoc se ipsam creat, hoc est, in suis theophanis incipit [sic!] apparere, ex occultissimis naturae suae sinibus volens emergere, in quibus et sibi ipsi incognita, hoc est, in nullo se cognoscit, quia infinita est . . . : P III 23;186,11-15 (III 18;166,28: in suis theophaniis incipiens apparere). This inner trinitarian appearing to himself (being created and becoming self-transparent) is worthy of comparison with the analysis of the trinitarian self revelation in Marius Victorinus. This is the event in the Son of the self knowledge of the Father occurs as manifestatio, apparentia or efulgentia of the pre-conceptual and thus hidden (occultus) Non Being of the First: Adv. Arium I 52ff (Henry-Hadot). For an interpretation of this text see W. Beierwaltes, *Identität und Differenz* 65 ff. For the probable dependence of Eriugena upon Marius Victorinus see G. Piemonte, *L'expression 'quae sunt et quae non sunt': Jean Scot et Marius Victorinus*, in: Jean Scot Écrivain, éd. G.-H. Allard, Montréal-Paris 1986, 81ff and now especially: *Vita in omnia pervenit. El vitalismo eriugeniano y la influencia de Mario Victorino*, Ediciones Patristica et Mediaevalia, Buenos Aires 1988.

65. I have given an extensive account of this problem area in: *Negati Affirmatio. Welt als Metapher. Zur Grundlegung einer mittelalterlichen Aesthetik durch Johannes Scotus Eriugena*, in *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 83, 1976, 237-265, in particular 241ff, for the historical presuppositions of the concept among others see p.249 (English version: *Dionysius I*, 1977, 127-159). In addition: the difference between the super cosmic (hidden) God (θεός ἀφανής) and the appearance of God in or as cosmos: θεός ἐμφανής in Proclus *in Tim.* III 204,5ff (Syrian!).

as a whole is theophany. A sentence *explaining* the concept of theophany: "Being as a whole is the appearance (apparition) of God, as of him who does not himself appear", understands both God *and* appearance emphatically: firstly, it means being, in which God *appears* or *shows* himself, in which however he *is* not as he is *in himself*, secondly, being in which or *as* which God appears, without whose going forth out of himself into an other *nothing*, i.e. only he himself would be. Eriugena develops the idea as the dialectical relationship of 'being hidden' (Verborgen-Sein, occultum) and appearance (apparitio, manifestatio), [being hidden and appearing], the becoming accessible to what is in itself inaccessible, as the active mediation of what in itself cannot be mediated, as the comprehensible and visible illumination (Licht-Sein) of the darkness which is in itself beyond all brightness (a blinding light which does not open itself to conceptual thought), as the going forth (progressio, processio) of the absolute unity and the radical similarity into the disparate manifoldness of being and into the dissimilarity of being as opposed to other being and by comparison with its origin.⁶⁶

The theophanic structure of the world as appearance of that which in itself does not appear gives rise to the possibility of going back in thought to the implied involvement (in the appearance) of that which does not appear, to grasp the world as an image of the fundamental image (Ur-Bild) or as a divine metaphor (metaphora divina), to comprehend the incomprehensible and to name the unnameable *in* or *as* appearance. The proviso that the divine principle in itself is beyond the reach of our concepts and language remains here intact and is never at risk. Theophany is, in Platonic terms, the 'second sailing' (deuteros plous), which is the only way in which we succeed in knowing anything, even if this knowledge is provisional and reveals the hidden totality only fragmentarily and in enigmatic images. The appearance of God *as* world and, more exactly still, in the Sacred Scripture, challenges us to translate it and interpret it in its relationship to its foundation in different ways.

The conception of the created world as theophany must have fascinated Cusanus as at the same time genuinely Christian and philosophically enlightening, in such a way that, even in its differentiations, it became central for his own thinking about the active relationship of God to the world and the reverse relationship of the world to God. For him Dionysius *and* Eriugena were a source of unlimited influence: witnesses to this in the case of

66. *Ibid.*, p. 241 (English version, *Dionysius*, Vol I, P. 131) For the terminus and the phenomenon PI 7;46,27f et passim. III 4;58,12ff.17;162,2ff. Jer.IV 297ff.419ff.

a source of unlimited influence: witnesses to this in the case of Eriugena are, besides the material analogies, also the marginalia to 'Periphyseon' and Honorius. Since Eriugena differentiates and universalizes the elements of the theophany theory which he finds in Dionysius, i.e. has made them into a fundamental motif of his system of thought, I would like to attribute to this development of the idea by Eriugena a particularly stimulating effect on Cusanus. It corresponds precisely to Cusanus' model "*complicatio-explicatio*": that God unfolds in a free creative act the ideas which are embraced by his comprehension and intuition as the "*coincidentia oppositorum*" and the "*conceptus absolutus*" or "*visio absoluta*" — the primordial causes — or the pre-concepts of the world; he unfolds them out of the complicative divine unity *as* plurality or *into* plurality which arises precisely through this act. Analogous to the relationship of unity (*monas*) and number (*numeri*) absolute unity, which itself is not a number or is "*without number*", posits as their principle discrete plurality or unities which are separated off from one another: primary plurality comes into being through the "*theophanicus descensus divinae primae unitatis*",⁶⁷ or: the in-finite unity makes itself finite in the creative act of self-unfolding, that which is itself un-determined determines itself (*se ipsum definit*), that which is invisible makes itself visible and opens itself to vision in the realm of otherness over against or by contrast to its own original being: it is thus that original being becomes, within the presupposed limits, utterable; it is thus that what is in itself formless shows itself in manifold forms; that which by reason of its nature as "*superesse*" is imparticipable itself gives a share in itself (*participabilis*). The result of this creative process is *world* — the quintessence of reality 'after' and 'outside' of the First One but still remaining in it — as the *luminous appearance of God* or, analogous to Eriugena: as *theophany*. Some of the named aspects are compressed into thesis-like propositions of Cusanus: these I would like to quote as verification of what has been said and as analogies to Eriugena and Dionysius:

1) "*Quid igitur est mundus nisi invisibilis dei apparitio*"?. In what immediately follows, the thought is inverted and thus the metaphoric quality of the world in relation to its foundation is

