

The "original type" which constitutes the foundation of every organic form "as the inner original community" is the *inner constructive force*, which receives the original direction of form-production—that is, the tendency to give rise to a particular form—and is propagated by *Inheritance*. The "uninterruptedly progressive transformation," on the other hand, which "springs from the necessary relations to the outer world," acting as an *external formative force*, produces, by *Adaptation* to the surrounding conditions of life, the "infinite variety of forms." The internal formative tendency of *Inheritance*, which retains the unity of the original type, is called by Goethe in another passage the *centripetal force* of the organism, or its tendency to specification; in contrast with this he calls the external formative tendency of *Adaptation*, which produces the variety of organic forms, the *centrifugal force* of organisms, or their tendency to variation. The passage in which he clearly indicates the "equilibrium" of these two extremely important organic formative tendencies, runs as follows: "The idea of *metamorphosis* resembles the vis centrifuga, and would lose itself in the infinite, if a counterpoise were not added to it: I mean the tendency to *specification*, the strong power to preserve what once has come into being, a vis centripeta, which in its deepest foundation cannot be affected by anything external."

Metamorphosis, according to Goethe, consists not merely, as the word is now generally understood, in the changes of form which the organic individual experiences during its individual development, but, in a wider sense, in the transformation of organic forms in general. His idea of metamorphosis is almost synonymous with the theory of