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1. **The Philosophy of Freedom (Spiritual Activity)**
2. **Basic Features of a Modern Worldview**
3. Results of soul-observation according to the scientific method
4. Translated by Google and DeepL
5.
6. **Preface to the Revised Edition (1918)**
7. Everything to be discussed in this book is organized according to two root questions of human soul-life.
8. One is whether there is a possibility of viewing the human being in such a way that this view proves to be a support for everything else that comes to him through experience or science, but of which he has the feeling cannot support itself and can be driven by doubt and critical judgment into the realm of uncertainty.
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10. The other question is this: Can man, as a being who wills, ascribe freedom to himself, or is this freedom a mere illusion that arises in him because he does not see through the threads of necessity on which his will hangs just as much as any natural event?
11. No artificial spinning-out of thoughts prompts this question.
12. It comes quite naturally before the soul in a certain condition.
13. And one can feel that the soul would lack something of what it should be if it never once saw itself confronted with the two possibilities: freedom or necessity of will, with the greatest possible seriousness of questioning.
14. The aim of this book is to show that the soul-experiences that man has to undergo through the second question depend on which point of view he is able to take with regard to the first.
15. The attempt is made to show that there is a view of the human being which can support the rest of his knowledge; and, further, to point out that, with this view, a full justification for the idea of freedom of the will is won, if only the region of the soul is first found in which free willing can unfold.
16. The view that is discussed here with respect to these two questions presents itself as one which, once gained, can itself become a part of active soul-life.
17. A theoretical answer is not given which, once acquired, carries with it a conviction preserved by memory.
18. For the way of picturing things that underlies this book, such an answer would only be a seeming one.
19. No such a finished and final answer is given, but reference is made to a region of experience of the soul, in which the inner soul-activity itself answers the question anew, in a living way, at every moment in which man needs it.
20. Whoever has once found the region of the soul in which these questions develop, the real view of this region gives him what he needs for these two riddles of life in order to travel on, with what he has achieved, into the breadths and depths of this enigmatic life, as need and destiny lead him.
21. — This seems to point to a knowledge which proves its justification and validity through its own life and through the affinity of its own life with the whole life of the human soul.
22. This is how I thought about the contents of this book when I wrote it down twenty-five years ago.
23. Even today I have to write down such sentences if I want to characterize thoughts towards which this book aims.
24. As I wrote at that time, I limited myself to saying no *more* than what is related in the *strictest sense* to the two root questions characterized above.
25. If anyone should be surprised that there is not yet any reference in this book to the region of the world of spiritual experience, which I have presented in my later writings, then he should consider that at that time I

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did not want to give a description of results of spiritual research, but first wanted to build the foundations upon which such results can rest.

26. This "*philosophy of spiritual activity*" contains no such special results, any more than it contains special scientific results; but what it does contains is, in my opinion, indispensable for anyone who strives for certainty in such knowledge.

27. What is said in the book can also be acceptable to those who, for whatever reason, do not want to have anything to do with the results of my spiritual-scientific research.

28. But to those who can regard these spiritual-scientific results as something to which they are drawn, what has been attempted here will also be important.

29. It is this: to show how an unprejudiced consideration, which merely extends over these two questions, which are fundamental to *all* knowledge, leads to the view that man lives within a true spiritual world.

30. In this book the aim is to justify a knowledge of the spiritual realm *before* entering into spiritual experience.

31. And this justification is undertaken in such a way that nowhere in these discussions does one need to take a peek at the experiences which I would later assert in order to find what is said here acceptable, if one can or is willing to go into the nature of these discussions themselves.

32. So, on the one hand, this book seems to me to occupy a position that is completely separate from my actual spiritual-scientific writings; and, on the other hand, to be very closely connected with them.

33. All this has prompted me, now, after twenty-five years, to republish the contents of this book essentially almost entirely unchanged.

34. I have only made lengthy additions to a number of sections.

35. The experiences I have had with misunderstandings of what I have said made such detailed extensions seem necessary to me.

36. I have only changed where it seemed clumsy to me today what I wanted to say a quarter of a century ago.

37. (From what has been changed in this way, only someone with ill intention will be led to say that I have changed my basic conviction.)

38. The book has been out-of-print for many years.

39. As can be seen from what has just been said, although it seems to me that what I said twenty-five years ago about the two root questions should still be said today, I hesitated for a long time to prepare this new edition.

40. I kept asking myself whether, at this point or that, I should not have to deal with the numerous philosophical views that have come to light since the publication of the first edition.

41. The demands of my purely spiritual-scientific lately have prevented me from doing this in the way I wished.

42. However, after looking as thoroughly as possible into the philosophical work of the present day, I have now convinced myself that, however tempting such a discussion would be in itself, it would be out-of-place in the context of what my book is intended to say.

43. What seemed to me necessary to be said about the recent philosophical tendencies from the point of view taken in *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* can be found in the second volume of my *Riddles of Philosophy*.

44. Rudolf Steiner

    April 1918

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46. **Part I — Science of Spiritual Activity**

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48. **Chapter 1 — Conscious Human Action**

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49. Is man, in his thinking and doing, a spiritually *free* being or is he under the compulsion of an iron necessity that is purely natural?

50. Upon few questions has so much ingenuity been expended as upon this.

51. The idea of the freedom of the human will has found warm adherents as well as stubborn opponents in abundance.

52. There are those who, in their moral pathos, deem anyone who can deny a *fact* so obvious as freedom as narrow-minded.

53. On the other hand, there are others who see it as the height of unscientific thinking when someone believes that the laws of nature are interrupted in the sphere of human action and thinking.

54. One and the same thing is here declared just as often to be the most precious possession of mankind as its worst illusion.

55. Infinite sophistication has been expended in explaining how human freedom is compatible with the workings of nature, to which, after all, man belongs.

56. No less is the effort with which other people attempted to make it understandable how such a delusion could have arisen.

57. Anyone who does not have the opposite of thoroughness as the most prominent feature of his character feels that we are dealing here with one of the most important questions of life, religion, practice and science.

58. And it is one of the sad signs of the superficiality of contemporary thinking that a book which wants to shape a "new faith" from the results of recent researches into nature contains nothing on this question but the words:

59. We need not here enter on a discussion of the question of free-will.

60. Every philosophy deserving the name, has always considered the reputed indifferent freedom of choice as an empty phantom; but the moral worth of human principles and actions remains untouched by that question.

    (D. F. Strauss, *The Old Faith and the New. A Confession*, Vol. 2, §72)

61. I quote this passage not because I believe that the book in which it is found has any particular importance, but because it seems to me to express the opinion which the majority of our thinking contemporaries are able to reach on the matter in question.

62. Anyone who claims to have outgrown scientific infancy seems to know today that freedom cannot consist in choosing, at will, one or the other of two possible actions.

63. There is always, it is claimed, a very specific *reason* why one carries out a certain action out of several possible ones.

64. This seems obvious.

65. Nevertheless, to this day, the main attacks of the opponents of freedom are directed only against freedom of choice.

66. Says Herbert Spencer, who lives in views that are becoming more widespread with each passing day:

67. *But that every one is at liberty to desire or not to desire*, which is the real proposition involved in the dogma of free-will, is negatived as much by the internal perception of every one as by the contents of the preceding chapters.

    (From the universal law that, other things equal, the cohesion of psychical states is proportionate to the frequency with which they have followed one another in experience, it is an inevitable corollary that all actions whatever must be determined by those psychical connections which experience has generated — either in the life of the individual, or in that general antecedent life whose accumulated results are organized in his constitution.)

    (H. Spencer, *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 1, §219)

68. Others start from the same point of view in attacking the concept of free will.

69. The germs of all relevant explanations can already be found in Spinoza.

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70. What he brought forward clearly and simply against the idea of freedom has since been repeated innumerable times, usually only wrapped up in the most subtle theoretical doctrines, so that it is difficult to recognize the simple train of thought on which alone it depends.

71. Spinoza writes in a letter of October or November 1674:

72. I say that that thing is *free* which exists and acts solely from the necessity of its own nature; but that that thing is *under compulsion* which is determined by something else to exist, and to act in a definite and determined manner.

73. For example, God, although He exists necessarily, nevertheless exists freely, since He exists solely from the necessity of His own nature.

74. So also God freely understands Himself and absolutely all things, since it follows solely from the necessity of His own nature that He should understand everything.

75. You see, therefore, that I do not place Freedom in free decision, but in free necessity.

76. Let us, however, descend to created things, which are all determined by external causes to exist, and to act in a definite and determined manner.

77. In order that this may be clearly understood, let us think of a very simple thing.

78. For instance, a stone receives from an external cause, which impels it, a certain quantity of motion, with which it will afterwards necessarily continue to move when the impact of the external cause has ceased.

79. This continuance of the stone in its motion is compelled, not because it is necessary, but because it must be defined by the impact of an external cause.

80. What is here said of the stone must be understood of each individual thing, however composite and however adapted to various ends it may be thought to be: that is, that each thing is necessarily determined by an external cause to exist and to act in a definite and determinate manner.