67. *coni.*I 12;61,5f *compl.theol.*46,4f with the in h XI 3,35 ad locum given passages.*fil.dei* 4;72,14-19.h IV 53. This corresponds to the relationship of the Monad or the One in Eriugena (according to the Neoplatonic model) to the numbers — to the multitude in general — is conceived. The Monad displays itself in the numbers, is principle of numbers but is itself no number.P III 1;38,9ff.5;66,28ff.7;72,37ff.11;102,23ff.104,18ff.106,10ff.28ff.12;112,33ff.118,18ff.V 10;881Df. *Deus innumerabilis, numerus sine numero*: I 72;208,13. (Cus.Marg. for this,fol.80v: *deus numerum in se non recipit*).III 16; 140,23.

seen to correspond to Eriugena's meaning: world as theophany is also an image which is at one and the same time made into an enigma and something to be deciphered; it is also a mirror in which its origin shows itself; it is accessible in an "aenigmatica visio": "Quid [est] deus nisi visibilium invisibilitas. . . Mundus igitur revelat suum creatorem, ut cognoscatur, immo incognoscibilis deus se mundo in speculo et aenigmate (1 Cor.13,12) cognoscibiliter ostendit. . ."⁶⁸

2). Mundus est infigurabilis figura et indesignabilis designatio. Mundus sensibilis est insensibilis (sc. intelligibilis) mundi figura, et temporalis mundus aeterni et intemporalis figura". "The world is the shape (or the shaping) of what is in itself unshapeable; it is the representation of that which cannot be represented. The world which is accessible to our senses is the shape of the (purely spiritual) world which is not accessible to our senses, and the temporal world is the shape of the eternal and non-temporal world."⁶⁹ The 'mirroring' of the ideas as a pre-sketch of the world in himself is presented in the world which has its origin from him as a "self-likeness" (sui ipsius imago) of God — a theophany in otherness and at the same time the (highest possible) similarity of the image.⁷⁰

3). The work "De non-aliud" develops, inter alia, the following thought: the Non-other is both the defining, ('determining', that which limits the identity of whatever exists: se ipsum et omnia definiens) and also, at one and the same time that which is defined in every other reality — *as this reality itself*, — so that fundamentally we only have to see in every other reality only the Non-other as defining itself *in* this other ("The sky is 'nothing other' than the sky" expresses the non-otherness or the self-identity of the sky). On this presupposition rests the proposition: "creation is the representation (the self-manifestation, the ostensio) of the creator determining himself or of the light manifesting itself — God himself being this light — it is so to speak the utterance (propalatio) of the spirit in its self-determining role, an utterance which is given to those present through living speech and to those absent through message and writing" [Gospel and Scripture].⁷¹ The

68. *possesit* 72,6-11; h XI 2,84f. *ibid.* n.2,11. *vis.* 12;104v34.

69. *princ.* 35,12-15.39,27ff. As Theophany is the Intelligible or the One 'touchable', *attingitur: fil. dei* 4; 72,13-18, h IV 53. For the concept of the "theophany" in the thought of Cusanus compare Jasper Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa's Metaphysics of Contraction*, Minneapolis 1983, 33 ff.

70. *vis.* 25; 113 v 20 ff.

71. *non aliud*, prop. XII; h XIII 63, 4-8. -On the different attitude of Eriugena to a conception which I describe in the sense of Cusanus as absolute self-determination, compare above I 2.a. The point of comparison despite this

Non-other as the absolute self-definition is in the sense of the universal principle of being and knowing the reason why it is, at least in its appearance, accessible: in every individual thing the Non-other *appears*, not as different from it, but *as* this thing itself; it does this by defining itself in it *as* this thing itself: as precisely the foundation of its uniqueness, determination (finiteness), individuality or identity, but at the *same* time the Non-other is to be thought of in relation to the context of *all* that is individual, finite and identical as the *absolute* principle that is precisely *not* the other: the appearance therefore indicates at one and the same time the transcendence of its own foundation.

The thought of a gradual self-unfolding which is all-embracing and at the same time differentiated within itself, or the thought of an appearance of the divine origin contracted into the individual [to individual existence] was retained by Cusanus right up to his late writing "The Summit of Contemplation" ("De apice theoriae"); one could almost say that in this writing he reduced it to a system. In this work he tries to draw out the lines which began as "possibilitas absoluta", "virtus" or "vis absoluta" via the "can-is" (possible — actual) (Können-ist) as divine predicates, or, in the case of "possest", as enigmatic *names* for God, into the "posse ipsum" or "posse absolutum". The "posse ipsum" (Possibility Itself) is the most comprehensive of all conceivable ontological and logical principles. Every principle that is conceivable (thinkable) and that has already been thought in the course of history is, according to Cusanus' fundamental insight, reducible to the "posse ipsum".⁷² Furthermore every question whether something can be or can be this and that presupposes "posse ipsum" as a condition of possibility of the question and of that which is in question. Since *without* "posse" nothing can be (what *is* must be *able* to be),⁷³ "posse ipsum" is also the most powerful principle (in a formulation analogous to the ontological argument: *quo nihil potentius*)⁷⁴ and as such identical with the "deus trinus et unus, cuius nomen omnipotens seu posse omnis potentiae".⁷⁵ "Posse omnis posse" — the "being able of all being able" — is therefore the existent (seiende) and causal (wirkende) foundation for and in every possibility and reality. From the point of view of the real itself: the real

difference is to be seen in the non aliud, the appearance of the Absolute *in* the other or *as* this, his constitutive relation to, or his immanence in all, despite his remaining otherness.

72. *ap.th.* 13,7ff; h XII 126-129.

73. *ibid.* 13,10.4,7-9.6,4.16f.12,23-25.18,1: non est nisi quod esse potest. possest 5,5f; h XI 2,6: quod enim esse non *potest*, non est. *compl.theol.* 10;29, 10f.

74. *ap.th.* 7,16.13,14. *compl.theol.* 10;29,9.

