

The Origin of Europe with the Greek Discovery of the World

KLAUS HELD

Universität Wuppertal

Translated by SEAN KIRKLAND

Goucher College

The convergence of humanity, occurring on a global scale and at an ever-accelerating rate, brings with it the danger of leveling all differences between traditional cultures. Thus, today's thought, more urgently and more clearly than ever, is presented with the task of bringing to light the philosophical background of what is proper and peculiar to developed cultural regions. Given the progress in Europe's economic and political integration, the above certainly holds true for this region as well.

The concept "Europe" has an acknowledged double meaning. It is used geographically, on the one hand, to indicate a region of the globe. On the other hand, a certain form of culture is intended, which is described as European, as when one says that democracy is a European invention. Here, one is not thinking primarily of the continent of Europe, but rather of certain features that characterize or have characterized the culture of this continent. The following considerations are concerned with two such features, which have not remained confined to the continent "Europe," but have extended themselves over the entire earth. These are science and, as mentioned above, democracy.

The philosophical background for the European origin of these cultural features demands our attention today. This is so because humanity at the beginning of the third millennium A.D. must recognize that the undeniable and incomparable advances, for which it has modern science and human rights-based democracy to thank, have come only at a great price. With the technology made possible by science, that price is the globally expanding destruction of the environment and, with modern democracy, it is the totalitarian or fundamentalist perversion of the political. If the dangers that threaten

human beings are historical occurrences, then, in response, those human beings have at their disposal no other means of orienting themselves than through the consideration of the historical derivation of those dangers. In the case of science and democracy, we find ourselves, therefore, directed toward their European origin.

The following reflections have as their central thesis the following: it was by no means a mere coincidence that science and democracy arose in the same age, among the same people, that is, among the Greeks. These two, rather, belong inherently together, for in them one finds two aspects of one and the same development. The discussion must first turn to this inherent connection and a clarification must be given as to why and in what sense the spirit of this development can be described as a “discovery of the world.” The clarification offered here will find support in the possibilities for philosophical thinking introduced in the phenomenology founded by Edmund Husserl and carried on and transformed in a revolutionary way by Martin Heidegger. The consideration of the European origin of science and democracy among the Greeks will additionally have recourse above all to the thought of Heraclitus. For, so far as may be determined from the fragmentary character of what has been handed down to us from that period, Heraclitus was the first thinker who reflected upon the earliest scientific activity and, at the same time, who first contemplated communal life in the Greek *polis*, where democracy was developing in his day.¹

The following reflections will follow the order of historical events. The origination of philosophy and science (I) in Miletus, a large city in the Greek colony of Ionia, preceded the inauguration of democracy (II) in Athens, the most important city on the Greek mainland. From the new spirit of world-openness, which appeared on the stage of human history with the Greek “discovery of the world,” European culture achieved its peculiar form of “identity” through the epochal stages of its history. These reflections will come to a close with the discussion of this thesis (III).

I

Because of its global extension, the existence of science appears to us today as a nearly self-evident fact. Science is not at all, however, a self-evident fact. It was originally necessary to discover science as a particular possibility for human life. We can make the original novelty of science clear if we attend to an expression in normal usage today, one that will not appear problematic to anyone: we speak of science as investigating “the world.” Using the concept of “world” in this context, we make, usually without remarking upon it, a simple assumption. We understand by this the totality of that to which human comportment can be related and we assume that this “totality” can be viewed as a

whole. That is, we assume that it constitutes a unity. For without this assumption, there would be no sense in bringing together that totality, bringing together all of that by which we are confronted into the unity of *one* concept, the concept of “world.”

Historically, one can recognize that the employment of this concept is not simply a self-evident fact, in that the Greek language originally had no such concept at its disposal. There was indeed the expression *ta panta*, which carried the same meaning as the English saying “each and every,” but only the totality of all occurrences within the world is thereby indicated. The world as the *one* whole, which forges out of the totality, out of the simple sum of multiplicity, a unity of that which belongs together, first had to be discovered and named. The name was taken from the everyday Greek language: *kosmos*. This word, which in Western languages has since become quite common, originally meant something like “decoration” or “ornament” and, therefore, “order.” Only at the turn of the sixth to the fifth century B.C., probably with Heraclitus, did *kosmos* become a designation for the whole of the world, that is, for the unity of everything that confronts us.

If there was no name for the all-encompassing unity of the world up to the time of Heraclitus, there is an explanation for this. Normally, we human beings live in the world without thinking of its unity. For the fact of there being something like the one whole, it is necessary that we, as one says in English, “account for it” expressly. There is an equivalent for this expression in ancient Greek: *logon didonai*. Literally translated, this means “to give a *logos*,” whereby “to give” is intended as “lay out or show before other humans.” The word *logos*, the Greek equivalent for the English “account” here and perhaps the single most significant term for European culture, has remained understood up to the present as “language” or “doctrine” and is familiar to us from a number of concepts derived from the Greek term. However, the fundamental meaning of the word *logos*, which it also has for Greek mathematics, is “relation,” or more precisely, the “laying open of a relation.”²

Heraclitus uses the word *logos* in this fundamental sense and puts forth the following thesis: in the thoughtlessness of our everyday life, we lack insight into that relation that enables us to recognize the unity of the world. The common conduct of human beings is comparable to that of the sleeper. Each has a world for him- or herself as in a dream. Humans as they most often are, “the many” or “most,” as Heraclitus says, know only that which is private and each time one’s own, the *idion*, but not that which is “common” to them all, the *koinon*, that is, the *one* world.³ In much of what has come down to us, Heraclitus speaks polemically against the masses of human beings in this sense, as those for whom the unity of the world remains closed off.⁴ He calls them “the many” because they remain imprisoned within the multiplicity of their respective

particular worlds, although the world of all human beings is *one*. The “many” do indeed live in the world, but the ground-laying attitude within which they engage in discourse and pursue their business impedes their recognition of the world *as* world. That is, as all-encompassing unity. The thinking of philosophy and science begins with the readiness to open itself to the relation of belonging together, in which all particular worlds stand, and that thinking consists of laying open this relation, this *logos*. What is proper to and what separates each respective, particular world is transcended through the commonness of the one world and the way in which this occurs is made intelligible through the *logos*.

How this thought of Heraclitus is to be understood can be clarified by way of the phenomenological concept of “world,” which Husserl introduces in connection with everyday usage. We use the word “world” often as a term for a life-space, as when we speak of the “world of sports,” “the world of the family,” “the world of economy,” etc. As a sort of indirect consequence of Husserl’s phenomenology, the concept of life-world has come into use today not only for such life-spaces, but also for the one whole of all such life-spaces. The encompassing life-worlds are the various human cultures and Europe is one of these cultures. All particular life-worlds within the one life-world of the whole of humanity constitute fields of vision, which offer arenas for the comportment of the humans living them. As a term for such fields of vision within human comportment, the concept of *horizon*, initiated by Nicholas of Cusa in the Late Middle Ages, has gradually come into use in modernity. Husserl has explicitly adopted this concept in his phenomenology.