81. *Next, conceive, if you please, that the stone while it continues in motion thinks, and knows that it is striving as much as possible to continue in motion.*

82. *Surely this stone, inasmuch as it is conscious only of its own effort, and is far from indifferent, will believe that it is completely free, and that it continues in motion for no other reason than because it wants to.*

83. *And such is the human freedom which all men boast that they possess, and which consists solely in this, that men are conscious of their desire, and ignorant of the causes by which they are determined.*

84. So the infant believes that it freely wants milk; the boy when he is angry that he freely wants revenge; the timid that he wants to escape.

85. Then too the drunkard believes that, by the free decision of his mind, he says those things which afterwards when sober he would prefer to have left unsaid.

So the delirious, the garrulous and many others of the same sort, believe that they are acting in accordance with the free decision of their mind, and not that they are carried away by impulse.

Since this preconception is innate in all men, they are not so easily freed from it.

86. For, although experience teaches sufficiently and more than sufficiently that the last thing that men can do is to moderate their appetites, and that often, when they are tormented by conflicting feelings, they see the better and follow the worse, yet they believe themselves to be free, because they desire some things slightly, and their appetites for these can easily be repressed by the memory of some other thing, which we frequently call to mind.

(A. Wolf, *The Correspondence of Spinoza*, Letter LVIII to G.H. Schuller)

87. — Because here is a clearly and definitely expressed view, it is also easy to uncover the basic error that lies in it.

88. Just as it is necessary for a stone to perform a certain movement after an impact, so it is necessary for man to perform an action when he is driven to it by some reason.

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89. Only because man has a consciousness of his action does he consider himself to be the free initiator of it.

90. However, he overlooks the fact that he is driven by a cause that he absolutely must follow.

91. The error in this train of thought is soon found.

92. Spinoza and all who think like him overlook the fact that man not only has a consciousness of his actions, but can also have consciousness of the causes by which he is guided.

93. No one will deny that the child is *unfree* when it desires milk, so is the drunk man when he says things which he later regrets.

94. Both know nothing of the causes that are active in the depths of their organism and under whose irresistible compulsion they stand.

95. But is it justified to lump actions of this kind with those in which man is conscious not only of his actions but also of the reasons that prompt them?

96. Are the actions of men then of one and the same kind?

97. Should the act of the soldier on the battlefield, that of the scientific researcher in the laboratory, that of the statesman in complicated diplomatic affairs, be placed scientifically on an equal footing with that of the child when it craves milk?

98. It is true that the solution of a problem is best attempted where the matter is simplest.

99. But the lack of ability to make distinctions has often brought endless confusion.

100. There is, after all, a profound difference between knowing why I do something and not knowing why.

101. At first this seems to be a entirely self-evident truth.

102. And yet the opponents of freedom never ask whether a stimulus to action, which I recognize and see through, is a compulsion for me in the same sense as the organic process that causes the child to cry for milk.

103. *Eduard von Hartmann* asserts in his *Phenomenology of Moral Consciousness* that the human will depends on two main factors: motive and character.

104. If one regards people as all the same, or at least their differences as insignificant, then their will appears to be determined from the *outside*, namely, by the circumstances that come to meet them.

105. But if one considers that different people make a mental picture the motive for their actions only when their character is such that this mental picture stimulates a desire, then the human being appears determined from *within* and not from *without*.

106. Now, because man must first make, according to his character, a mental picture imposed upon him from the outside into a motive, he believes that he is free, that is, independent of external motives.

107. But the truth, according to Eduard von Hartmann, is that: "Even though we ourselves first raise mental pictures into motives, we do not do this arbitrarily, but according to the necessity of our characterological disposition, that is, *anything but freely*."

108. Here, too, the difference that exists between motives which I allow to work upon me after I have permeated them with my consciousness and those which I follow without having a clear knowledge of them, remains without any consideration.

109. And this leads directly to the point of view from which the matter is to be viewed here.

110. May the question of the freedom of our will be asked by itself, in a one-sided way?

111. And if not: with which other questions must it necessarily be connected?

112. If there is a difference between a conscious motive for my action and an unconscious impulse, then the former will also entail an action which must be judged differently from that of blind urge.

113. The question of this difference will therefore be the first one.

114. And what it reveals will determine how we have to approach the actual question of freedom.

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115. What does it mean to know the reasons for one's actions?

116. Too little attention has been paid to this question because, unfortunately, we have always torn into two what is an inseparable whole: the human being.

117. A distinction was made between one who acts and one who knows, and the one who matters above all was left out: the one who acts out of knowledge.

118. It is said that man is free if he stands only under the dominion of his reason and not under that of his animal desires.

119. Or also: freedom means being able to determine one's life and actions according to purposes and decisions.

120. But nothing at all is gained with assertions of this kind.

121. For that is precisely the question of whether reason, whether purposes and decisions exert a compulsion on man in the same way as animal desires.

122. If, without my doing, a rational decision arises in me, precisely with the same necessity as hunger and thirst, then I can only follow it out of necessity, and my freedom is an illusion.

123. Another saying goes: Being free does not mean being able to will what one wills, but being able to do what one wills.

124. The poet-philosopher Robert Hamerling characterized this idea in sharply outlined words in his *Atomistics of the Will*:

125. Man can certainly *do* what he wills — but he cannot will what he wills, because his will is determined by *motives*! — He cannot will what he wills?

126. Let us take a closer look at these words.

127. Is there any reasonable sense in them?

128. So freedom of the will would have to consist in being able to will something without reason, without motive?

129. But what does willing mean other than *having a reason* to do or strive for this rather than that?

130. To will something without reason, without motive, is to will something *without willing it*.

    (Man cannot will what he wills. Otherwise, it would mean that man can *just* will: not will something, but purely will, without any object. And this means that man can will something without willing it, which is absurd.)

131. The concept of motive is *inseparably* linked with the concept of willing.

132. Without a determining motive, the will is an empty *faculty*: only through the motive does it become active and real.

133. It is quite true, then, that the human will is not 'free' inasmuch as its direction is always determined by the strongest of motives.

134. But, on the other hand, it must be admitted that, in contrast to this 'unfreedom', it is absurd to speak of a conceivable 'freedom' of the will which would mean being able to will what one does *not* will.

135. Here, too, only motives in general are spoken of, without taking into account the difference between unconscious and conscious ones.

136. If a motive works upon me and I am compelled to follow it because it proves to be the "strongest" among its kind, then the thought of freedom ceases to have any meaning.

137. How should it have any significance for me whether I can do something or not if I am *compelled* by the motive to do it?

138. What matters first is not whether I can do something or not when the motive has had an effect on me, but whether there are only such motives that work with compelling necessity.

139. If I *must* will something, then under certain circumstances I am quite indifferent as to whether I can do it.

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140. If, because of my character and the circumstances surrounding me, a motive is forced upon me which proves unreasonable to my thinking, then I should even be glad if I could not do what I will.

141. The important thing is not whether I can carry out a decision that I have made, but *how the decision arises in me.*

142. What distinguishes man from all other organic beings rests on his rational thinking.

143. Being active is what he has in common with other organisms.

144. Nothing is gained by looking for analogies in the animal kingdom to elucidate the concept of freedom for the actions of human beings.

145. Modern science loves such analogies.

146. And when it succeeds in finding something in animals that is similar to human behavior, it believes it has touched on the most important question of the science of man.

147. The misunderstandings to which this opinion leads can be seen, for example, in the book *The Illusion of Free Will* by P. Rée, who says the following about freedom:

148. It is easy to explain why it seems to us that the movement of the stone is necessary while the will of the donkey is not.

149. The causes that move the stone are, of course, external and visible.

150. But the causes by which the donkey wills are internal and invisible: between us and the place of their activity is the skull of the donkey.

151. One does not see the causal conditionality and therefore thinks that it does not exist.

152. The will, he explains, is indeed the cause of the turning around (of the donkey), but the will itself is unconditioned; it is an absolute beginning.

153. So here, again, actions of the human being for which he is conscious of the reasons are simply ignored, because Rée explains:

154. Between us and the place of their activity is the skull of the donkey.

155. To conclude already from these words: Rée has no inkling of the fact that there are actions, not of the donkey, to be sure, but certainly of people, in which the motive *that has become conscious* lies between us and the action.

156. He proves this again a few pages later with the words:

157. We do not perceive the *causes* by which our will is conditioned, so we think it is not causally conditioned at all.

158. But enough of the examples which show that many fight against freedom without knowing what freedom is in the first place.

159. It goes without saying that an action cannot be free if the doer does not know why he is doing it.

160. But how does the matter stand for an action whose reasons are known?

161. This leads us to the question: what is the origin and significance of thinking?

162. For without the knowledge of the *thinking* activity of the soul, a concept of knowledge of anything – thus also of an action – is not possible.

163. When we know what thinking in general signifies, then it will also be easy to become clear about the role that thinking plays in human action.

164. "Thinking makes the soul, with which the animal is also endowed, into a spirit," says Hegel rightly, and therefore thinking will also give human action its peculiar character.

(G. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse*, in Preface to the 2nd Edition.)