75. *ap.th.* 28,1.12,3.

is understandable as the different modes or forms of appearance of possibility ("posse") itself — "omnia non sunt nisi apparitiones ipsius posse".⁷⁶ Or, in so far as one presupposes the differentiation of existing reality (des Seienden) "after" the absolute unity, every existing thing *itself*, though individually different, is given a more or less powerful form,⁷⁷ the "possibility-itself" ("posse-ipsium") or its various representations; it *is* — formulated in terms of identity — the "posse ipsum" (Können-Selbst/Possibility Itself) as appearing under different forms: "posse ipsum varie apparens".⁷⁸ Under existing things spoken of here, not only things and substances are to be understood but equally human *capabilities* and *activities* or structures which determine being (Sein) and thinking. Thus being, life, thinking (insight and comprehension: intelligere, comprehendere) are taken to be manifestations of the *ability* (Können) to be, to live, and to think, and are thus manifestations of the "posse" itself in so far as it "lights up" in them in different ways, showing itself, making itself clear.⁷⁹ Or: in the plurality of numbers the "possibility of unity" shows itself as the foundation and origin of this plurality of numbers which are the unfolding of what is complicated in the unity, but at the same time the unity appears in them as the principle of every distinction and individuation. The infinite plurality of the numbers *could* not be unless in it unity played its individuating and identifying role.

In the context of an appearance of "Posse" that diminishes or grows in intensity, the *incarnatory* (incarnate, emodied) appearance of absolute "posse" is theophany as such; it is the most potent proof of the "posse ipsum" and at the same time — as the infinite light itself — the clearest pointer in the realm of alteritas to its own divine foundation: *Christus* as "perfectissima apparitio, qua nulla potest esse perfectior, . . . nos ad claram contemplationem ipsius posse verbo et exemplo perducens".⁸⁰

76. *ibid.* 20,6f.9,7: et non videbis varia entia nisi apparationis ipsius posse varios modos.

77. 10,6f. *dat.patr.lum.*111,32f;h IV 82.

78. *ap.th.*9,8f.

79. The comparison with the light and its influence: 8,5ff. Metaphorically about the principle: 27,5. 10,1ff: to esse-vivere-intelligere.- 14,15ff: the posse ipsum unitatis. *d.i.*II3 ;h I 69,9ff.70,17ff.

80. *ap.th.*28,1-6.*dat.patr.lum.*111,29ff;h IV 82.*possest* 32,23ff. Incarnation as 'manifestatio' or 'theophania' in Eriugena: P III 20; 174,1ff.*Ier.*IV 627ff.P V 24, 912 C/D: Incomprehensibile quippe erat Verbum omni creaturae visibili et invisibili . . . priusquam incarnaretur, quoniam remotum et secretum super omne, quod est et quod non est, super omne, quod dicitur et intelligitur: incarnatum vero quodammodo descendens, mirabili quadam theophania . . . in cognitionem angelicae humanaeque naturae processit. -The incarnate Christ as 'ostensio Patris': *lud.glob.*II 71f (Wilpert, Straßburger Druck II 604). *quaer. deum* III 39, 1ff;h IV 27ff.

The world or the totality of beings as a theophany, — as activity of the divine principle showing itself in the world of sense, the highpoint in the incarnation of Christ is represented in a text of Eriugena's 'Periphyseon' as a multiplicity of aspects. This text mirrors essential characteristics of the specifically Cusanian development of the idea of theophany: Cusanus characterized it in one of the marginalia as "wonderful words", "verba mirabilia".⁸¹ Thus he was to conclude his thoughts on this subject: "All that is understood (thought) and experienced on the sense level is nothing other than the appearance of that which does not appear, the revelation of the hidden, the affirmation of the denied, the comprehension of the incomprehensible, the utterance of the inutterable, access to the inaccessible, understanding of the unintelligible, the embodiment of the non-corporeal, the essence of the supra-essential, the form[ation] of what is formless, the measure of the immeasurable, the number of what is innumerable, the weight of that which is weightless, the concretization of what is spiritual, the visibility of the invisible, the localization of what is without place, the temporality, [temporalizing, timing] of the timeless, limiting the limitless (making finite what is infinite), the circumscription (containing or determining) of the uncircumscribable."⁸² This text could suggest a manifestation that has no reservations, a revelation which *cancels* the absoluteness of the origin, the *total* transition into the world. But for Eriugena as well as for Cusanus this suggestion is opposed by the "affirmation" of the divine transcendence *in* the manifestation.

2. The preceding description of the horizon that embraces and links the thought of Eriugena and Cusanus was focussed on the notion of theophany. I would like to expand this description through some observations which focus on the *inner structure of the created being* (des Geschaffen-Seienden), on the way of *grasp-*

81. Marg. Hon. 76. Further marginalia to 'Theophany': Hon.2.6.8. To PI fol.14v.15r.16r.16v. The question as to the function of 'theophany' in the circular process of knowledge ('descensio' and 'ascensio' and identity of both) requires its own analysis starting point for Cusanus: *coni.* II 16; 167,19 ff — and the Eriugena text to which the marginalia refer fol 15r: PI 9; 52,24ff).

82. PIII 4; 58,12-19: Omne enim quod intelligitur et sentitur nihil aliud est nisi non apparentis apparitio, occulti manifestatio, negati affirmatio, incomprehensibilis comprehensio, ineffabilis fatus, inaccessibleis accessus, inintelligibilis intellectus, incorporalis corpus, superessentialis essentia, informis forma, immensurabilis mensura, innumerabilis numerus, carentis pondere pondus, spiritualis incrassatio, invisibilis visibilitas, illocalis localitas, carentis tempore temporalitas, infiniti diffinitio, incircumscripti circumscriptio. In addition to this: P III 17; 160,37ff.19; 166,26-32.

ing it conceptually, and on the possibilities and extent of knowledge itself.

a. The result of creatio in Cusanus' sense as an explication of the infinite principle is *finite* being, determined being, being which is limited within itself (*finitum*, *de-finitum*), as an individual and as an identical thing and characterized as this peculiar being by a distinguishing inner form or shape. The identifying effect of the all-embracing principle contracts itself into the individual, so that the world can be understood not only as an *unfolding* of God but also as his '*contractio*': the individual is the *principle* but in a contracted way (*contractum* corresponds entirely to the "*varie apparens ipsius posse*"); it is the one in manifold contractions, limitations, or in the individualized concrete.⁸³