In its literal sense, the Greek word “horizon” indicates the line at which point our visual field reaches its limit due to the curvature of the earth.⁵ Even so, every horizon, understood as a life-world, constitutes an initial limit for the circumscribing of our comportment and, thus, *limits* the range of our respective behaviors. When viewed in this way, every horizon is a particular world and we human beings usually and for the most part have the tendency to persist in our familiar, particular life-world. Heraclitus hits the mark, then, with his critical observation that human beings do not place their particular worlds in relation to one another. He could not, however, criticize humans for this if it were not possible in principle to break out of this spell, this hold within the particular life-world. That we are already conscious of this possibility even before the explicit philosophical insight into the unity of the world is confirmed, for example, by the fact that one can be seen as needing to broaden one’s horizons.

It is possible to overcome the restriction of our respective life-worlds because horizons constitute referential contexts. Only because we have ordered everything that confronts our thinking and doing into such complexes are we

able to *understand* each of these elements. Each occurrence of whatever kind within our respective life-world refers through the meaning it has for us to other occurrences. A basketball refers in some sense to the basket or to the rules of the game, to the skill of the players, to the spectators, to the television, to the manufacturer that produced it, to the store that sold it, etc. This indicates that the life-worlds do not constitute enclosed fields of vision. They are not insulated from one another, but refer out beyond themselves. A ball can, within the game in which it is used, belong to the “world of the child” or to the “world of sports,” and at the same time it can possess, as merchandise, a position of value in the “world of economics.”

Because the particular worlds in which we live refer in multiple ways to one another through such meaning-bearing references, these are all unified into an encompassing referential context and this is the *one* world as life-world, which is common to all human beings. With the elevation of the everyday word *kosmos* to a fundamental concept for philosophy and science, Heraclitus had nothing else in mind than the life-world, common to all humans, as all-encompassing referential context. Since this context unifies all particular horizons within itself, it constitutes the order within which all these individual worlds belong. Thus, Heraclitus could employ a word meaning “order” in everyday language to indicate the one all-encompassing world.

The reader might be surprised that the concept of horizon was above employed in elucidating the Heraclitean understanding of world, since, although linguistically of Greek origin, this concept reflects in its contemporary usage the modern tendency of referring the “world” back to the human subject insofar as “horizon” indicates a circumscribing that encircles human beings. However, the idea that the world and things *are* insofar as they *appear* to humans within the circumference of their life-worlds need not necessarily imply subjectivity. Parmenides, a thinker contemporary with and closely intellectually related to Heraclitus, already gave expression to the notion that the human perception of things, on the one hand, and the *existence* of those things, on the other hand, belong inextricably together. In his didactic poem, he states that the perception opened to the Being of things, *noein*, and Being, *einai*, are “the same.”⁶

A generation later, Protagoras founded the educational movement of sophistry by concretizing in his own way this fundamental Parmenidean thought: the human being is “the measure of all things.” That is, humans are the criterion for things, if they are that they are, and if they are not, that they are not, because things appear differently to each individual human or to each human group. This is the illuminating presentation of Protagorean relativism in Plato’s *Theaetetus*.⁷ That means simply that every human being has a circumference for the appearing of things that is proper to him or her. That is, as Heraclitus

would have put it, each has his or her own proper and peculiar world as an *idion*. Protagoras rejects the Heraclitean critique of the many's restriction to their "dream-worlds" and in the name of "sound common sense" he rehabilitates the hold or bias that prevails over human beings as they ordinarily are in their particular life-worlds. Thus, in this Protagorean protest against that which he sees as the presumption and arrogance of previous thinkers, the world is already thought substantially as horizon.⁸

Contrary to the many, who are blind to the commonness of the one world, Heraclitus expressly emphasizes in his central statement concerning the world that "this *kosmos* here" is "the same for all." In this statement, the striking and, according to some interpreters, suspect formulation "this here" points unmistakably and substantially toward the world as lived in by us humans, the life-world.⁹ Two and a half thousand years later we encounter, renewed and transformed by Husserl, the fundamental thought of Heraclitus that, in order to discover the commonness of the one world, it is necessary to distance oneself from the life and the mental posture of human beings in their ordinary everydayness. Husserl names that posture the "natural attitude." His phenomenology can, therefore, be understood as a reflective resumption of the discovery of the world *as* world and the resumption of the break with the natural attitude, a break presupposed by the world's discovery. Because that discovery stands at the origin of European culture, it is no coincidence that the word "European" appears in the title of Husserl's last work of 1936, his legacy to future philosophy.¹⁰

As has been indicated, the word *kosmos* came to refer to "order" because it properly referred to something like ornament or decoration. The question arises, then, how the one common world, which presents itself to all human beings and which exceeds their particular horizons, could have originally presented itself to Heraclitus as ornament, that is, as something beautiful. The answer to this question can be brought to light via the phenomenon of the moods or attunements (*Stimmungen*) familiar to every human being. That is, it is in these attunements, in a peculiarly comprehensive way, that we come into the whole of the world in which we live. According to Husserl's theory of horizons, the one life-world that transcends and encompasses all particular horizons is familiar to us through our consciousness that the referentiality of horizon to horizon extends unforeseeably. We know *of* the one world through the consciousness of this infinite "and so forth" of references. This Husserlian description of our familiarity with the one world is not false, but it is nevertheless one-sided. For the one world does not stand open to us *only* in the infinite character of referential contexts. There is also the possibility that this world can be given to us in a single blow, as it were. Moods or attunements open up this possibility, for in each of them the whole of our world appears to us "in another light"; to lovers the world might appear rosy, to the despairing, gloomy.

It is necessary, of course, to make distinctions among attunements. There are the superficial attunements, the rapidly fluctuating good and bad moods of everyday life. We also have the experience, however, of moods that stir or shake us deeply and that have a lasting effect on our whole lives. An irrepressible joy with the world, an undying love, a persisting angst, a groundless despair, etc., can determine the life-project of a human being from the ground up and the world appears as wholly different in each of these. Heidegger, always remaining true to the spirit of “phenomenology,” even in the decades when he hardly employed the concept, named such attunements “fundamental or grounding attunements” (*Grundstimmungen*). These arise from out of the fundament or ground (*Grund*) of human existence and constitute simultaneously the ground or reason (*Grund*) for the discovery by individuals or communities of the possibilities from which their existence receives its measure. And such fundamental attunements thereby determine or attune the manner in which the whole of the world appears to individuals and to communities.¹¹ We owe to these fundamental attunements the ground-laying certainty of our existence, that is to say, the certainty that we live “in the world.” “The world” here indicates the one world that we have in common with all human beings. Our existence is always latently supported by fundamental attunements, although they only come to light occasionally in moments when we are deeply moved or shaken.