165. This is not to claim by any means that all our actions flow only from the sober deliberations of our intellect.

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166. It is quite far from my intention to call only those actions which result from abstract judgment as *human* in the highest sense.

167. But as soon as our action rises above the realm of the satisfaction of purely animal desires, our motives are always permeated by thoughts.

168. Love, compassion, patriotism are mainsprings of action which cannot be resolved into cold concepts of the intellect.

169. Here, it is said, the heart and the soul come into their own.

(What we translated here as 'soul' is the German word 'Gemüt', which is a broad concept that includes: mind, feelings, heart, nature, disposition, temperament, person, soul, thing, creature, feelings, people, etc.)

170. Without a doubt.

171. But the heart and soul do not create the motives for action.

172. They presuppose them and take them into their domain.

173. Compassion appears in my heart when the mental picture of a pitiable person has entered my consciousness.

174. The way to the heart is through the head.

175. Even love is no exception to this.

176. When it is not the mere expression of the sexual impulse, then it is based on the mental pictures that we form of our loved one.

177. And the more idealistic these mental pictures are, the more blissful is the love.

178. Here, too, thought is the father of feeling.

179. It is said that love blinds us to the weaknesses of the loved one.

180. The matter can also be grasped the other way round and it can be asserted: Love opens the eyes precisely to the good qualities of the loved one.

181. Many pass by these good qualities obliviously, without ever noticing them.

182. One person sees them, and for that very reason love awakens in his soul.

183. What has he done other than form a mental picture of which a hundred others have none.

184. They do not have the love because they lack the *mental picture*.

185. We may grasp the matter as we please: it must become ever clearer that the question of the nature of human action presupposes the other question of the origin of thinking.

186. I shall therefore turn, first of all, to this question.

187.

188. **Chapter 2 — The Fundamental Desire for Knowledge**

189. Two souls, alas! reside within my breast,
And each withdraws from, and repels, its brother.
One with tenacious organs holds in love
And clinging lust the world in its embraces;
The other strongly sweeps, this dust above,
Into the high ancestral spaces.

Faust I, Sc. 2 (Bayard-Taylor translation)

190. With these words Goethe expresses a characteristic that is deeply rooted in human nature.

191. Man is not a uniformly organized being.

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(As Goethe said, the human soul has two distinct 'halves': one reaching towards the Heavens, and the other holds on strongly to the things of the Earth, both engaged in ceaseless conflict of interests.)

192. He always demands more than the world gives him of its own accord.

193. Nature has given us needs; among these are those whose satisfaction she has left to our own activity.

194. Abundant are the gifts that are allotted to us, but still more abundant is our desire.

195. We seem born to dissatisfaction.

196. Our thirst for knowledge is only a special instance of this dissatisfaction.

197. We look at a tree twice.

198. One time we see its branches at rest; the other time, in motion.

199. We are not satisfied with this observation.

200. We ask: why does the tree appear to us one time at rest and the other time in motion?

201. -----

202. Every look at nature produces in us a sum of questions.

203. With every phenomenon that confronts us, we are given a task.

204. Every experience becomes a riddle for us.

205. From the egg we see a creature emerging that resembles the mother-animal, and we ask the reason for this resemblance.

206. We observe, in a living being, growth and development to a certain degree of perfection, and we look for the determining factors of this experience.

207. Nowhere are we satisfied with what nature unfolds before our senses.

208. We look everywhere for what we call an *explanation* of the facts.

209. The surplus of what we seek in things over what is immediately given to us in them splits our whole being into two parts; we become conscious of our opposition to the world.

210. We confront the world as independent beings.

211. The universe appears to us in two opposites: *I* and the *world*.

212. We erect this wall of separation between ourselves and the world as soon as consciousness lights up within us.

213. But we never lose the feeling that we do belong to the world, that there is a bond that connects us to it, that we are not beings *outside* the universe, but within it.

214. This feeling creates the striving to bridge the opposition.

215. And ultimately the whole spiritual striving of mankind consists in bridging this opposition.

216. The history of our spiritual life is a continuous search for the unity between us and the world.

217. Religion, art and science all pursue this goal.

218. The religious believer seeks, in the revelation that God grants him, the solution to the riddle of the world that his 'I', dissatisfied with the world of mere phenomena, poses to him.

(This 'riddle of the world' that is mentioned here is the *question* of unity between the 'I' and the world: we feel this *connection* to the world, despite all apparent evidence to the contrary.)

219. The artist seeks to imbue the material with the ideas of his 'I' in order to reconcile what lives within him with the outside world.

220. He, too, feels dissatisfied with the world of mere phenomena and seeks to mold into it that something more which his 'I', going beyond that world, bears.

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221. The thinker searches for the laws of phenomena, he strives to penetrate through thinking what he experiences through observing.

222. Only when we have made the *world-content* into our *thought-content* do we find again the connection from which we have severed ourselves.

(World-content and thought-content? Here, and elsewhere later on, 'content' refers to what is contained in some thing or some concept. It should not be seen as an unusual or awkward usage.)

223. We shall see later that this goal can only be reached if the task of the scientific researcher is grasped much more deeply than is often the case.

224. The whole relationship that I have presented here confronts us in a world-historical phenomenon: in the opposition of the unitary view of the world or *monism* and the theory of two worlds or *dualism*.

225. Dualism directs its attention only to the separation between 'I' and world brought about by the consciousness of man.

226. Its whole striving is an impotent struggle for the reconciliation of these opposites, which it sometimes calls *spirit* and *matter*, sometimes *subject* and *object*, sometimes *thinking* and *phenomenon* (or *appearance*).

227. It has a feeling that there must be a bridge between the two worlds, but is unable to find it.

228. In experiencing himself as 'I', man cannot but think of this 'I' as being on the side of the *spirit*; and in contrasting the world with this 'I', he must reckon to this the world of perception given to the senses, or the *material* world.

229. In this way man places himself in the opposition of spirit and matter.

230. He must do this all the more since his own body belongs to the material world.

231. The 'I' thus belongs to the spiritual as a part; the material things and processes which are perceived by the senses, to the 'world'.

232. All riddles concerning spirit and matter must be found again by man in the fundamental riddle of his own being.

233. *Monism* directs its attention solely on unity and seeks to deny or erase the oppositions that actually exist.

234. Neither of the two views is satisfactory, because they do not do justice to the facts.

235. Dualism sees spirit ('I') and matter (world) as two fundamentally different entities, and therefore cannot grasp how the two can interact with each other.

236. How should the spirit know what is going on in matter if the essential nature of matter is completely foreign to it?

237. Or, under these circumstances, how should the spirit work upon matter so that its intentions are translated into deeds?

238. The most ingenious and most absurd hypotheses have been proposed to solve these questions.

239. To this day, however, things are not much better with monism either.

240. It has so far sought to help itself in three ways: either it denies the spirit and becomes materialism; or it denies matter in order to seek salvation in spiritualism; or else it asserts that, even in the simplest entities of the world, matter and spirit are already inseparably joined, for which reason one need not be surprised at all when these two modes of existence, which are nowhere separated, appear in the human being.

241. *Materialism* can never provide a satisfactory explanation of the world.

242. For every attempt at an explanation must begin with one's forming *thoughts* about the phenomena of the world.

243. Materialism therefore begins with the *thought* of matter or of material processes.

244. Thus it already has before itself two different realms of facts: the material world and thoughts about it.

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245. It attempts to understand the latter by grasping them as a purely material process.

246. It believes that thinking takes place in the brain in much the same way as digestion in the animal organs.

(Of course, thinking takes place in the brain, but it is *not* comparable to, *e.g.*, the digestive process that occurs in the animal organs. Digestion is always an automatic bodily process, which is *not* the case for thinking.)

247. Just as it ascribes mechanical and organic effects to matter, so it ascribes to it, under certain conditions, the capacity to think.

248. It forgets that it has now only shifted the problem to another place.

249. The materialist ascribes the capacity to think, not to himself, but to matter.

250. And with this he is back again at his starting point.

251. How does matter come to think about its own being?

252. Why is it not simply satisfied with itself and simply accepting its existence?

253. The materialist has turned his gaze away from the definite subject, his own 'I', and has come to an indefinite, hazy something.

(So-called matter is an indefinite, hazy something, *unlike* concepts and ideas. To be clarified further in Ch. 3.)

254. And here the same riddle confronts him.

255. The materialistic view is not able to solve the problem, only shift it.

256. What about the spiritualistic view?

257. The pure *spiritualist* denies matter in its independent existence and understands it only as a product of the spirit.

258. If he applies this worldview to solving the riddle of his own human nature, he is driven to a corner.

259. The 'I', which can be placed on the side of the spirit, is directly confronted with the sensory world.

260. No spiritual entry into this sensory world seem to open up; it has to be perceived and experienced by the 'I' through material processes.

261. The 'I' does not find any such material processes in itself if it wants to be regarded only as a spiritual being.

262. The sensory world is never present in whatever the 'I' works out spiritually.

263. It seems that the 'I' must admit that the world would remain concealed to it, if the 'I' would not relate to the world in an unspiritual way.

264. In a similar way, when we set out to act, we must translate our intentions into reality with the help of material substances and forces.