We find in Eriugena's work an idea which is analogous to Cusanus' idea and which shows itself in analogous terminology: *infiniti definitio*, *interminabilis terminus*, *incircumscripti circumscriptio*, *informis forma*, *contrahi* [*contractio*]. Expressed in terms of the analogy to the self-multiplying "*vis seminalis*": to contract itself "into the little" — by contrast to the fullness of the origin — or into the manifold concrete⁸⁴ — describes the process of the creative manifestation of the origin, whereby in this manifestatio the origin of course remains unchanged in its essence and remains itself ("permanet").⁸⁵ Every individual created thing "is compressed in a particular shape (Etwas, [some]thing) through measure, number and weight according to the fixed limits of its nature"; i.e. it is given a limit, defined as something finite and belonging to the sense world over against the divine infinity and intelligibility; or it is "circumscribed" by defined limits, corresponding to its nature (*naturae suae certis finibus circumscripta*).⁸⁶ Every individual thing defines itself by its inner and outer limits and is

83. See footnote 35. In the pursual of the main passage quoted in footnote 82 this is formulated as an analogy to linguistic communication: 58,26 permanent; of the '*vis seminalis*': III 16; 146,4: *dum fit manifesta non desinat esse occulta*. *Ier.*I 356f: *dum . . . in omnia procedit, manet in se ipso, . . . sui similis uniformis fixus* (of the creative '*divinus radius*'). *Comm.* I,XXVI 6ff. — Cusanus for example *vis*.13; 105r39: *ab . . . omnibus absolutus*. 105v37: *nullum omnium*. 106r6: *Infinitum . . . non est contrahibile, sed manet absolutum*. *absconditus*: 104v30. W.Beierwaltes, *Identität und Differenz* 112f.162ff et passim (see Index "*Transzendenz*").

84. P III 16; 144,34ff. 146,6: *contrahi*. The termini *contractio* and *contrahi* in Eriugena's Maximus translation stand for *συστολή* or *συνάγεσθαι* in the sense of contraction, determining, limiting, or determined or limited. (PG 91, 1178 C).

85. Corresponding to this in Cusanus is the thought that the *incarnate* Jesus is '*simul contractum et absolutum*': *d.i.* I 2;h I 8,6.

86. P II 28; 144,28f: . . . *intra terminos propriae naturae in aliquo coartetur in mensura, numero et pondere*. 16; 54,8. *praed.*18,6,125.

thus measured in an intelligible relationship with every other existing thing: it is involved in the relationality which measures it. The 'categories' as specific determinations of an essence (*essentia*) are characterized by Eriugena also as something additional to the being (*Wesen*) and are thus *accidentia*, but they are understood primarily as the limits which "surround" (*concludere*) the essence or "stand around" it (*circumstare*).⁸⁷ They are, so to speak, the 'circum-stantiae' which as limits give an *essentia* its definition; for Eriugena these *circumstantiae* are all that is conceptually intelligible in the essence and yet they do not permit of a perfect and sure understanding of the "what" (*quid*) of an essence or of the being of a thing.

b. This idea is an ever-recurring thesis of Eriugena: the "what" (or the essence) of every being is as such not accessible to conceptual thought.⁸⁸ It is, as already suggested, definable only by reference to the circumstances and its categorial determinations and through these its individual identity is determined. Only the 'that' (*quia*) of a being is accessible, its *existence*. This limitation refers to all created being; it refers in an extreme way and with a different content also to the 'being' (*Sein*) of the divine nature: Even if he *could* be thought of at all as a 'quid', God could not be grasped conceptually in his self-existence (*Ansich-Sein*) and in what he is (*Was-Sein*), since he transcends finite beings in a supra-ontological manner. His absolute nothingness — nothing of everything — does not leave room in him for any "quid" either as being or as predicate, so that he is not able to see even *himself* as "quid"; he does not know *what* he is himself because he is *not* a "quid" (a what).⁸⁹ Absolute self-consciousness as *not-*

87. P I 25; 102,31ff. The concept 'concluditur' in PI 39;126,23 is emphasised especially by Cusanus and he remarks in further discussion fol. 45v of the limiting, determining function of the categories: *esse contractum ad aliquem modum est in loco et tempore*.

88. P I 3,40,6f. 25;102,32ff.47;138,3ff.II 28; 136, 29-35. This knowledge restricting theory leads Eriugena himself back (P I 25; 102,31ff) to Gregory of Nyssa and, above all, Maximus. However, it is neither from this source nor from Augustine fully conceivable. See on this point É. Jeaneau in *Comm. I,XXVI*, 5;128, footnote 3 and *Quatre Thèmes Érigéniens*, Montréal-Paris 1978, 86. — *non aliud* 22;h XIII 52,25 (referring to Plato and Proclus). For further aspects compare the adnotatio 21 ad n.2,17 of *De apice theoriae*, h XII 165 f. Further *compl.theol.*; Par II,93r18f.

89. P II 28; 142,32f: *deus . . . nescit se quid est quia non est quid, which matches a 'divina ignorantia' (146,16)*. Compare on this issue W. Beierwaltes, *Das Problem des absoluten Selbstbewußtseins bei Johannes Scotus Eriugena*, in: *Platonismus in der Philosophie des Mittelalters, Wege der Forschung* 197, Darmstadt 1969, 484-516, esp.498ff. It is conceivable, in my opinion, that Cusanus' sentence in *Cribr. Alk.II* 6; h VIII 102,2: *Deus enim non potest dici ignorans se ipsum . . .* is intended to be a correction

knowing ("divina ignorantia") in the sense of a knowing that can only relate to a "quid" is of course not to be understood as a limitation but as the most intense reality and heightening of being and knowledge.⁹⁰ The impossibility that divine "knowledge" should know its own "quid" gives a glimpse of the possible justification for saying that human knowledge with regard to the "quid" or the essence of a being has to be "ignorantia": God is the "esse omnium"; a thing's own "quid" is not conceptually comprehensible precisely because God as its foundation in *it* is not comprehensible in *his* own being (Ansich). Thus if God is not able to know himself as "quid", his presence in finite being as the "quid" of finite being cannot be made intelligible in its essence to finite thought. "Theophany" and "circumstantiae" are analogous to one another: God's "super-quid-esse" receives a limitation in theophany and becomes accessible in the manner of finiteness and image (incomprehensibilis comprehensio); the original hidden-ness of God's being is of course not removed. Theophany is merely another but comprehensible form of an incomprehensibility that remains. And so by analogy, only that which "includes", "stands around", and determines the essential core is conceptually comprehensible; not however that which thought knows is the goal of defining.