How is our horzonal orientation in particular life-worlds related to the immediate certainty of the one world within our fundamental attunement? The particularity of our experience of the world is already established in our fundamental attunements. Attunements are, as is well known, what bind human beings together, but also what separate them from one another. There is a commonness of fundamental attunements for an entire culture. It is most deeply due to these, that among the inhabitants of a certain cultural world we can feel at home, while we remain always guests in other such worlds, even when we have already immersed ourselves thoroughly in the language and customs of a foreign life-world.

Indeed, we have a self-evident certainty that we have the one and only life-world on this earth in common with all human beings. However, we can only experience concretely the one world, in which certain particular life-worlds constitute our home, by beginning from the world of our family, of our job, etc., and proceeding to the common world of our culture. The one world is always accessible for us only from the perspective of one life-world, which is for us home or the home-world, as Husserl called it in his later period. Only in going out from this world does the foreign-world open itself up to us. The inhabitants of a foreign-world can never experience our home-world from within, in the manner we experience it, even as we can never make our own

the way in which they experience our home-world from without. This asymmetry of accessibility of home-world and foreign-world from within and without constitutes the unavoidable fundamental structure of our certainty of the one and only life-world of humanity.

On the basis of the above reflections, we are able to approach the previously mentioned problem of the “identity” of European culture and to pose the following question: does a fundamental attunement perhaps present itself that originally determined or attuned the manner in which the European home-world was experienced at its inception? The question could initially appear forced, but it receives a surprising confirmation, if we turn once again to the beginning of European culture. In fact, the new life-possibilities for the pursuit of philosophy and science, the Greek discovery of the one world as *kosmos*, is indebted to a fundamental attunement.¹² This is no strictly modern claim, but rather stems from the first canonical figures of philosophy and science, Plato and Aristotle. Looking back on the beginning of philosophical and scientific thinking, they themselves observed that this thinking arose from wonder, from *thaumazein*.¹³ Wonder is, for Plato and Aristotle, as well as for the Greeks in general, a *pathos*, a “suffering,” but this means nothing but an attunement.

Thaumazein can also remain, like every attunement, fleeting and superficial, but when it becomes a deep attunement, the wonder through which philosophy, unified with science, arose determines or attunes by way of a unique ambivalence of joy and fright. In this attunement, we are overtaken by a joyous wonder *that* the single, all life-world encompassing world is “there” at all, rather than not being there. In this elevated attunement, wherein this “wonder” at the opening of the world overcomes us, we sense at the same time that the fact of the world’s being there, rather than there being nothing, is not in our power. In the happy occurrence of wonder, the darkness of nothing is concurrently present as a shadowy abyss. Therefore, deep wonder leaves us speechless and calls forth questions, which, in the attempt to answer them, leave us in *aporia*, as Plato and Aristotle emphasize. Because the “light of the world” only illuminates before the dark background of nothingness, the world could appear to the Greeks in wonder as “luminescent.” And this luminescence of the world was then the ground for the possibility of experiencing the world’s order as ornament or decoration, that is, as *kosmos*.

From childhood, all human beings of all cultures are familiar with the occasionally overwhelming attunements of wonder and astonishment. Through Greek philosophy and science, however, the *pathos* of *thaumazein* became for the first and only time in the history of humankind a culture-founding force for the European culture that has its beginning within this *pathos*.¹⁴ This occurred insofar as the first practitioners of philosophical-scientific thinking overcame the normal hold exerted upon human beings

within their particular life-worlds and opened themselves up in a new and world-historical way to that world which is common to all humans. As is well known, wonder makes one initially speechless. But what is peculiar to this attunement is that it does not wish to abide in speechlessness, but demands that the things that show themselves in the newly appearing world be brought to language. Thus, deep wonder transforms itself into a curiosity about things now seen anew. Science could only arise because, from wonder, a peculiar curiosity was born.

Human beings are also familiar, long before any philosophy or science, with the urge to know more and more information. But this curiosity normally is placed in the service of some goal or other. It limits itself, in order to know its way better within certain horizons. Curiosity was transformed for the first time with the Greeks into the striving for a knowledge that no longer had as its justification the promise of better orientation within individual, particular life-worlds. Aristotle introduced the term *theôria*, “theory,” for this kind of knowing. The corresponding verb, *theôrein*, properly means “to view,” in the sense in which, for example, an official spectator “viewed” the competitions at the Olympic games. One who is “theoretical” in the original Greek sense does not, when striving for knowledge, regard that which is investigated insofar as it can be useful for him or her within the limited field of vision of a particular life-world, but is interested simply in beings insofar as they *are*. He or she considers, as Aristotle says, a being *as* being. That is to say, not simply as it belongs to one of the many life-world horizons, but as it belongs within the one world. It was no accident that the spirit of *theôria* appeared not initially in Athens with its poor Attic rural surroundings, but in Miletus. The wealth that depended upon the fruitfulness of Ionia’s alluvial land was of significance for the appearance of philosophical-scientific thinking. The poor, who must work daily for the maintenance of their very lives, have no time to spare, and can in no way afford the luxury of *theôria*, which does not in the least meet his or her life-world needs. Therefore, Aristotle aptly remarks that, because the Ionians had *scholê*, “leisure,” that is they had time free from life’s necessities, these people began to philosophize.¹⁵ Only in the leisure made possible by their prosperity could the inhabitants of Ionia open up the world for themselves in a manner so new and radical. And yet these living conditions and such prosperity have occurred here and there in other cultures, without giving rise to philosophy or science. The philosophical fundamental attunement, *thaumazein*, was required in order that the new openness to that one world could arise, an openness to that world which for us has become self-evident and certain as that which transcends all particular horizons.

The tie that binds us to our respective life-worlds, our “peculiar worlds” (“*Sonderwelten*”) as Husserl formulates them in a late manuscript,¹⁶ biases

our judgments from the start. Thus, the ideal of a radical freedom from bias that serves as the measure for science, something wholly new in cultural history, belongs properly to the Greek openness to the one world. In the striving for a freedom from bias, there emerged for the first time an explicit consciousness that the one world is accessible for human beings only within the difference between home-world and foreign-world. For its first practitioners, therefore, *historiê* consisted in seeing beyond the Greek home-world and exploring the manifold given occurrences within culturally different foreign-worlds.