265. We are, therefore, dependent on the outer world.

(The pure spiritualist is driven to a corner when it attempts to explain how the spiritual 'I' interacts with the material world. He is forced by his conviction to stay put at his corner, unable to make any satisfactory *explanation* about matter and its processes, because he cannot find a spiritual access into matter and its processes, which are indeed facts. Unlike the Dualist who simply moves this question of 'how' to hazy, unclear regions, the Spiritualist remains fixed at one corner, imagining some explanation that involves *only* spirit — *only* concepts and ideas.)

266. The most extreme spiritualist, or if you like, the thinker presenting himself as an extreme spiritualist through absolute idealism, is Johann Gottlieb Fichte.

267. He attempted to derive the whole edifice of the world out of the 'I'.

268. What he has really succeeded in doing is a magnificent *thought-picture* of the world, devoid of any experiential content.

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269. As little as it is possible for the materialist to decree away the spirit, just as little is it possible for the spiritualist to decree away the outer material world.

270. Because, when man directs his knowledge to the 'I', he first perceives the working of this 'I' in the intellectual elaboration of the world of ideas, a spiritualistically-oriented worldview can feel tempted, when looking at man's own nature, to acknowledge of the spirit only this world of ideas.

271. In this way, spiritualism becomes one-sided idealism.

272. It does not come to seek a spiritual world *through* the world of ideas; he sees the spiritual world in the world of ideas itself.

273. Thus it is driven to a standstill with its worldview as if spell-bound within the activity of the 'I' itself.

274. A curious variety of idealism is the view of Friedrich Albert Lange, which he has presented in his much-read *History of Materialism*.

275. He assumes that materialism is quite right when it declares all world phenomena, including our thinking, to be the product of purely material processes; but, conversely, matter and its processes are themselves a product of our thinking.

276. The senses give us... *effects* of things, not true pictures, nor things in themselves.

277. But to the mere effects belong also the senses themselves, together with the brain and the molecular movements which we suppose in it.

    (F. A. Lange, *History of Materialism and Criticism of Its Present Importance*, p. 230)

278. That is to say, our thinking is produced by the material processes, and these material processes by the thinking of the 'I'.

279. Lange's philosophy is thus nothing other than the story of the brave Münchhausen, translated into concepts, who is lifting himself up freely in the air by his own pigtail.

280. The third form of monism is that which already sees the two entities of matter and spirit already united in the simplest entity (atom).

281. Nothing is achieved with this, however, except that the question, which actually arises in our consciousness, is shifted to another scene.

282. How does the simplest entity come to express itself in a two-fold manner, if it is an undivided whole?

283. Against all these standpoints, it must be asserted that the basic and original opposition first confronts us in our own consciousness.

284. It is we ourselves who has severed ourselves from the mother-soil of nature and confront the 'world' as 'I'.

285. Goethe expresses this in a classic way in his essay "Nature", even if his approach may at first appear to be entirely unscientific: "We live in her (Nature) midst of it and know her not. She is incessantly speaking to us, but betrays not her secret."

286. But Goethe also knows the reverse side: "Mankind dwell in her, and she in them."

    ("Nature: Aphorisms by Goethe" from *Nature: A Weekly Illustrated Journal of Science*. Nov. 4, 1869.)

287. As true as it is that we have estranged ourselves from nature, it is just as true that we feel we are within her and belong to her.

288. It can only be her own working that also lives in us.

289. We must find the way back to her again.

290. A simple consideration can show us this way.

291. It is true that we have torn ourselves away from nature; but we must have nevertheless taken something with us into our own being.

292. We must seek out this being of nature within us, then we will also find the connection again.

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293. Dualism fails to do this.
294. It regards the inner being of man as a spiritual entity that is totally foreign to nature and seeks to attach this entity to nature.
295. No wonder it cannot find the connecting link.
296. We can only find nature outside of us when we first know it *within* us.
297. What is akin to nature within ourselves will be our guide.
298. Our course is thus mapped out for us.
299. We do not want to engage in any speculation about the interaction of nature and spirit.
300. We want, however, to descend into the depths of our own being in order to find therein those elements which we have rescued in our flight from nature.
301. The investigation of our being must bring us the solution to the riddle.
302. We must come to a point where we can say to ourselves: Here we are no longer just 'I', here lies something that is more than 'I'.
303. I am prepared for the fact that some who have read up to this point will not find my explanations in accord with "the present-day state of scientific inquiry".
304. I can only reply that up to this point I have not wanted to deal with any scientific result, but with the simple description of what everyone experiences in his own consciousness.
305. The fact that individual statements about attempts at reconciliation between consciousness and the world have also been included only has the purpose of clarifying the actual facts.
306. I have therefore not attached any importance to using single expressions such as 'I', 'spirit', 'world', 'nature', and so on, in the precise manner that is customary in psychology and philosophy.
307. Everyday consciousness does not know the sharp distinctions of science, and up to this point it has only been a matter of recording everyday facts.
308. It is not my concern how science has interpreted consciousness until now, but how consciousness expresses itself at every moment.
309.
310. **Chapter 3 — Thinking in the Service of Viewing the World**
311. When I observe how a billiard ball, when hit, transfers its motion to another ball, I remain entirely without influence on the course of this observed occurrence.
312. The direction and speed of the second ball is determined by the direction and speed of the first.
313. As long as I act merely as an observer, I can say something about the movement of the second ball only when it has occurred.
314. Things are different when I begin to reflect about the content of my observation.
315. The purpose of my reflection is to form concepts of the occurrence.
316. I bring the concept of an elastic ball in connection to certain other concepts of mechanics, and consider the particular circumstances that prevail in the case at hand.
317. I am therefore trying to add to the occurrence that takes place without my participation a second occurrence that takes place in the conceptual sphere.
318. The latter is dependent upon me.
319. This is shown by the fact that I can be content with the observation and forgo any search for concepts if I have no need of them.

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320. But if this need is present, then I only rest content when I have brought the concepts: sphere, elasticity, movement, impact, velocity, etc., into a certain connection, to which the observed occurrence stands in a definite relationship.

321. As certain as it is that the occurrence takes place independently of me, it is just as certain that the conceptual process cannot take place without my participation.

An occurrence that is *merely* observed is, to the observer, a *mere* sequence of smaller occurrences. In this case, the observer does *not* form or find concepts for the individual parts of the occurrence. This can be quite slippery to grasp at first because, to some extent, each of us *already* has a concept for nearly any thing or event we are asked to imagine, *e.g.*, a ball hitting another ball, a seed growing into a plant, a horse galloping, *etc.* But, within the realm of thinking, we can see these *facts* clearly: The process of forming or finding concepts involved in a given occurrence is an activity that requires the *active participation* of the observer, i.e., the concepts are *worked out* or *sought out* by the observer himself. On the other hand, an occurrence that is *merely* observed simply happens before the observer, and is just as meaningful as the one taking place elsewhere. This is why, in this case, he is already content with the observation alone; for him, no concepts need to get involved.

322. Whether this activity of mine really issues out of my independent being, or whether modern physiologists are right when they say that we cannot think as we will, but must think as determined by the thoughts and thought-connections present in our consciousness at the moment, will be the subject of a later discussion.

(T. Ziehen, *Introduction to Physiological Psychology*, Chapter X: The Association of Ideas)

323. For the moment we simply want to establish the fact that we constantly feel compelled to seek concepts and conceptual connections that stand in a certain relationship to the objects and occurrences that are given to us without our participation.

324. Whether this activity is truly *our* doing, or whether we carry it out according to an unalterable necessity, we leave this question aside for the moment.

325. That it first appears to us as ours is without question

326. We know quite well that the concepts are not given to us along with the objects.

327. That I myself am the active one may rest on an illusion; in any case, that is how it appears to immediate observation.

328. The question now is: What do we gain by finding a conceptual counterpart to an occurrence?

(So this activity of seeking for concepts *appears* to be our very own. — Now, we wonder what we do that for. Why do we feel this need to seek for concepts whenever we *decide* to go beyond our observation of a process?)

329. There is for me a profound difference between the way in which the parts of an occurrence relate to one another before and after the discovery of the corresponding concepts.

330. Mere observation can follow the parts of a given occurrence in their course; but their connection remains obscure before the recourse to concepts.

331. I see the first billiard ball moving in a certain direction and with a certain speed towards the second ball; I have to wait and see what happens after the impact, and then again I can only follow it with my eyes.

332. Let us assume that at the moment of the impact someone conceals the field on which the occurrence is taking place; then I, as a mere observer, have no knowledge of what happens afterwards.

333. It is different if I have found the corresponding concepts for the constellation of relationships before the concealment took place.

334. In this case I can state what is occurring even if the possibility of observation ceases.

335. An occurrence or object that is merely observed, of itself, reveals nothing about its connection with other occurrences or objects.

336. This connection only becomes evident when observation is combined with thinking.

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337. *Observation and thinking* are the two starting points for all the spiritual striving of man, insofar as he is conscious of such striving.

338. The operations of common sense and the most intricate scientific investigations rest on these two pillars of our spirit.