c. This exclusion of any *essential* knowledge (Wesens-Erkenntnis) has consequences for the certainty and degree of truth of *knowledge* and thus for the reliability or guarantee of evidence in *speech*: the *truth* of a being or the truth in itself (*ipsa veritas*) that acts as a comprehensive foundation making conceptual thinking and utterance possible, is not attainable.⁹¹ Instead of the "verum" there is the "verisimile" as a possible product of knowledge.⁹² In statements which are "similar" to the truth are to be included all the areas which are discussed in the 'Periphyseon', even the truth revealed in Holy Scripture. For Eriugena this truth does not lead to resignation but stimulates him to a refining of the scientific method (*ratiocinatio*) which sees what is "similar" to the truth [verisimilitude] as the highest possibility of our thinking. *Language*, which is meant to bring to light or appearance [zur Erscheinung] the concept of the object intended by knowledge and thereby also its truth, by relating it to sense or by "embodying" it,

of the extreme formulation in Eriugena. Cusanus read the above quoted sentence and its context in Honorius' *Clavis Physicae* 107,24ff and 108 and glossed it with 'male' (Hon. Marg.64).

90. P II 28; 154,6: *Ipsa itaque ignorantia summa ac vera est sapientia.*

91. P II 35; 200,24-30.

92. Compare here G. Schrimpf, *Johannes Scottus Eriugena und die Rezeption des Martianus Capella im karolingischen Bildungswesen*, in: Eriugena. Studien zu seinen Quellen, edited by W. Beierwaltes. Heidelberg 1980, 145-147 ("Der Wahrheitswert der 'ratiocinationes'").

becomes a necessary but most external phenomenon of mediation, which however remains utterly remote from "being".

This process of mediation makes the transition from being into "intelligere" and "cogitare" and then into "sermone proferre". Scepticism about language results here from the in-finity of the supreme object which also as the "being of all" [everything] essentially affects the finite which is its manifestation.⁹³

Cusanus' evaluation of the possibilities and scope of knowledge has essential aspects in common with the 'epoché' of Eriugena outlined above. Cusanus also holds that the "quidditas" of a being, since identical with its truth, is not conceptually intelligible "in its purity", i.e. precisely as it *is in itself* (uti est).⁹⁴ Knowledge must have ascertained about itself — and this is the fundamental characteristic of a "docta ignorantia" — that merely an *approximation* to the truth of the object to be known, a "participatio" that fully respects the fundamental discrepancy or difference, is possible. (This approximation can, if we are fortunate, become ever greater and sometimes extreme and intense). This is conditioned by the structure of the sphere in which knowing necessarily takes place — the sphere of the finite which is determined by the relationality of bigger and smaller, of exceeding and exceeded (excedere/excessum) and thus of identity and difference (identitas/alteritas), all of which point to a unity or identity which is their foundation and to an absolute truth which is the measure also of approximate knowledge. This absolute, divine reality of truth is the impulse at work *in* knowledge itself; it is the impulse that initiates the continual attempt to improve in "praecisio", "certitudo" and "unitas" of knowledge. Mathematics has a particularly fruitful function in this tendency of thought to make itself more precise. An "absolutissima praecisio" of thinking and knowing is possible and real [realised actually] only in the divine identity of thought and being as radical "super-esse".⁹⁵ Thus a "praecisio veritatis" in the realm of otherness is not attainable and furthermore knowledge only manages to ascertain and describe the "quia" but not to comprehend the "quid" of every being, including the highest.⁹⁶ From these two latter statements it follows

93. On this point see my article on 'Sprache und Sache. Reflexionen zu Eriugena's Einschätzung von Funktion und Leistung der Sprache.' in: Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung 38, 1984, 523-543. English version in Jean Scot Écrivain (footnote 64) 209-228 ("Language and its object").

94. *d.i.I.* 3; *h I* 9,24ff.*possesst* 43,15ff.30. For further reference see footnote 96.

95. *coni.I* 11;55,16;*h III* 57. *II* 16; 168,26 (p.171). *princ.*37,6ff.

96. *possesst* 43,30. *ven.* 12;31,11ff.29;86,6ff. *de pace fidei* 18,65; *h VII* 60,1ff.*compl. theol.*2; 93r19. Marginalia Cusanus' to Eriugena PI fol.27v: substantiam non posse intelligi nisi ex circumstanciis. Hon.62.

that the “*praecisio*” ideally aimed at is reduced to a “*coniectura*”.⁹⁷ Turning the intention of knowledge into an ‘*ars coniecturalis*’⁹⁸ is thus the answer to the situation of thinking ‘in otherness’. This answer is realistic (not a mere resignation); it sceptically curtails on the one hand any claim that thought may have to absolute-ness, and, on the other hand, it gives stimulus to an inexhaustible “*adauctio*”: “The unity of unattainable truth is known through a conjectural otherness and vice versa through the conjecture of otherness in the simplest unity of truth.”⁹⁹ The relative exactness of conjectural knowledge has its foundation in the absolute exactness of divine thought (*mens*, *intellectus*); its determination resulting in precision and measure affects all levels of or capacities for knowing with different degrees of intensity, so that any higher level or capacity is to be thought of as of higher precision than the preceding lower level or as a precision which cancels the preceding level. The inner continuity of individual knowing faculties is seen to be a circle of “*descensio*” and “*ascensio*”: intellect, for example, descends into the sphere of sense, giving it its foundation and making its function possible, so that what belongs to the sphere of sense can ascend to reason i.e. can be raised to the level of concept. The unity of this movement is what guarantees knowledge.¹⁰⁰ Or: the ascent of ratio into intellect is identical with the descent of intellect into ratio. This mutual circular penetration however is to be understood as the highest possible approximation to the truth aimed at or as the previously mentioned heightened elevation in the faculty of the higher level in which the lower faculty attains to “its” ‘truth’. Despite the fundamentally relative and conjectural nature of knowledge in the movement in which it has a measuring and attractive function and transcends itself it is founded on the “*praecisio absoluta*” and is directed towards it:¹⁰¹ it realizes itself as a tendency of thought towards infinity,

97. *coni.*I 11; 57,10ff et passim. *possesit* 43,18. The terminus ‘*coniectura*’ in *Eriugena*: P III 16; 140,36.V4;868 D (here, however, not in the limiting sense as for Cusanus). IV 12,797 A, in a quotation from Gregory’s ‘*De imagine*’ for *στοχασμοί* (καὶ εἰκόνας) in the context of the epistemological possibility of absolute truth [de hominis opificio c.16;PG 44,185 A]).