Concrete empirical science began in Miletus with a type of investigation that called itself *historiê*. We are familiar with this word even today in the noun “history,” insofar as it is in *historiê* that European historical writing finds its beginning with Herodotus a century later. The word *historiê* actually means something like “exploration.” Its object was the multiplicity of customs, of forms of life, of religions, of geographical characteristics among the various peoples known to the Greeks at that time. This multiplicity aroused the curiosity of the Greeks, who, with the wide-open eyes we know from their artistic representations, could never take in enough of the world’s richness and who sought knowledge of each and every thing. The location of cities in which science developed was advantageous for *historiê*, or for the curiosity in the multiplicity of other life-worlds. Miletus and Ephesus were port cities and centers, within which trade routes intersected, routes that joined east and west, or the Mediterranean and the Orient, as well as north and south, or Central and Eastern Europe and North Africa and Egypt. The above-mentioned prosperity of Ionia depended also on this geographical location.¹⁷

In their early period, philosophy and all-“exploring” science are indistinguishable from one another. This original unity has been the model for almost every canonical figure in the history of philosophy. This model faded only in the nineteenth century, with the radical emancipation of the so-called special sciences from philosophy. It has become fashionable to call every achievement of knowledge and every kind of deeper thought within the tradition of the non-European high cultures “science” or “philosophy.” However, one thereby levels an essential cultural distinction. Today it is beyond question that the quest for knowledge in other cultures has here and there led to an understanding significantly more developed than that achieved by the Greeks, and that other cultures have arrived at potentially more meaningful existential insights. So long as knowledge remains in the service of life bound within particular horizons, however, and has not yet been carried out by the “theoretical” openness to the world *as* world that developed out of philosophy and science in their unity, philosophy and science in the original European meaning of these concepts are not in play. It is necessary to hold fast to this meaning, in order to avoid losing the particularity of these concepts.

The curiosity of *historiê* arose out of wonder, but it was accompanied by the danger that the spirit of that wonder would thereby be lost because curiosity preoccupies itself with the multiplicity of that with which one would like to become acquainted and to know. It thereby loses sight of the unity of the common world, which stirs human beings within the speechlessness of deep wonder. It is precisely this critique of *historiê* that one finds already with Heraclitus of Ephesus. One of his pregnant fragments directs itself explicitly against the founder of *historiê*, Hekataeus, of the neighboring city of Miletus. Heraclitus writes, "Knowing much does not teach mindfulness."¹⁸ The "mindfulness" of which Heraclitus here writes is, as the Greek word *nous*, the ability to *noein*, to perceive, that, as mentioned above, belongs inextricably together with Being according to Parmenides. This perceiving opens us up to that which holds together the multiplicity of the appearances within the world and, thus, to the *logos*, the relation, that binds all horizons to the one world, common to all human beings. The *historiê* threatens to lose itself in the many cultural and geographical worlds, in the particular horizon it investigates with curiosity. Indeed, a corresponding danger now poses an extreme threat to modern science, with its endlessly progressing specialization.

On the other hand, Heraclitus makes it clear in another fragment that the philosophical spirit of wonder, which directs itself toward the one all-encompassing world, cannot manage without curiosity for the many particular worlds.¹⁹ This is because the *one* world *is* only as the ordering of the *many* worlds. In order that the many horizons may be experienced expressly with *nous* as belonging together, that is, within the unity of *one* order, each must also appear as an individual, peculiar horizon with a character proper to it within the multiplicity. Thus, science at its inception must direct its attention toward the many horizons of human life with new respect for what is proper in each and every foreign-world. Science becomes, thereby, exploration.

The Greek discovery of the world in the earliest philosophy and science has, therefore, two aspects that stand in a certain tension with respect to each other. Philosophical *thaumazein* allows the luminous ordering of the *one* world, the world as *kosmos*, to present itself, while the scientific curiosity that springs from wonder arouses interest in the *many* geographical and cultural horizons and brings about an explicit opening toward foreign-worlds. World comes to appear as the one all-encompassing whole and at the same time as a wealth of many life-world horizons. This complimentary relationship between the one world and the many worlds *attunes or determines* not only the spirit of philosophical-scientific thinking at its inception, but also, in another manner, democracy, to which this discussion must now turn.

II

In democracy, the second above-mentioned accomplishment of humanity originally stemming also from ancient Greece and determining equally the spirit of European culture, we find a parallel to science. On the Greek mainland, also around the turn of the sixth to the fifth century B.C., as Heraclitus was engaging in a dispute with *historiê*, Athens was preparing itself for the transition to this world-historical, new form of communal life. In a democracy, it is institutionally acknowledged that human beings are equal to one another in their right to develop their own freedom and are, in this sense, "citizens." The early democracy of Athens, therefore, names itself an *isonomia*, that is, literally, "equality before the law," the *nomos*. Concretely, the equality of the citizens consisted above all in possessing the same freedom to speak publicly concerning the common affairs of the *polis* in the *agora*, that is, *agoreuein*. It is from this verb that *isegoria* is derived, which is a concept fundamental to democracy for the early Athenians and which means equality with respect to public speech.

Isegoria was at the outset anything but a self-evident fact. For opinion formation had, then as well as now, a tendency that cast doubt upon the validity of granting the freedom to publicly express opinions to everyone: whoever forms an opinion can only proceed from the respective particular horizons within which one orients oneself in everyday comportment. Every opinion adheres somewhat to the limitation of the horizon that stands behind it. It also holds for human beings, however, that they are not fettered by this limitation in their communal life and in their dealings with one another. They can also have recourse in expressing their opinions to that life-space that they have in common with all others in their shared dealings with one another. For the Greeks, this was the community of citizens in the communal world of a city, the *polis*.

With respect to this shared world, a *logon didonai* is possible, in the form of "giving an account" within democratic discussion, not only for those few with insight who stand, according to Heraclitus, above the many. The many also have a *logos* as citizens who are in the position to discuss the shared affairs within the *polis*. Heraclitus did not yet entrust this capacity to the many,²⁰ but his fragments concerning the comportment of the many within the *polis* show that during his time a transformation of the Greek *polis* into a democratic world was impending. Of the citizens' public existence it can indeed be said that it is one "world." The public dispute between the political opinions of the citizens is not only tolerated, but rather constitutes the substance of open communal life. The distinctions between opinions bring it about, however, that we humans accomplish our fundamental everyday orientation from out of our distinct particular worlds. The democratic *polis*, which bases itself

upon the freedom for expressing opinions, allows these immediate horizons to become mediately valid for every citizen and it is a world, insofar as it provides an open arena for the multiplicity of horizons.

If the individual citizen arrives at his or her respective political opinion by way of particular horizons, this means, in Heraclitean terms, that the citizen proceeds from what is proper and peculiar to him or her, from the *idion*. In the communal life of the Greeks, there was, in a pronounced sense, just such an *idion*, a proper or ownmost, in the form of the house, *oikos*, the dwelling place for the communal life of the ancient extended family. "House" identifies at the same time the extended family itself as a community, in which the conduct of life occurred, indeed in its two-fold form. It is the place for the satisfaction of the needs that must be satisfied daily for every individual's survival and for the survival of humankind through procreation and the education of children.