339. Philosophers have started from various primal oppositions: idea and reality, subject and object, phenomenon and thing-in-itself, 'I' and not-'I', idea and will, concept and matter, force and matter, conscious and unconscious.

340. It can easily be shown, however, that all these opposites must be preceded by *observation* and *thinking* as the most important for the human being.

341. Whatever principle we may ever set up, we must show that it was somewhere observed by us, or express it in the form of a clear thought that can be re-thought by anyone else.

342. Every philosopher who begins to speak about his original principles must use the conceptual form, and thus use thinking.

343. He thereby indirectly admits that he already presupposes thinking for his activity.

344. Whether thinking or something else is the principal element in the evolution of the world, about this nothing yet is determined here.

'Evolution of the world' here means *how* the content of the world: things and processes, undergo their various lawful transformations or developments. We are not employing the specialized usage of science.

345. But it is clear from the outset that, without thinking, the philosopher cannot acquire any knowledge of it.

346. Thinking may play a secondary role in the coming-into-being of the phenomena of the world, but it certainly plays a principal role in the coming-into-being of a view about them.

347. Now, as far as observation is concerned, it lies in our organization that we are in need of it.

Here, organization refers to one's overall make-up, how one is constituted, *etc.* It is just a *given* in our organization that, in order to 'reach out' to things *outside* of ourselves, we need to carry out an observation. It is clear that observation would be unnecessary if we have these things already *within* us.

348. Our thinking about a horse and the object "horse" are two things that occur to us separately.

349. And this object is accessible to us only through observation.

350. As little as we can form a concept of a horse by merely staring at the animal, just as little are we capable of bringing forth the corresponding object by merely thinking of it.

351. In time-order, observation indeed precedes thinking.

352. For we must get to know thinking itself first through observation.

353. It was essentially the description of an observation when we described at the beginning of this chapter how thinking is kindled by an occurrence and goes beyond what is given without its participation.

354. We only become aware of everything that enters the circle of our experiences through observation.

355. The content of sensations, perceptions, intuitions, feelings, acts of will, dreams and fantasies, mental pictures, concepts and ideas, all illusions and hallucinations are given to us through *observation*.

356. But, as an object of observation, thinking differs essentially from all other things.

357. The observation of a table, or a tree, occurs for me as soon as these objects appear on the horizon of my experiences.

358. But I do not observe my thinking about these objects at the same time.

359. I observe the table, I carry out my thinking about the table, but I do not observe this thinking at the same moment.

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360. I must first put myself to a standpoint outside of my own activity if I want to observe, in addition to the table, my thinking about the table.

361. While observing objects and occurrences and thinking about them are everyday states that fill up my on-going life, observing thinking is a kind of exceptional state.

362. This fact must be properly taken into account when it is a matter of determining the relationship of thinking to all other contents of observation.

363. One must be clear about the fact that, in observing thinking, one applies to it a procedure that constitutes the normal setting for the consideration of all other content of the world, but which, in the course of this normal setting, is not applied to thinking itself.

Let us review this important statement. When we are observing our thinking, we are applying to it a *process* that normally occurs when considering all other things; but the *process*, as it goes on in this normal or default setting, does *not* occur for thinking itself. — That is, the process, by default, is not directed at thinking itself! This is why, in observing out thinking, we are carrying out an act that is above normal, or *exceptional*.

364. Someone might object that what I have here remarked about thinking also applies to our feelings and other spiritual activities.

365. For example, when we have the feeling of pleasure, this is also kindled by an object; but I observe in fact this object, not the feeling of pleasure.

366. This objection, however, is based on an error.

367. Pleasure, by no means, stands in the same relation to its object as the concept formed by thinking.

368. I am most definitely conscious that the concept of a thing is formed by my activity, while pleasure is produced in me by an object in a similar way as, for example, the change that a falling stone causes on the object that it hits.

369. For observation, pleasure is given in exactly the same way as the occurrence that causes it.

To form a concept of a thing, we always have to *intend* it. This is not the case for feelings: normally, they come with the objects *without* our intention. Let us always take note of this distinction.

For example, when I observe a tree on a hill and then, after some time, I start to have – i.e., *passively* – a feeling of calm: both the tree and this feeling of calm belong to the same field of observation. I observe both of them: one outside of myself, the other within; nevertheless, both of them stand on the same level of being given.

370. The same is not true of the concept.

371. I can ask: Why does a certain occurrence produce a feeling of pleasure in me?

372. But I certainly cannot ask: Why does an occurrence produce a certain sum of concepts in me?

373. That would simply not make sense.

374. In thinking about an occurrence, it is never about an effect on me.

375. I cannot find out anything about myself by the fact that I know the appropriate concepts for the observed change that a stone thrown against a window pane causes in it.

376. But I do learn something about my personality when I know the feeling that a certain occurrence arouses in me.

377. When I say to an observed object: "This is a rose," I do not say a slightest thing about myself; but when I say of the same thing: "It gives me the feeling of pleasure," then I have characterized not only the rose, but also myself in my relation to the rose.

378. Therefore, it is out of the question to regard thinking and feeling as being on the same level in their relation to observation.

379. The same could be easily demonstrated for the other activities of the human spirit.

380. In contrast to thinking, they belong in a category along with other observed objects and occurrences.

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381. It belongs precisely to the peculiar nature of thinking that it is an activity directed solely to the observed object and not to the thinking personality.

382. This is evident in the way we express our thoughts about a thing as opposed to our feelings or acts of will.

383. In general, when I see an object and know it as a table, I will not say: "I am thinking about a table," but rather: "This is a table."

384. But I will certainly say: "I am pleased with the table."

385. In the first case it is not important for me to state that I am entering into a relationship with the table; in the second case, however, it is precisely this relationship that is the issue.

386. With the statement: "I am thinking about a table," I am already entering the exceptional state characterized above, in which something is made the object of observation that is always contained within our spiritual activity, but not as an observed object.

(When we say: "I am thinking about a table," we are observing our thinking *of* a table, not our thinking itself. However, in doing so, we are already *entering* the exceptional state involved in observing thinking itself.)

387. This belongs to the peculiar nature of thinking, that the thinker forgets his thinking while carrying it out.

388. It is not thinking that occupies him, but the object of thinking which he observes.

389. Therefore, the first observation we make about thinking is: that it is the unobserved element of our ordinary spiritual life.

390. The reason that we do not observe thinking in everyday spiritual life is none other than that it has its basis on our own activity.

391. What I do not myself produce comes into my field of observation as something objective.

392. I see myself before it as before something that has come about without me; it approaches me; I have to receive it as the premise for my thinking process.

393. While thinking of the object, I am occupied with it, my gaze is turned to it.

394. To be so occupied with an object is precisely the thinking-contemplation of this object.

The raw translation is: "This occupation is precisely thinking-contemplation."

395. My attention is directed, not to my activity, but to the object of this activity.

396. In other words: while I am thinking, I do not look at my thinking, which I myself produce, but at the object of my thinking, which I do not produce.

397. I am, in fact, in the same position when I allow the exceptional state to occur and think about my own thinking.

398. I can never observe my present thinking; but only the experiences that I have had through my thinking process can later be made into the object of my thinking.

399. If I wanted to observe my present thinking, I would have to split myself into two personalities: one that thinks and the other that watches itself doing this thinking.

400. This I cannot do.

401. I can only do this in two separate acts.

402. The thinking that is to be observed is never the one that is active at the moment, but another one.

403. Whether for this purpose I am making my observations on an earlier thinking of my own, or whether I am following the thought-process of another person, or finally whether, as in the case above with the movement of the billiard balls, I am assuming an imaginary thought-process, does not matter.

This is an important fact to keep in mind: The thinking, as an object of observation, is never the one that is active at the moment, but another one. If I attempt to observe my own thinking as it is currently going on, I only see that it has already gone ahead from wherever I am at. All that is left for me to observe is a series of

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'thought-objects' that thinking has formed: a trail of mental pictures! The same happens particularly if I am observing the thought-process of another person, if it is possible to do so. In this case, the thought-process is an object that is outside of me; so it stands on the same level as observing, say, a tree.

What we can glean from the preceding discussion is that: we can certainly *observe* our mental pictures, and in doing so we already enter the exceptional state. But in order to observe thinking itself, we can only do this by *thinking about our thinking*, which clearly places us in an even more exceptional state!

404. Two things are not compatible: active production and contemplative confrontation.

405. The first book of Moses already knows this.

406. In the first six world-days, God causes the world to come into being, and only when it is present is there the possibility of contemplating it:

407. "And God saw everything that he had made; and, behold, it was very good."

408. It is the same with our thinking.

409. It must be there first if we want to observe it.

'Incompatible' here means that the two cannot come together, at the same time. Also take note that here we are pointing to the idea of a direct relation between the activity of thinking to that of the world-creator itself: produce first, contemplate after. This idea will unfold as our book proceeds in its discussion.

410. The reason that makes it impossible for us to observe thinking in its present course is the same as that which makes it known to us more directly and intimately than any other process in the world.

411. Precisely because we produce it ourselves, we know the characteristics of its course, the way in which the occurrence in question takes place.