98. *coni.*I 11;60,1.J.Koch, *Die Ars coniecturalis des Nikolaus von Kues*, Düsseldorf 1956 (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Forschung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, Heft 16).

99. *coni.*I,prol. 2,9-12.

100. *coni.* II 16; 157,10ff.159,9ff.161,28ff.

101. *ibid.*I 10; 52,7f: ratio . . . praecisio sensus. 11: rationalium . . . praecisio intellectus est. 12: summa . . . praecisio intellectus est veritas ipsa. For the circular movement also *coni.* n. 53. The thus conceived idea of the absolutely grounded continuity of the epistemological faculties has its analogy in Eriugena’s attempt to see *sensus-ratio-intellectus* as dialect-

and this thought is again and again tempted to overcome the disproportionality of the finite and the infinite.

III

The third dimension which is essential for the relationship of Eriugena to Cusanus embraces those notions which are concerned with the principle as a *goal* of reality as a whole and with the "conversio" or "reversion" of the movement which goes out from the principle.

Eriugena defines, in his division of the four dimensions of being, the "fourth nature" as one which neither creates nor is created. This determination is identical with the statement about the first aspect of being of the divine nature, according to which it creates and is not created, although to a finitely conditioned "duplex theoria" it would have to *appear* as different. The former is to be understood as the *beginning* of all creative movement into the manifold, the latter as its *goal* or *end* "(finis)", through the 'con-' or 'reversion' of the movement as a whole. On the basis of the actual identity of both of these aspects the following proposition is valid: "finis . . . totius motus est principium sui".¹⁰²

The movement contained in this differentiated situation is understood by Eriugena, according to the model of the movement of dialectical logic, the scientific method par excellence, as *ontological dialectic* which presents itself as a circle of "processio" and "reversio" out of and into the beginning which in itself remains absolute; it is the mirror-image of the inner-trinitarian dialectic, in which God grounds himself as unity of beginning — middle — end (principium — medium — finis). The movement caused by the fact of being a goal, the final aspect of the 'fourth nature' — dialectically the complement to "divisio" (processio) — is precisely this universal "reditus": the dissolution (analutike) or return,¹⁰³ the

tically connected, characterised by the basic movement of the dialectical method of 'descendere' and 'ascendere'. P.II 23; 116,15-18: intellectus . . . nec a se ipso nec ab aliquo intelligi potest, quid sit, in ratione autem, quae de ipso nascitur, incipit apparere (ratio as an expression or recognisable manifestation of the intellect). Unity of the three: ipse intellectus mediante ratione per consubstantialem sibi sensum sine errore investigat et persequitur certisque regulis comprehendit (ibid. 118,18-20), related to the field of knowledge, in itself differentiated but leading back to unity. — intellectus descendens: 118,7. — For this group of problems see K.Bormann and K.Kremer in MFCG 11,1975, 62ff and MFCG 13,1978,23ff.

102. P V 3; 866B. For the conditioning of 'naturae': PI; 36,19ff. On the method of 'duplex theoria' see the publication quoted in footnote 93 which on p. 537ff discusses the principle of the 'transition' which is significant for the ensuing material in connection with an ontological dialectic.

103. *praef.in vers. Amb.S.Max.PL* 122, 1195 BC. For the aspect of method:

gathering back of the particular into the general, of the many into the original unity, of the caused into the original causes as the essential moments of the divine origin or beginning (*recollectio*, *resolutio*, *reversio*, *reditiva collectio*).¹⁰⁴ The whole of this downward movement into multiplicity and the unifying ascent into the “*finis omnium*” is to be understood, as already stated; as a dialectical process or as a philosophically comprehensible self-contained process of the divine reality as world; but it is nonetheless to be understood at one and the same time as pertaining to the history of salvation and to eschatology — in line with the model of the patristic apokatastasis — and anakephalaiosis-doctrine it is the completion of salvation. The incarnated Christ is the moving and completing mediator of this process, which is a “*restauratio in novitatem quandam*” or a transforming return to the “*earlier state*”, into the “*pristina gloria*”.¹⁰⁵ Through his Resurrection — “*in the death of death*” — he initiates the decisive turning of history to the universal “*transition*”. This active soteriological mediation of the whole into an original “*harmony*” and beauty — the perfect spiritualising of world and man *without* loss of what is *individual*¹⁰⁶ — leads to a “*state*” in which Christ is “*everywhere*” present in his entirety: “*Totus enim Deus est [Christus] totus ubique, totus super omne, quod dicitur et intelligitur, exaltatus, totus in Patre et cum Patre unum effectus, totus Deus in toto homine, et totus homo in toto Deo. . .*”¹⁰⁷ In this christological mediation (Deus-Christus as “*medium*”) the movement which deifies the world and completes its reconciliation returns back into the “*finis omnium*”, so that God, in the end once more embracing himself and the world, is “*all in all*” — “*quando nihil erit nisi solus deus*”.¹⁰⁸

The fundamental philosophical and theological view of Cusanus undoubtedly converges with Eriugena’s concept of God as the unity of “*beginning-middle-end*”, “*principium-medium-finis*” which forms the basis of the consequences for the history of salvation we have just outlined.¹⁰⁹ He was familiar with this idea of unity above all from the writings of Proclus, Dionysius, Alanus ab Insulis and Heimaricus de Campo (God’s “*three-fold causality*”).¹¹⁰ A specific aspect in Cusanus’ conception of the “*reditus*

P II 1; 6,28ff.

104. P II 1f;8,3ff.

105. P V 36; 978B.37; 989B.*Comm.* IV 1, 77f;284.

106. P V 20; 894A.

107. P V 38; 994B.

108. P V 8; 876B.

109. For this determination of God in the Neoplatonic context through Eriugena compare W. Beierwaltes, *Proklos. Grundzüge seiner Metaphysik*, Frankfurt 1979, 82-89.