In the language of Habermas, the life in the *oikos* was characterized by "instrumental action" ("*instrumentales Handeln*"). It served in the provision of the necessary means for the maintenance of life. In order to achieve the aims of maintaining life, we are referred to the appropriate means and these means refer us to the aims they serve to help us achieve. In this sense, the "house" constitutes a referential context and, thus, a horizon or world. The world of the *oikos* was the "life-world" of the Greeks, if one takes the concept "life-world" literally, "life" meaning the kind of existence that is marked by self-preservation. The instrumental action of the human being was originally undertaken because of the needs each one felt, needs that indicate the necessity of one's own self-preservation as a living thing. As a consequence of Husserl's work, especially in the social philosophy of Alfred Schütz, the concept of the "life-world" has become a term with worldwide significance well beyond philosophy. Even today, however, it is unclear what is properly to be understood by it. I would like to suggest that one elaborate the term first from an historical point of view, using it for the Greek *oikos* or for the ancient world of life-preservation.

For the Greeks there were two life-spaces: the *polis* or city as a community of citizens, on the one hand, and the *oikos* or the community of the family within the home, on the other hand. Given this, Greek social life was shaped by a fundamental distinction between openness and closure. Every Greek home was, even according to its architectural form, an enclosed life-space, concealed from those not belonging to the family. Over against this, the communal life of the city, the *polis*, was played out not as concealed, but rather openly and publicly. In the Greek differentiation between the concealedness of the life-realm within the home and the openness and public space²¹ of civic communal life, there awakened in European culture for the first time a consciousness

that the life-world usually remains hidden, but can also come to appearance as a world common to all.

This occurred non-philosophically from the historical moment when the city's community opened an arena, wherein many opinions could step forth openly and publicly against one another.²² This stepping forth was *agoreuein* and this is a way of *logon didonai*. European culture thus begins among the Greeks with a two-fold overcoming of the concealedness of the world *as world* through an appropriate *logos*. The elite thinkers' discovery of the world as *kosmos*, as a relation or *logos* between the unity and the multiplicity of the life-world, is complemented by the world's coming to appear also for the many *as world*. It does so insofar as the life-world steps forth for the first time out of the concealedness of the "house" and the communal life of the *polis* becomes open and public. That is, it proceeds into the democratic dispute between opinions.

Although this dispute was certainly constitutive for the *polis*, it was more vital for it that the one common fundamental order, the *nomos* expressed in the concept *insonomia*, was protected. As indicated above, Heraclitus calls the ordering of the one world that which is "common" to all humans and he encourages a prioritization of the common, *koinon*, over that which is each time *idion* for the many. In order to clarify the meaning of that which is "common" for the *kosmos*, he employs a revealing comparison. Because the law, the *nomos*, is what is common to the citizens in the community of a city, they must take strength from their *nomos* like a city wall, in order to preserve their holding together.²³ Communal life in the city owes its order, an order that protects it from self-destruction, to this common *nomos*. Thus, any heedlessness that could become bereft of that awe before the holiness of the *nomos*, any impiety or *asebeia*, was punished most severely in the Greek *polis*.

The tense relation of the freedom of *isegoria* and the restraint of the *nomos* shows that between the political world of democracy put underway by the Greeks and the world that they discovered through the new openness of *theoria* there exists a ground-laying structural similarity. The multiplicity of horizons, by which the open or public dispute among opinions within the democratic *polis* is determined, belongs together within the unity of an accompanying order, namely the *nomos*, as with the *kosmos* investigated by philosophy and science. Also, democracy, with its freedom of opinions, owes its emergence to the new world-openness characterized by the complementary relation of the unity of the world and the multiplicity of horizons, which is based upon inaugural philosophical-scientific thinking. Thus, as claimed above, it was indeed no coincidence that democracy emerged nearly simultaneously alongside science and among the same people.²⁴

Beyond the individual *polis*, the Greek tribes showed an interest in the multiplicity of the cultural life-worlds within the narrowest geographical

region. Complementary to this interest, however, they had a consciousness of the unity of the Greek world, a feeling that all “Hellenic” peoples belonged together, because of which they supported religious and cultural centers, such as Delphi, Olympia, or Delos. And yet they placed great value as well in protecting those qualities proper to the worlds defined by the language and tradition of each individual Greek tribe and in developing these independently of one another. For example, it was typical to consciously employ in dramatic or lyric poetry the various dialects of the Greek tribes. Thus, Greek communal life had, in a certain sense, even in relation to the various *poleis*, a “democratic” tendency.

One must, in any case, exercise caution in using the concept “democracy” in such a manner. For it is no less true of this concept than of “science” and “philosophy” that it is often used in a vague sense that levels the fundamental distinctions between Europe and the developed non-European cultures. One understands it as partly democratic, for example, if the ruler of a great empire is supported by a committee of advisors who are allowed to express their contrary opinions freely. But one loses from the outset the sense of the freedom of opinion that determines or attunes the communal life of the citizens of a democracy if one believes that this freedom bears an essential resemblance to the tolerance for freely expressed opinions within a circle of advisers surrounding a ruler. Such a belief would understand democracy as the broadening of the circle of advisers to include the entire population. One thereby fails to grasp that democracy can be spoken of only where a free-space for the general freedom of opinion among the citizens is expressly institutionalized. This free-space is the “openness or public space” that emerges among the Greeks in the *agora* and that transcends the survival-space of the “house.” This was something singularly new in the history of developed cultures. Such public or open space assumes that there are “citizens,” whose freedom to express their opinions is guaranteed by the principle of equality.

The paradigmatic inequality experienced within the family is that which in non-European cultures has been understood to be a natural condition, as it were. Thus, as a rule, a hierarchical structure is carried over from the family to the whole of society. A classic example is the ethic of Confucianism in China. In Europe, there emerges with the Greeks for the first time the possibility of interpreting marriage, the core of the family, as the prefiguration of the democratic experience of equality prepares itself. One finds proof for this in Aristotle’s *Politics*, the founding work of political philosophy. The work begins with the definition of political, communal life within a democratically organized *polis* and this definition is introduced significantly with a critical aside concerning the Persian Empire. The fundamentally undemocratic character of this empire is for Aristotle evident in that the men are allowed to rule despotically over their wives.²⁵

From the perspective of the traditional family structure, the character of democracy as even contrary to nature consists in the fact that the commonness of communal life is not based here in a harmony guaranteed through hierarchy, but indeed in a quarrelsome dispute between many opinions. If democracy thus understood is able to exist, this must be attributed to the fact that the free-space for freedom of opinion is held open through a particular form of respect for every individual citizen even prior to institutional provisions for stability. The ancient Greek language had the word *aidôs* for such a way of behaving. *Aidôs* encompasses the modes of comportment through which the other is cared for and within which consideration is given to the other. In English, this sense of *aidôs* can be translated by the phrase “modest awe” (in German, *schamvolle Scheu*).²⁶ As can be seen in Protagoras’s *mythos* in Plato’s early dialogue of the same name, the Greeks were conscious of the fact that this modest awe was a ground-laying *êthos*, whereby the communal life of the political world became possible and *asebeia* was avoided.²⁷

Such modest awe is inherently connected to wonder, whereby one is overwhelmed by the existence of the world and which thereby motivates philosophy and science. Philosophical wonder allows us to sense that it is not in our power that the existence of the world stands in place of the Nothing. Therefore, an awe before the wondrous occurrence that the Nothing has freed up the world for its existence is proper to this attunement. The awe in communal life with other humans consists in the readiness to hold myself back in my own appearance in the world in order thereby to provide a place for the appearance of other humans. In democracy, the individual human comes to appear as a citizen, that is, as a place where the world appears as the political world in the perspectival multiplicity of the opinions that concern it as a world. The awe before the individual citizen as the site for the appearing of the world and the awe of *theoria* before the miracle of the world’s being there belong together. What binds them together is the special role that every individual human being plays as the place for the openness of the world. This can be clarified as follows.