412. What can only be found in an indirect way in the other spheres of observation: the factually corresponding connection and the relations of the individual objects, this we know in the most direct way in the case of thinking.

413. Why for my observation thunder follows lightning, I do not know at once; why my thinking connects the *concept* of thunder with that of lightning, I know directly from the contents of these two concepts.

414. Of course it does not matter at all whether I have the correct concepts of lightning and thunder.

415. The connection of those that I have is clear to me, and that through the very concepts themselves.

In order to see *why* thunder follows lightning through observation, I must follow the process thoroughly, from the appearance of lightning to the appearance of thunder, in a level of detail sufficient to see the *development* of the phenomenon of thunder from that of lightning. On the other hand, the *concepts* of lightning and that of thunder, I have formed these from the 'substance' of my *thinking* alone. This is why I am *clearly* aware of their intrinsic connection, through the very concepts themselves: *even if* these concepts may later prove as not correct to external facts.

Let us think about the way we can engage quite vividly in our fantasies, where everything goes as we please, *no matter how contrary to facts*. This is so, because *in* the realm of our thinking we feel no need to explain to ourselves the *connection* among things; everything therein is our very own thinking, through and through.

416. This transparent clarity regarding our thinking-process is completely independent of our knowledge of the physiological basis of thinking.

417. I am speaking here of thinking insofar as it results from the observation of our spiritual activity.

418. How one material occurrence in my brain causes or influences another while I am carrying out an operation of thought does not come into consideration at all.

419. What I observe in thinking is not what occurrence in my brain connects the concept of lightning with that of thunder, but what causes me to bring the two concepts into a specific relationship.

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420. My observation shows that, for my thought-connections, nothing is available to me with which to direct myself other than the content of my thoughts; I do not direct myself according to the material occurrences in my brain.

421. For a less materialistic age than ours, of course, this remark would be entirely superfluous.

422. At present, however, where there are people who believe that if we know what matter is, we will also know how matter thinks, it must be said that one can speak of thinking without immediately coming into collision with the physiology of the brain.

423. It is difficult for many people today to grasp the concept of thinking in its purity.

424. Whoever immediately counters the idea I have developed here of thinking with the statement of Cabanis: "The brain secretes thoughts like the liver secretes bile," simply does not know what I am talking about.

(P. Cabanis, *Rapports du physique et du moral de l'homme*.)

425. He attempts to find thinking through a mere process of observation in the same way as we proceed with other objects from the world-content.

426. But he cannot find it in this way because, as I have shown, it eludes precisely this normal observation.

427. Anyone who cannot overcome materialism lacks the ability to bring about in himself the exceptional state described above, which makes him conscious of what remains unconscious in all other spiritual activity.

428. He who does not possess the good will to put himself in this position, one could talk to him about thinking just as little as one could talk to a blind person about color.

429. Let him not believe, however, that we regard physiological processes as thinking.

430. He fails to explain thinking because he does not see it at all.

I will admit that the way I *usually* see thinking *indeed* collides with brain physiology: the brain must have something to do, at least, with how our thinking works. However, in the light of what has been clearly explained up to this point and also my own notes here, I must now admit that: *within the realm of my thinking*, I am directed solely by the content of the 'thought-objects' therein. It matters not at all to me if the connections I make are correct to facts or not; I can correct them later on by meticulous study, or leave them as they are and move on to other things, *as I wish*. This is the 'transparent clarity' that this paragraph is referring to. It refers to the transparent clarity of the *realm of thinking* alone, *i.e.*, the 'things' and 'connections' therein, and it has nothing to do with brain physiology, unless we ourselves decide to find some associations and latch them on to the original 'things' in that realm. This is *not* saying that the science of the brain of today has got it *all* wrong. Thinking indeed *happens* mainly in the brain, hence there is a corresponding brain activity with every operation of thought. But how can we assert that thinking is produced by the brain? And why is it a better explanation than that the brain is the physical instrument of thinking, whose origin is *elsewhere*? One thing is certain for us: Thinking *cannot* be found in the *usual* manner of observation. Certainly, science can tell us interesting facts that happen inside our heads while we are thinking this or that way; but, as to the *origin* of thinking, we need to look deeper into thinking itself, and not into brain matter.

431. For anyone, however, who has the ability to observe thinking — and with good will every normally organized person has it — this observation is the most important one he can make.

432. For he observes something of which he himself is the producer; he does not see himself confronted with an object that is, at first, foreign to him, but with his own activity.

433. He knows how what he is observing comes about.

434. He sees through its connections and relations.

435. A fixed point has been won from which he can, with well-founded hope, search for the explanation of the other phenomena of the world.

436. The feeling of having such a fixed point prompted the founder of modern philosophy, René Descartes, to base the whole of human knowledge on the principle: *I think, therefore I am.*

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437. All other things, everything else that is happening is there without me; whether as truth, whether as illusion and dream, I do not know.

438. There is only one thing I know absolutely for sure, because I myself bring it to its certain existence: my thinking.

439. It may have another source of its existence; it may be coming from God or from elsewhere; that it is there in the sense that I myself produce it, of this I am certain.

440. Descartes initially had no justification for giving his sentence any other meaning.

441. He could only assert that, within the world-content, I grasp myself in my thinking as within an activity that is my very own.

442. There has been a lot of debate as to what the attached, "*therefore I am*," should mean.

443. But it can only have meaning under one condition.

444. The simplest statement I can make of a thing is that *it is*: that it exists.

445. How this existence is then to be determined more closely cannot be stated immediately in the case of any thing that enters the horizon of my experiences.

446. Every object will first have to be examined in its relationship to others in order to be able to determine in what sense one can speak of it as existing.

447. An experienced occurrence can be a sum of perceptions, but also a dream, a hallucination, and so on.

448. In short, I cannot say in what sense it exists.

449. This I will not be able to gather from the occurrence itself, but I will learn it when I consider the occurrence in relation to other things.

    On the term 'consider'. We use this term in the same sense as the term 'observe'.

450. But there, again, I cannot know any *more* than how it stands in relation to these things.

451. My search only comes to a firm footing when I find an object, the sense of existence of which I can draw from itself.

452. But such an object is I myself as a thinker, for I give my existence the specific, self-contained content of the thinking activity.

453. Now I can start from there and ask: Do the other things exist in the same or in a different sense?

    Again, the content of thinking need not, *at first*, conform to facts: that will come later, depending on our decision to correct, adjust, augment, refine, *etc.*, or even leave them as they stand. The point is that: the content of the thinking activity is *indeed* specific and self-contained.

454. When thinking is made the object of observation, something is added to the other observed world-content that otherwise escapes one's attention; but he does not change the way in which he conducts himself towards other things.

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455. He increases the number of objects of observation, but not the method of observation.

456. While we are observing other things, a process is mixed into the world-occurrences — to which I now include the observing — which is overlooked

457. There is something present, different from all other events, that is not taken into account.

458. But when I consider my thinking, there is no such overlooked element.

459. For what now hovers in the background is only thinking itself over again.

460. The observed object is qualitatively the same as the activity directed upon it.

461. And that is again a characteristic peculiarity of thinking.

462. If we make it the object of observation, we do not feel compelled to do so with the help of something that is qualitatively different, but we can remain in the same element.

(To clarify this section with an example: Let us *think* of a rose. Now, we are observing our thinking. And, again, it does not have to be perfect in any sense. This 'mental picture' of the rose is the observed world-content *other* than our thinking itself. But in this case, in this simple exercise of thinking, we have already added the element of thinking, which remains unnoticed when we are observing things *other* than thinking, *e.g.*, when looking at a table five meters away. Also, in this case, we are not changing the way in which we, human beings, consider all other things just because we are in this *exceptional* mode of observation. We have simply added the thinking as an object of observation, but we have *not* at all introduced a second, different process of observation.

Now, let us *observe* the table some distance away from us. There are many things and processes surrounding that table; these elements are what the book calls 'world-events', which includes the table and the process of observation themselves. Now, another process is present that we know, with utmost clarity, *is* within us, and thus is also a part of the world. This is our own thinking, which must be counted in the 'world-events', but which we *never* take into account in every case of this kind. We know from the discussions and notes in this Chapter now why this is so.)

463. When I weave into my thinking an object that is given without my participation, I go beyond my observation and the question becomes: what gives me the right to do this?

464. Why do I not simply let the object affect me?

465. In what way is it possible that my thinking has a relation to the object?

466. These are questions that everyone who reflects on his own thought-processes must ask himself.

467. They fall away when one reflects on thinking itself.

468. We add nothing to thinking that is foreign to it, therefore we do not have to justify such an addition either.

(Let us reflect on our own thought-processes involved in observing a thing given without our participation.

Suppose I am observing an object K for the very first time. We have to make this assumption of a new object K because, as we have noted earlier, each of us *already* has to some extent a concept for nearly any thing or event we are asked to imagine. The first thing *I do* then — if I *decide* to not simply let this object pass me by — is to *form* the concept that object K *is*, that it *exists*, that there *is* such an object K. I have woven, from the substance of my own thinking activity, this *new* concept for object K. More concepts relating to object K gets *added* as we proceed further in our observation and thinking about it. This *may* cause us to wonder: what gives us the right to do this: to add new 'things' into the realm of our thinking that is related to what is given outside.