110. See *non aliud* 3:h XIII 7,29ff.*ven.* 7;18,10f,h XII 19 with the references

in finem omnium" certainly points in a special way to Eriugena. It is known that in this context there is a link between Cusanus and Meister Eckhart; but his relationship to Eriugena (also a source for Eckhart) has not yet been noted. The specific respect I am referring to is the following: Eriugena thinks of the "fourth nature" also as the "locus omnium" or "locus locorum": as the place of all things [Ort von Allem, of everything] or the place of places. In this idea the Aristotelian conception of "natural place" in which every being is or to which it *strives* is linked with the final aspect of the Neoplatonic One and with Augustine's doctrine of Ideas: God as the place of ideas and as the goal which takes up into himself every movement towards himself and as the goal which rests in itself and which is giving rest to everything (in quo quiescunt omnia). For Eriugena both "place" and "time" cannot be applied as categories to God. God can only be called the "place of all" in a metaphorical sense. "Beyond" [all] place, he *is* still the cause of its being. To this extent the place that creatively determines all places, giving each being its place and limiting all places *through* the act that constitutes them, is the "place of places" or the absolute place.¹¹¹ As ideas in himself *and* as created things "outside himself" he "situates" (verortet) in himself all that is (omnia intra se collocat); as universal creative "extensio" he creates — for everything — *himself* as fundamental place or everything as *his* place without his being thereby affected, determined and limited.¹¹² But God is as well the "place of all" as the goal of the "reditus" which "attracts" and even *loves* and which gathers everything back into itself. His "love" (amor) has, apart from the communication of being (diffusiobonitas), also the function of establishing and maintaining the "universitas omnium rerum" as a unity in harmony with itself and with its origin.¹¹³ The movement of created being back to its origin corresponds to and answers the loving "diffusio": the "bonitas" and absolute beauty "attracts" — a Dionysian

ad locum.

111. PI 21;98,2ff. Aug. *Gen. litt.* IV 18,34: et ideo, dum ipse manet in se, quidquid ex illo est retorquet ad se, ut omnis creatura in se habeat naturae suae terminum, quo non sit, quod ipse est, in illo autem quietis locum, quod servet, quod ipsa est. See on this problem area and its connection to Neoplatonism my article: *Augustins Interpretation von Sapientia* 11,21, in: Rev. Ét. Aug. 15, 1969, 58ff. Also of interest is Sextus Empiricus' remark in respect of Aristoteles: κινδυνεύει ὁ πρῶτος τόπος εἶναι πάντων (adv. math. X 33; II 310 Mutschmann)

112. P III 9; 80,33ff.82,11.

113. PI 74; 210,26-30: Amor est connexio ac vinculum quo omnium rerum universitas ineffabili amicitia insolubilique unitate copulatur. Amor est naturalis motus omnium rerum quae in motu sunt finis quietaque statio ultra quam nullus creaturae progreditur motus.

motif — like a “magnet”: “God is rightly called love, because he is the cause of love, pours himself out into everything and gathers back everything into a unity, moves it in an inutterable way back to himself and makes the impulses of love of every created thing end in himself”.¹¹⁴

It is hardly surprising then that on the basis of the central thought of Christianity — that God is love — and on the basis of the complex tradition which he also in this context realises and continues, he thinks of God as the “absolutissimus infinitus amor” or as the “amor perfectissimus et simplicissimus”. In trinitarian terms: he thinks of God as the dynamic unity of loving and lovable love through or in its union (*Verbindung*)¹¹⁵ The idea connected with this — “God as the place of places or the place of all things” — seems to me an especially obvious indication of a link with Eriugena. On several occasions Cusanus refers in the marginalia to the unifying, gathering, actively embracing aspect of love in Eriugena which brings things to itself as goal; likewise he refers to the “locus locorum” as the “status” (Stand) of the movement:¹¹⁶ as goal of the movement he is its fulfilling “rest”, its proper place or its “constant being or essence” — (*stabilis essentia*).¹¹⁷ — From sermo 213¹¹⁸ one could even develop a philosophy and theology of “absolute place”; but in this context I can only indicate a few main lines of thought. The theme of this sermon is the question: “Ubi est qui natus est rex Judaeorum?” The crux of the interpretation which endeavours to verify its pre-concept of absolute place turns out to be, on the model of Eckhart, the transformation of the interrogative “Ubi” into a substantivized adverb which becomes the predicate of an affirmative sentence: “The new-born king of the Jews is the where” or “the place of all things or of all” without himself being categorially determined (*contracte*).¹¹⁹ Place and rest (constancy) are fundamentally related to one another. Place is (in general terms and, at this point, without theological connotations) the rest of every movement, or rest is the fixed point in the course of every movement, its “constant” being (*Sein*) which

114. PI 75; 212, 13-16. 32ff (magnes)

115. *coni.* II 17; 182,3.*vis.*17;108r 7ff.

116. Marg.PI fol.81 v.82r(2x).82v(2x).83r(amor).18v (deus locus omnium). 78v (deus totum, locus . . . et statio omnium). Marg.Hon.22.34.

117. *d.i.* I 23;47,15-17.20.22f: quies motus est ipse, qui est finis motus. Compare also footnote 120.

118. according to the numeration of Haubst. Edited by J. Koch: *Cusanus-Texte*, Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist.Kl.1936/7,2.Abh.84-117. The date of the sermon “*In die Epiphaniae*”, Brixinae 1456.

119. *ibid.*20,p.104,15f: Est enim in esse loci, quia esse loci in ipso, et non est in loco, licet ab esse loci absit. . .

gives it consistency (Bestand);¹²⁰ like the present of the now in time or the one in number, the being of rest (*esse quietis*) is the essential constituent and always the goal of every movement. Just as, in the case of time, we can say of the "now" that time *always* stands in it and consists in it, so in the case of movement we can say of rest or of stance in a place: movement "stands" in rest or in place; only because movement always has this "stance" in a place is it always able to begin anew. But *absolute* rest, *absolute* stance or place of movement is its very beginning which creatively posits it. This beginning coincides with the goal of the movement to form a stable movement or a moved stability.¹²¹ This coincidence is — in theological terms — also the place which puts all human movement to rest and gives it its perfection: "*Jesus itaque est locus, ubi omnis motus naturae et gratiae quiescit*".¹²² Christ as the "infinite way" is, looked at from this point of view, the "place of (man as) 'viator'" — the place *from* which he starts out, *in* which he journeys and *at* which he ends (the end is at the same time the beginning.) So the idea of "*deus locus omnium*" becomes at the same time the fascinating paradigm of a reflexion in which philosophical and theological ideas throw light on one another: the principle as goal of movement and Jesus as the living way — alpha and omega,¹²³

120. 6; 90,24; *quies igitur est stabilis essentia motus*.