The things in the world would be present even if no human beings had been born, but their existence would remain shrouded in darkness. Things step forth into the light only within human dealings with them and, thus, only insofar as they hold a place within the context of meaning that constitutes the world in its horizontal order. In German, one can say that a child at birth “beholds the light of the world” (“*das Licht der Welt erblickt*”). The German expression does not mean to say that the world is so full of light that it thereby gives occasion for great optimism. It means to say much more that the world’s being there is luminous because it raises itself from the darkness of the Nothing, which event is awe-inspiring within the attunement of wonder. With every birth of a human being this darkness is newly broken and the world is brought

forth as the light for the appearing of things. In this sense, every birth possesses a world-creating character.

With the awe that it contains, the wonder that motivates science is properly a susceptibility to the light of the world insofar as it becomes new. It is an attunement of birth, of the coming-to-be of the human being. But that applies equally to the modest awe before other citizens and their political opinions. By way of the relation of these opinions to the shared world of public or open space, the political activity of each respective citizen does not remain confined to a particular world. In this there lies always a hope for path-breaking new beginnings, within which the first birth, as it were, repeats itself. If someone can clear the way for something new with his or her opinion, this is possible only because he or she sees the world "in a new light." In the case of a truly new beginning, the political world comes forth into a new light and experiences therein a rebirth. According to Hannah Arendt, the possibility for human beings to live together democratically depends upon the fact that the spirit of birth, "natality," remains alive.²⁸ Modest awe in the political world grants to every individual the space for a creative bearing, which is made possible through natality.

Thus, science and democracy spring from the same fundamental attunement, which one could call the modest awe of natality. This fundamental attunement constitutes the inaugural spirit of Europe. It is from this that every individual human being receives an incalculable dignity, as a site for a world-openness of natality. Politically, the modest awe before this dignity has led to democracy's being grounded expressly upon human rights in the modern development of Western, Euro-American culture. This historical development only became possible because the fundamental attunement of natality, modest awe, had earlier deepened itself in an epochal manner, when the Christian doctrine of neighborly love became determining or attuning for the spirit of European culture in Late Antiquity.

In ancient China there was already, with Confucius, such a "Golden Rule," as well as in pre-Christian Europe, as the fundamental command for ethical human behavior. That is, a rule, that demands that I should do unto others what I would expect them to do unto me. But this rule assumes that there is already an established canon of what one may expect from others. What can be expected is that good which "one" has to do to others according to the traditional customs of one's own cultural home-world. Jesus refers as well to the Golden Rule in the Sermon on the Mount,²⁹ but he interprets it such that neighborly love breaks open the home-world horizon of being good. This is made clear in Jesus' paradigmatic story of the Good Samaritan, the one who took pity upon another who had been the victim of robbers and who lay half-dead on the roadside.³⁰

The Jewish priest and the servants of the Temple who first pass the injured man do not show concern for him because the customs of their life-world do not dictate that they do so. Neither was the man from Samaria, thereby, compelled to behave differently. Through his mercy, however, he comes near to the injured man or, as it says in the story, he becomes his “neighbor,” i.e., one who lives nearby. From what “nearness” is Jesus speaking here? Someone who does a member of his or her own home-world a good turn, which is owed to the other according to the concrete implications of the Golden Rule for that home-world, that one draws near to the recipient of the good deed. One who practices neighborly love, however, is incomparably nearer to the addressee of that love, because the former encounters the latter not as a member of his or her home-world, but as an other with whom the one world is shared, through which the lines of separation between the particular life-worlds become meaningless. Every act of neighborly love steps in an unexpected manner beyond the horizon of that which can be expected of the good human being within his or her home-world. In this sense, this is a revolutionary new beginning in conduct—a beginning that becomes possible through an openness of natality to the one world. A spirit of birth and rebirth reigns in Christianity, then, which manifests itself ritually in such celebrations as Easter and Christmas.

III

An objection presents itself here, if not earlier: with this sketch of the European spirit are we not presenting an idealized image of Europe? Have the Europeans not paid the high price of an extreme political division and controversy dating back even to the internecine wars between the Greek *poleis*? Has Europe throughout its history not continually violated this same modest awe before the worth of the others and let itself be governed by hate rather than by neighborly love? And what remains of the awe before the miracle of the world in the age of environmental destruction? Mustn't the Europeans admit that the worth of the members of non-European foreign-worlds has been continually trampled under foot, first by traditional Christian evangelism, then by modern imperialism? Religious and political colonialism knew nothing of the respect for others as sites for the openness of the world and did not shy away from considerably destroying the traditional form of their life-worlds.

This cannot be denied. Yet a temptation belongs to all great possibilities in human life; a temptation that is itself characteristic of greatness and that necessarily accompanies its emergence. The temptation of Europe and, in the modern period, for the whole Euro-American Western culture, lies in identifying the one world discovered here, a world of all human beings that provides a place for all their various life-worlds, with one of these worlds. Namely, there

is the danger of equating the one shared world with our own European or Western home-world. The universality of the one open world of humanity becomes then merely a pretext for enforcing universally the customs and convictions that are themselves nothing but the expression of the particular possibilities of a certain home-world.

It would be a one-sided representation of the history of Europe, if this history were seen to consist entirely in falling prey to this temptation. The country of Spain is here exemplary. It was indeed Spain that launched the modern development of European colonialism and imperialism, whereby it brought endless misery to the peoples of the New World four or five centuries ago. Simultaneously, however, in the thought of Francisco de Vitoria or Bartolomé de las Casas, Spain struck out on the path toward modern international law, which for the first time in the history of the world forbade explicitly such colonialism. Suggestions from de las Casas for human rights legislation in "New India" met with the approval of the world leader Charles V, and Francisco de Vitoria held lectures, in part in the presence of this emperor, at the University at Salamanca, which then echoed throughout the whole of Spain. These lectures document clearly the fact that the new international law was a result of a European self-critique with respect to the imperialistic oppression and mishandling of the Native Americans.