On the other hand, reflecting on our thinking *itself*, we clearly see that, when observing thinking itself, we are not getting out of it and thus not 'importing' anything from outside of it.)

469. Schelling says: "To know nature means to create nature."

470. Whoever takes literally these words of this bold philosopher of nature will have to renounce all knowledge of nature for the rest of his life.

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471. For nature is already there once, and in order to create it a second time one must recognize the principles by which it came into being.

472. For the nature that one wanted to create first [before knowing it], he would have to copy the conditions of its existence from what already exists.

473. But this copying, which would have to precede creating, would be knowing nature, even if, after copying had taken place, the creating did not take place at all.

474. Only a nature that does not yet exist could one create *before* knowing it.

475. What is impossible [for us] with regard to nature: creating before knowing, this we accomplish in thinking.

476. If we wanted to wait with thinking [or postpone it] until we have known it, we would never get to it.

477. We must think resolutely about it in order to come to a knowledge of it afterwards by observing what we ourselves have done.

478. We ourselves first create an object for the observation of thinking.

479. The presence of all other objects has been taken care of without our participation.

480. Someone could easily oppose my statement: we must think before we can consider thinking, by another statement as being equally justified: we cannot wait to digest until we have considered the process of digestion.

481. That would be an objection similar to what Pascal made to Descartes, when he asserted that one could also say: "I take a walk, therefore I am."

482. Certainly, I must digest resolutely [and not wait until] I have studied the physiological process of digestion.

483. But this could only be compared with the consideration of thinking if I did not want to consider the digestion afterwards, but wanted to eat and digest it.

484. It is also not without reason that, while digestion cannot become the object of digestion, thinking can very well become the object of thinking.

485. So there is no doubt: in thinking, we grasp the world-events at a corner where we have to be present if something is to come about.

486. And that is precisely what matters.

487. This is precisely the reason why things are so puzzling to me: that I am so uninvolved in their coming about.

488. I simply find them; but, with thinking, I know how it is done.

489. Therefore there is no more original starting point for considering all world-events than thinking.

In the previous paragraph, we contemplated on the fact that we weave things into our thinking, and thereby we *create* the concepts that we have of things. Here, we look into this the act of creating.

"To know nature means to create nature." Perhaps, in the fullness of our development as human beings, this is indeed the case: that knowing nature is both sufficient and necessary for creating nature. But it does not matter to us at this point. At present, it is clear, with regards to nature outside of us, that it is impossible for us to engage in creating prior to knowing. This is not the case with our thinking. In thinking, we *indeed* do the creating first before the knowing! With our thinking, we create 'things' *within* us (*e.g.*, concepts) that correspond to those that nature creates for us on the outside. With our thinking, we act as nature itself acts on the outside! We are thus being led to an important insight: That our thinking bears a direct relation to that creative power in nature. This must be what we must have taken with us in our flight from nature, as described in Chapter 2, when we divided the universe into 'I' and 'world'. So indeed, in thinking, we grasp the world-events *at a corner* (that of our 'I') where we have to be present and participate if something is to come about (concepts).

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----- HERE STARTS TRANSLATION, COMPARING WITH 1918 ED. LINDEMANN & HOERNLE -----

490. I would now like to mention a widespread error that prevails with regards to thinking.

491. It consists in the statement: Thinking, as it is in itself, is nowhere given to us.

492. The thinking that connects the observations of our experiences and weaves about them a network of concepts is not at all the same as that thinking which we afterwards lift out of the objects of observation and make into the object of (new) observation.

493. What we first weave unconsciously into things is, so we are told, quite different from what we subsequently recover from these things consciously.

494. Whoever concludes so does not understand that it is not at all possible for him to escape from thinking in this way.

495. I cannot get out of thinking at all if I want to observe thinking.

496. If one wants to distinguish the preconscious thinking (*i.e.*, thinking that occur before my consciousness of it) and the thinking of which I am conscious afterwards, he should not forget that this distinction is a completely external one and has nothing at all to do with the matter itself.

497. I do not at all make one thing into another by considering it thinking.

498. I can imagine that a being with completely different sensory organs and with a differently functioning intelligence would have a completely different idea of a horse from mine, but I cannot imagine that my own thinking becomes a different one because I am observing it.

499. I myself observe what I myself carry out.

500. How my thinking appears to an intelligence other than my own is not at issue here; but how it looks to me.

501. In any case, the picture of *my* thinking in another intelligence cannot be truer than my own.

502. Only if I were not myself the thinking being, but rather thinking confronted me as the activity of a being foreign to me, could I say that my picture of thinking appears in a certain way; but that I cannot know how the being, in itself, thinks.

503. So far, however, there is not the slightest reason for me to consider my own thinking from a different point of view.

504. I consider the rest of the world with the help of thinking.

505. How should I make an exception to this in the case of my thinking?

506. With this, I consider it sufficiently justified if that I start from thinking in my view of the world.

507. When Archimedes had invented the lever, he believed that, with its help, he could lift the whole cosmos out of its hinges if only he could find a point of support for his instrument.

508. He needed something that is supported by itself, not by anything else.

509. In thinking we have a principle that exists in and through itself.

510. Let us start from here in our attempt to understand the world.

511. We can grasp thinking through thinking itself.

512. The only question is whether, through thinking we can also grasp other things.

513. So far I have spoken of thinking without taking account of its bearer, the human consciousness.

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514. Most philosophers of the present day will object to me: Before there is thinking, there must be consciousness.

515. Therefore, one should start from consciousness and not from thinking.

516. There is no thinking without consciousness.

517. I have to reply to this: If I want clarification regarding the relationship between thinking and consciousness, then I have to think about it.

518. I thereby presuppose thinking.

519. Now, one can certainly respond to this: If the philosopher wants to *understand* consciousness, then he makes use of thinking; to that extent he presupposes it; in the ordinary course of life, however, thinking arises within consciousness and therefore presupposes it.

520. If this answer were given to the creator of the world who wanted to create thinking, it would undoubtedly be justified.

521. One cannot, of course, allow thinking to arise without first bringing about consciousness.

522. But the philosopher is not concerned with the creation of the world, but with the understanding of it.

523. Therefore, he must seek the starting point, not for creating, but rather for understanding the world.

524. I find it very strange when one reproaches the philosopher for being concerned above all else with the correctness of his principles, rather than working immediately with the objects he wants to understand. (*e.g.*, consciousness).

525. The creator of the world had to know above all how to find a vehicle for thinking, but the philosopher must seek a secure basis from which to understand what is there already.

526. Of what use is it to us to start with consciousness and subject it to thinking-consideration if we know nothing beforehand about the possibility of getting insight into things through thinking-consideration?

527. We must first consider thinking quite neutrally, without relation to a thinking subject or a thought object.

528. For in subject and object we already have concepts which are formed by thinking.

529. It cannot be denied: *Before anything else can be understood, thinking must be understood*.

530. Whoever denies this overlooks the fact that, as a human being, he is not an initial member of creation, but its final one.

531. Therefore, in order to explain the world through concepts, one cannot start from the first elements of existence in time, but from what is given to us as the closest, as the most intimate.

532. We cannot leap to the beginning of the world to start our contemplation there, but we must start from the present moment and see if we can proceed from what is later to what is earlier.

533. As long as geology spoke of imagined revolutions to explain the present condition of the earth, it groped in darkness.

534. It was only when it began by investigating what events are currently still taking place on earth and drew conclusions about the past from these that it gained firm ground.

535. As long as philosophy accepts all possible principles, such as atom, motion, matter, will, unconscious, it will hover in the air.

536. Only when the philosopher regards the absolute last as his first can he reach the goal.

537. But this absolute last, to which world evolution has brought it, is *thinking*.

538. There are people who say: Whether our thinking is, in itself, correct or not, we cannot determine with certainty.

539. In this respect, therefore, the starting point remains a dubious one in any case

540. This is just as reasonable as doubting whether a tree, in itself, is right in itself.

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541. Thinking is a fact; and to speak of the correctness or incorrectness of a fact is meaningless.

542. I can, at most, doubt whether thinking is correctly employed, as much as I can doubt whether a certain tree supplies wood that is suitable for a useful implement.

543. It is precisely the task of this book to show to what extent the application of thinking to the world is correct or incorrect.

544. I can understand if someone doubts that something can be found out about the world through thinking; but it is incomprehensible to me how anyone can doubt the correctness of thinking in itself.

545.

546. **ADDENDUM TO THE REVISED EDITION 1918**

547. In the preceding explanations the significant difference between thinking and all other soul-activities is pointed out as a fact which results from genuinely unprejudiced observation.

548. Whoever does not strive for this unprejudiced observation will be tempted to make objections to these explanations like this: When I think about a rose, then this only expresses a relationship of my "I" to the rose, just as when I feel the beauty of the rose.

549. There is just as much a relationship between "I" and object in thinking as, for example, in feeling or perceiving.

550. Whoever raises this objection does not consider that *only* in the activity of thinking does the "I" know itself to be one with that which is active, right into all the ramifications of the activity.