121. 6; 92,1f.

122. 14; 98,6f.

123. 4; 88,12ff.

Abbreviations of selected Eriugen a- and Cusanus- texts:

ERIUGENA:

P̄Periphyseon (*De divisione naturae*), ed. I. P. Sheldon-Williams (with English translation), book I-III, Dublin 1968-1981. Book IV/V in: *Patrologia Latina* 122, ed H.J. Floss, 1853. — English Translation only, in: *Eriugena, Periphyseon (The Division of Nature)*, transl. by I. P. Sheldon-Williams, revised by John J. O'Meara, Montréal-Washington 1987.

Hom. Jean Scot, *Homélie sur le prologue de Jean*. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes de É. Jeauneau, *Sources Chrétiennes* 151, Paris 1969.

Comm. Jean Scot, *Commentaire sur l'Évangile de Jean*. Introduction, texte critique, traduction, notes et index de É. Jeauneau, *Sources Chrétiennes* 180, Paris 1972.

NICHOLAS OF CUSA:

d.i. *De docta ignorantia*, Nicolai de Cusa *Opera Omnia* I, ed. E. Hoffmann et R. Klibansky, Leipzig 1932 (h I).

Apol. *Apologia doctae ignorantiae*, ed. R. Klibansky, Leipzig 1932 (h II).

coni. *De coniecturis*, ed. I. Koch et C. Bormann/I.G. Senger, Hamburg 1972 (h III).

vis.(dei) *De visione dei liber pius sive de icona liber*, Nicolai Cusae

both forms of being as manifestation of the same (reality).

Precisely this idea of "deus as 'locus locorum'" makes it clear that the formation of Cusanus' ideas is not and cannot be one-dimensionally defined by reference to specific "sources". Certainly Cusanus is essentially indebted to the differentiated character of Eriugena's thought, but he owes just as much to the contact

Cardinalis opera, ed. Faber Stapulensis, Paris 1514, I, fol. 99 ff (Par.I).

compl.theol. Complementum theologicum figuratum in complementis mathematicis, Par.II b, fol. 92 vff.

princ. De principio, ed. M. Feigl, H. Vaupel, P. Wilpert, Padua 1960.

aeq. De aequalitate, Par. II a, fol. 15vff.

ven. De venatione sapientiae, ed. R. Klibansky et I.G. Senger, Hamburg 1982 (h XII).

ap.th. De apice theoriae, ed. R. Klibansky et I.G. Senger, Hamburg 1982 (h XII).

Postscript

Cusanus' Proklos-Marginalia (compare footnote 17) have been meanwhile fully edited: For the *Elementatio theologica* by Helmut Boese, in: *Wilhelm von Moerbeke als Übersetzer der Stoicheiosis theologike des Proclus*, Abh.d.Heidelberger Ak.d.Wiss., phil.-hist. KCe.1985, 5.Abh.,151-155; for the Parmenides commentary by Carlos Steel in: *Proclus, Commentaire sur le Parménide de Platon*. Traduction de Guillaume de Moerbeke, Leuven 1985, II, 529-555; and all the marginalia together with an introduction by Hans Gerhard Senger, in: *Cusanus-Texte III, Marginalien*, 2. *Proclus Latinus. Die Exzerpte und Randnoten des Nikolaus von Kues zu den lateinischen Übersetzungen der Proclus-Schriften: 2.1 Theologia Platonis. Elementatio theologica*, edited and expounded by Hans Gerhard Senger. 2.2 *Expositio in Parmenidem Platonis*, edited by Karl Bormann, in Abh.d. Heidelberger Ak.d.Wiss., phil.-hist. Kl.1986, 2. und 3. Abh. Further now it is worth considering Jasper Hopkins' meritorious edition of 'De visione dei', the result of the comparison of 22 manuscripts: *Nicholas of Cusa's dialectical mysticism. Text, translation and interpretive study of de visione dei*, Minneapolis 1985. — I regret it very much that we are still very far from having a critical edition of 'De visione dei' in the Heidelberg Edition "Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia" — despite manifold activities in stimulating editors. In 'Identität und Differenz' p.170 footnote 103 I announced in advance the present investigation of the relationship between Cusanus and Eriugena. I had already corrected and finished this text as I became aware of Riccati's book: "Processio" et "Explicatio". *La doctrine de la création chez Jean Scot et Nicolas de Cues*, Napoli 1983. In MFCG 17, 1986, 272-277 I have discussed it in a review.

The German version of this paper (ERIUGENA REDIVIVUS. Zur Wirkungsgeschichte seines Denkens im Mittelalter und im Übergang zur Neuzeit, Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.- hist.Klasse, Jahrgang 1987, hg. v. W.Beierwaltes, Heidelberg 1987, 311-343) was dedicated to Dieter Henrich in honour of his 60th birthday and has been translated into English by D. Farrelly and F. O'Rourke (text) and R.D.Hedley (footnotes). I want to express my warmest gratitude to the translators.

with Eckhart, so that in the context of the central theory — divine unity as perfecting goal — Eriugena could have exerted an influence on Cusanus both directly *and* indirectly.

Although in the preceding reflections I have by no means weighed up and dealt with *all conceivable* relationships between Eriugena and Cusanus, on the basis of what I have said the following can be suggested in thesis form concerning the central constellations of ideas characteristic of both thinkers: The thought of Eriugena found in Cusanus its most intense and most appropriate reception from the 12th century until German Idealism. Though on the whole not so productive and terminologically influential as for example the reception of Proclus, Dionysius, the Platonists of Chartres or Meister Eckhart, it shows the deep-rooted congeniality of both: they are united in a daring speculative force which in the Cusanian reception retains, through a prudently selective process in the context of a rather complex tradition, its own identity and remains true to its own aims. Looked at philosophically the strongest bond is an open or — in the case of Eriugena — a latent Platonism which is none the less effective for his being largely unaware of it; from a theological point of view, the strongest bond is the many-sided 'Dionysian' phenomenon which — both for Eriugena and Cusanus — in no way excludes the "Augustinian" element; but the philosophical idea in fact remains an essentially determining factor. Historically both thinkers stand at a point of upheaval in which new things — arising out of a past assimilated both reflectively and practically — are not only suggested but have already begun to develop.

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