What occurred in Spain in the sixteenth century is paradigmatic of Europe's capacity, whereby, when she is responsible for a disastrous development, she is able to discover a remedy for the development as if it were a deadly disease. It is not intended with this observation that atrocities can be undone or that they might find a *post facto* justification. It is meant to show, rather, that the new world-openness discussed above has enabled Europe to bring itself into a relation with its own culture and the result of this self-relation is an amazing and radical freedom. No other developed culture has managed to perceive the proper claim of foreign life-worlds with such a lack of prejudice as that which occurs under modern international law.

In the Greek openness to the world as world, the possibility was from the outset presaged that the whole world would one day unite the two achievements put under way through this openness: science and democracy. Their global expansion has lent support to the above-mentioned impression that the operations of science and the democratic form of communal life are possibilities of comportment that are from the outset natural for human beings. The consciousness that these are in their spirit European could, thereby, have been to a great extent lost. In truth, what is at stake in this worldwide expansion of science and democracy is nothing other than a "europeanization of humanity,"³¹ even if this expression, which comes from Husserl, might sound today far too "Eurocentric."

But if what is European, indeed particularly by way of its continuation and transformation in the United States of America, has gained access to every culture on earth, a new objection presents itself. Under these conditions, how can one still speak of an “identity” of European culture, whereby it might be distinguished today from other cultures? The answer can only be that this identity, the common spirit of European culture, consists precisely not in the particularity of a home-world through which it delimits itself with respect to other cultures. Quite to the contrary, the identity of European culture consists in its opening itself through its new world-openness for all foreign-worlds, from which it might delimit itself as an enclosed home-world. There is indeed an identifiable quality peculiar to Europe, which has continually maintained itself and which goes back to the original fundamental attunement, to a modest awe of natality. This peculiarity, however, consists simply in the openness for non-European cultures that began among the Greeks with the above-mentioned *historiê*. Regardless of the political demarcation of the Greeks over against the “Barbarians,” the interest in the Egyptians, Persians, and other foreign life-worlds is clear in Herodotus’ dramatic presentation of these worlds within his historical work, his *historiê*. What is properly “European” resides in its not having closed itself off to the outside. “Europe is peculiar perhaps only in that it is, in possibility, everything,” as Karl Jaspers once judiciously phrased it.³²

The concept of identity suggests a representation of a static, enduring plurality-free unity. Europe, however, in contrast to the other developed cultures, has not found its way to itself by continuously preserving one certain culture as unified and enclosed. Europe has found itself, rather, by recognizing the merits of other cultural horizons with their particularities and indeed within a fundamental attunement always ready for new beginnings, the modest awe of natality. Before the dawn of European history, the developed cultures of humanity were largely static, a characteristic we can see even today in parts of East Asia, where temples and pagodas are still built looking exactly as they did a thousand years ago (which, of course, takes nothing away from how worthy these structures are of admiration). With the Greeks and the beginning of European culture, human communal life starts to flow in a peculiar manner. A kind of history came into existence, which the world had never seen. Because it is familiar to us to understand Europe as a, so-to-speak, finished cultural unity alongside other unities, such as the Islamic or East Asian Worlds, we easily fail to see that Europe distinguishes itself from such worlds in that it has never been finished, but is always coming-to-be.

In the common historical picture of the West, the age of the Renaissance, or literally, “re-birth,” is distinguished from the other historical periods of the West. It has, however, often been justifiably pointed out that the whole of European

history has been nothing but a series of Renaissances. In these, the fundamental attunement of natality has renewed itself in ever different and surprising transformations. Wonder even allows the discovery of something new in the light of the world because new horizons with new riches are always opening themselves. The peculiar European curiosity already apparent in the *historiê* of the Greeks works creatively because therein the most elementary creation repeats itself, the world-creation of birth, in which the light of the world dawns upon something new. In the creative joy of new birth, there is a productivity, which unfolded itself immediately and explosively already among the Greeks in dramatic and lyric poetry, in sculpture and in architecture, in engineering and in a wealth of political ideas. This same productivity has been the cause again and again of powerful innovative thrusts in the later history of Europe and, originating in Europe, in the history of the West in general.

Europe has held its form throughout the epochs of its history precisely in that foreign cultural horizons, appearing “from outside,” have come to provide a measure for its self-understanding and in that the distinction between “inside” and “outside” has, thereby, relativized itself. The educational treasures of the Greeks only became the origin of Europe insofar as the Romans made these treasures their own, although they belonged initially to a life-world wholly foreign to them. As the Hellenistic, Roman Empire Christianized itself during Late Antiquity, it opened itself once again to the influence of a foreign cultural horizon, to the biblical world of the Near East. The Christianization first of the Roman Empire, then of the peoples pouring into the Mediterranean region from the other side of the Alps, constituted the second great beginning of European culture. At this time the tradition grounded in its Greek origin first took on, a thousand years later, the geographical-political dimension that has been called “European” since the beginning of the Middle Ages. And there were other such beginnings, above all in the Middle Ages themselves through the openness to the transformation of the ancient tradition within the foreign world of Islam, without which modern Europe could never have come to be.

Europe found itself in that it established its existence in relation to, or more precisely, *as* relation to foreign cultures *in* their otherness. It did not develop itself into one world, into one culture along the, so to speak, normal path, that is, through establishing and preserving a persisting and identity-grounding center. Preservation depends normally on an inner enclosedness, for which an encapsulation apart from the foreign, from the culturally other is required to a large extent. The coming into existence of Europe has been quite otherwise. Its cultural integrity came to be, paradoxically, precisely in that it allowed itself to be attuned or determined from outside, from the foreign, or in that it never rested nor had its center within itself. In this sense, Europe had something

literally “ex-centric” about it. This is the thesis that Rémi Brague in 1992 put forth in his book, *Europe: la voie romaine*,³³ which, in my opinion, is the most philosophically important contribution to the discussion of the Europe-problematic in recent years.

If the openness to the multiplicity of cultural worlds becomes politically effective, it appears as the principle of *federalism*. In the fundamental attunement of natality or of the capacity to begin anew, which the founding fathers of North American democracy brought with them from Europe in the eighteenth century, these men elevated federalism to the principle of the American democratic constitution, as is documented in their “Federalist Papers.” The modern development of democracy has brought about not only the achievement of human rights, but also the centralization of bureaucratic and economic power structures, which threatens the federalist wealth of cultural worlds. One must fear that the particularity of mature cultures will be dissolved into a planetary “civilization-cocktail,” wherein what remains of cultural traditions will merely have the function of uprooted, folklore pieces to be utilized by the tourism industry.

European culture, due to its openness in natality to the universal world as place for many particular life-worlds, has the chance to show the world how its own multiplicity—such a cultural multiplicity in so small an area as is to be found on no other continent—can be kept alive. But that can be accomplished only if the political integration that the Europeans at present would like to implement, without the means or method having being agreed upon, is carried out consistently from the principle of federalism. That integration is, for the most part, a self-protective measure of the European countries over against the economic blocs of North America and East Asia. But a “European Community” grounded only in the political and economic cooperation of the member states would lack an intrinsic common bond. It would be built upon sand. This can be avoided only if the Europeans once again seize the opportunity to recall the grounding spirit of their culture through the process of political and economic integration: the wonder and modest awe of natality.

Because this culture-founding fundamental attunement consists in the shock that is called forth by the existence of the world as suspended over the abyss of the Nothing, it forbids any feeling of power by which Europe might lord itself over others in the current combative relations between cultures. Therefore, the past’s naïve pride in the European accomplishments of “science” and “democracy,” which have sprung from this fundamental attunement and have achieved worldwide acknowledgment, is foreign to any deeply penetrating consideration of that European fundamental attunement. In place of such arrogance, a European self-consciousness that has become self-critical through the consideration of the fundamental attunement could step forth

into the discussion among the world's cultures. But even in the self-critical reflection upon its fundamental attunement, Europe may retain a consciousness of its own unique position among cultures, that is, its openness for the world *as world*, or for the productive tension between the one world and the many life-worlds.

NOTES

1. The interpretation of Heraclitus here is based on my book, *Heraklit, Parmenides und der Anfang von Philosophie und Wissenschaft. Eine phänomenologische Besinnung* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1980).
2. The fundamental sense of *logos* is not "gathering," as Heidegger claims, but can be expressed by the phrase "laying-open of a relation." Only if *logos* is grounded in this meaning is it possible to understand how the term could also have been fundamental to Greek mathematics, a fact which Heidegger completely ignored.
3. H. Diels and W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 3 vols., 19th ed. (Zürich: Weidmann, 1996), 22 B 1.
4. Diels and Kranz, 22 B 1.
5. The present participle *horizôn*, or limiting, was used by the Greeks after the fourth century B.C. only in this astronomical sense.
6. Diels and Kranz, 28 B 3.
7. Plato, *Theaetetus* 152a–d.
8. The philosophical interpretation of sophistry, which supports the explanation of the *homo mensura*-statement discussed above, is more precisely carried out in my articles: "Die Sophistik in Hegels Sicht," in *Hegel und die antike Dialektik*, ed. M. Riedel (Frankfurt a.M., 1990) and "The Controversy Concerning Truth: Towards a Prehistory of Phenomenology," *Husserl Studies* 17/1 (2000).
9. Diels and Kranz, 22 B 30.
10. Cf. E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, vol. 6 of *Husserliana*, ed. W. Biemel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954); translated by D. Carr, under the title *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1970).
11. On the concept of fundamental attunement in Heidegger, cf. my "Fundamental Moods and Heidegger's Critique of Contemporary Culture," in *Reading Heidegger: Commemorations*, ed. J. Sallis (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993). Cf. also Peter Trawny, *Martin Heideggers Phänomenologie der Welt* (Freiburg and München: Verlag Karl Alber, 1997).
12. Cf. my "Intercultural Understanding and the Role of Europe," *The Monist* 78/1 (1995): 5–17.
13. Plato, *Theaetetus*, 155c–d; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 982b11–983a23.

14. After philosophers had called upon the Greek *thaumazein* innumerable times, it was Heidegger who, in his lecture course of winter semester 1937/38, posed for the first time the phenomenological question of what properly distinguishes philosophical wonder from the various unphilosophical forms of wondering and astonishment. This lecture course appeared in 1984 under the title "Grundfragen der Philosophie," vol. 45 of Heidegger's Gesamtausgabe (Frankfurt a.M.: Vittorio Klostermann, 1984/1992); translated by R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer, under the title *Basic Questions of Philosophy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).
15. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 981b20.
16. Cf. *Krisis*, Beilage XVII, op.cit., 459ff.
17. The particulars of the concrete geographical and historical conditions for ancient philosophy and science in general can be found in my book, *Treffpunkt Platon. Philosophischer Reiseführer durch die Länder des Mittelmeers* (Stuttgart, 1st ed., 1990; 3rd ed. [expanded by a third tour of significant sites of the Renaissance], 2001).
18. Diels and Kranz, 22 B 40: *polymathiê noon echein ou didaskei*.
19. Diels and Kranz, 22 B 35: "For it is very well necessary, that those who love wisdom investigate many things [*chrê gar eu mala pollôn historas philosophous einai*]."
20. Cf. Diels and Kranz, 22 B 121 in relation to B 104, B 33, B 49.
21. In contrast to English and to the Romance languages, in German it is possible to indicate the inherent connection between "public space" (*Öffentlichkeit*) and "openness" (*Offenheit*), which are both then opposed to concealedness (*Verborgtheit*). Both these nouns in German are connected to the adjective "open" (*offen*) and the verb "to open" (*öffnen*).
22. Cf. my "Husserl und die Griechen," in *Phänomenologische Forschungen*, vol. 22, ed. E. W. Orth (Freiburg and München, 1989).
23. Cf. Diels and Kranz, 22 B 114.
24. The German historian Christian Meier has performed a service by showing the connections between the emergence of democracy and the appearance of philosophical-scientific thinking in their entire historical breadth: *Die Entstehung des Politischen bei den Griechen* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1980); translated by D. McLintock, under the title *The Greek Discovery of Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990).
25. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252b5–9.
26. Cf. Plato, *Protagoras* 322cff.
27. According to Kant's well-known claim, it is possible in principle for there to be a "republic of devils." That is not true, however, of democracy. As the world of public and open disputes of opinions, democracy must be supported by a reigning ethic of awe among the citizenry. Because the democratic tolerance of disputation among many opinions depends upon this modest awe, it is no coincidence that the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century cast aside their attunement and annihilated as vermin groups of human beings declared by them to be undesirable.

28. Cf. Hannah Arendt, *Vita activa oder Vom tätigen Leben* (München and Zürich, 1979), 105–7 and 195–204; translated under the title *The Human Condition* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1958).
29. Matthew 7:12: “Thus, everything you want human beings to do unto you, in this way do also unto them!” and Luke 6:31: “And as you want human beings to do unto you, thus do unto them in this way!” translated from the Greek.
30. Luke 10:25–37.
31. Cf. “Die Krisis des europäischen Menschentums und die Philosophie,” in *Krisis*, op. cit. For more on this subject cf. Husserl, “These von der Europäisierung der Menschheit,” in *Phänomenologie im Widerstreit*, eds. C. Jamme and O. Pöggeler (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1989).
32. K. Jaspers, “Vom europäischen Geist,” in *Rechenschaft und Ausblick* (München, 1958), 283; translated by R.G. Smith, under the title *The European Spirit* (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1948).
33. R. Brague, *Europe, la voie romaine* (Paris: Criterion, 1992).