551. This is not entirely the case with any other activity of the soul.

552. If, for example, a pleasure is felt, a finer observation can very well distinguish to what extent the "I" knows itself to be one with what is active and to what extent something passive is present in the "I", so that pleasure merely occurs for the "I".

(This distinction can be more easily observed when we feel pain, *e.g.*, pain from a small wound. The feeling seems to be divided into two. First, there is an *inner* suffering in us that is associated with the wound. This feeling is more strongly felt at the start of the wound, but fades away *as* it starts to heal. Then, as the healing proceeds towards completion, we still feel the presence of this wound but just as though we are simply observing it happen. In fact, sometimes we even observe it too casually: removing the scab, applying alcohol, *etc.*, — the additional pain involved in this does not even matter to us anymore; at this stage, it simply happens to us. On the other hand, when it comes to the feeling of pleasure, we oftentimes cannot make this distinction. This is because we *naturally* want to take in the whole of the pleasure, to make it entirely our own. This is clearly not the case with the feeling of pain.)

553. And it is also like this with the other soul activities.

554. One should only not confuse "having thought-images" and working out thoughts in thinking.

555. Thought-images can appear in the soul in a dreamlike way, like vague inspirations.

556. This is not thinking.

557. — Certainly someone could now say: If thinking is meant in this way, then the will is present in thinking, and one is dealing, not only with thinking, but also with the will in thinking.

558. This, however, would only justify us in saying: Real thinking must always be willed.

559. But this has nothing to do with the characterization of thinking made in the preceding explanations.

560. The nature of thinking may, in fact, make it necessary that it be willed: what matters is that nothing is *willed* which, while it is being carried out, does not appear before the "I" as completely its own activity which it can survey.

561. Indeed, one must even say that, *because of* the nature of thinking presented here, it appears to the observer as thoroughly *willed*.

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562. Whoever genuinely makes the effort to see through everything that comes into consideration for the assessment of thinking will not fail to notice that this soul activity has the peculiarity that is spoken of here.

563. A personality valued very highly as a thinker by the author objected to him that it is not possible to speak about thinking in the way that is done here, because what one believes to be observing as active thinking is only an illusion.

564. In reality one is observing only the results of an unconscious activity that underlies thinking.

565. Only because this unconscious activity is not observed does the illusion arises that the observed thinking exists in and through itself, as when one believes he sees a movement in an illumination produced by electric sparks in quick succession.

566. This objection is also based on an inaccurate view of the situation.

567. Whoever makes it does not take into account that it is the "I" itself, standing *within* thinking, that observes its own activity.

568. The "I" would have to stand outside of thinking if it could be so deceived as in the case of the illumination produced by a quick succession of electric sparks.

569. One could rather say: Whoever makes such a comparison is as mightily mistaken as someone who wanted to say of a light in motion: It is lit anew by an unknown hand at every place where it appears.

570. — No, whoever wants to see something else in thinking than what is brought about within the "I" itself as a surveyable activity must first blind himself to the plain facts presenting themselves to his observation, in order then to be able to base thinking upon some hypothetical activity.

571. Anyone who does not blind himself in this way must recognize that everything that he "thinks in addition" to thinking (*e.g.*, hypothetical additions) in this way leads away from the essential nature of thinking.

572. Unprejudiced observation shows that nothing can be counted as part of the essential nature of thinking that is not found *within* thinking itself.

573. One cannot come to something that *causes* thinking if he leaves the realm of thinking.

574.

575. **CHAPTER IV — THE WORLD AS PERCEPTION**

576. Through thinking, concepts and ideas arise.

577. What a concept is cannot be expressed in words.

578. Words can only make the human being aware that he has concepts.

579. When someone sees a tree, his thinking reacts to his observation; an ideal counterpart is added to the object, and he regards the object and the ideal counterpart as belonging together.

580. When the object disappears from his field of observation, its ideal counterpart alone remains.

581. The latter is the concept of the object.

582. The more our experience expands, the greater becomes the sum of our concepts.

583. But the concepts, by no means, stand there isolated.

584. They join together to form a lawful whole.

585. The concept "organism" is connected, for example, to others such as "lawful development," "growth".

586. Other concepts formed from particular things completely coincide.

587. All concepts that I form of lions fuse into the overall concept "lion".

588. In this way, the individual concepts combine to form a closed system of concepts in which each has its special place.

589. Ideas are not qualitatively different from concepts.

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590. They are only fuller, more saturated and more comprehensive concepts.

591. I must attach particular importance to the fact that, at this point, it is emphasized that I have designated *thinking* as my starting point and not *concepts* and *ideas* which are only gained through thinking.

592. These already presuppose thinking.

593. Therefore, what I have said in relation to the self-sustained, self-determined nature of thinking cannot be simply transferred to concepts.

594. (I expressly note this here because it is here that I differ with Hegel. He posits the concept as primary and original.)

595. -----

596. The concept cannot be derived from observation.

597. This is evident from the fact that, as the human being grows up, he slowly and gradually forms the concepts for the objects that surround him.

598. The concepts are added to the observation.

(Our concepts develop as we develop as human beings. A particular object *may* remain the same object, but our concept of this object grows as we grow. This shows that concepts arise from *within* us, not from outside of us. They are added, from *within* us, to the observation, not derived from it.)

599. A widely-read philosopher of the present day (Herbert Spencer) describes the mental process that we carry out with respect to observation as follows:

600. If, when walking through the fields some day in September, you hear a rustle a few yards in advance, and on observing the ditch-side where it occurs, see the herbage agitated, you will probably turn towards the spot to learn by what this sound and motion are produced. As you approach there flutters into the ditch, a partridge; on seeing which your curiosity is satisfied — you have what you call an *explanation* of the appearances. The explanation, mark, amounts to this; that whereas throughout life you have had countless experiences of disturbance among small stationary bodies, accompanying the movement of other bodies among them, and have generalized the relation between such disturbances and such movements, you consider this particular disturbance explained, on finding it to present, an instance of the like relation. (*First Principles*, p. 56)

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602. -----

603. Viewed more closely, the matter presents itself quite differently from what is described here.

604. When I hear a noise, I seek, first of all, the concept for this observation.

605. Only this concept points me beyond the noise.

606. Whoever does not reflect further simply hears the noise and is satisfied with it.

607. But through my reflection it is clear to me that I have to regard the noise as an effect.

608. Thus only when I connect the concept of the *effect* with the perception of the noise am I prompted to go beyond the particular observation and to look for the *cause*.

609. The concept of effect calls up the concept of cause, and I then look for the causal object, which I find in the form of the partridge.

610. But I can never obtain these concepts, "cause" and "effect", through mere observation, no matter how many cases it may cover.

611. Observation calls forth thinking, and it is only thinking that shows me the way to connect a particular experience to another.

612. If one demands of a "strictly objective science" that it take its content only from observation, he must at the same time demand that it renounce all thinking.

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613. For thinking, by its very nature, goes beyond what is observed.

614. It is appropriate now to pass from thinking to the being who thinks.

615. For it is through the thinker that thinking is joined with observation.

616. The human consciousness is the stage where concept and observation meet each other and where they are linked.

617. Thereby, this (human) consciousness is characterized at the same time.

618. It is the mediator between thinking and observation.

619. Insofar as man observes a thing, this thing appears to him as given, insofar as he thinks, he appears to himself as active.

620. He regards the thing as an *object*, himself as the thinking *subject*.

621. Because he directs his thinking upon the observation, he has consciousness of objects; because he directs his thinking upon himself, he has consciousness of himself or self-consciousness.

622. Human consciousness must necessarily be self-consciousness at the same time, because it is *thinking* consciousness.

623. For when thinking directs its gaze upon its own activity, then it has its very own essence, *i.e.* its subject, as an object before it.

624. Now, however, it must not be overlooked that it is only through thinking that we are able to determine ourselves as subjects and contrast ourselves to the objects.

625. Therefore thinking must never be regarded as a purely subjective activity.

626. Thinking is *beyond* subject and object.

627. It produces these two concepts just as it produces all the others.

628. Thus, when we, as thinking subject, relate the concept to an object, we must not regard this relation as something purely subjective.

629. It is not the subject that brings about the relationship, but thinking.

630. The subject does not think because it is a subject; rather, it appears to itself as a subject because it is able to think.

631. The activity that man exercises as a *thinking* being is therefore not merely subjective, but one that is neither subjective nor objective, one that goes beyond these two concepts.

632. I must never say that my individual subject thinks; rather, my individual subject itself lives by the grace of thinking.

633. Thinking is thus an element that takes me beyond myself and connects me to objects.

634. But at the same time it separates me from them inasmuch as it places me over against them as a subject.

635. This is the basis of the double nature of man: He thinks and thereby encloses himself and the rest of the world; but at the same time he must determine himself through thinking as an individual confronted by things.

636. The next thing to do is to ask ourselves: How does the other element, which we have hitherto merely described as the object of observation and which encounters thinking in our consciousness, come into our consciousness?

637. In order to answer this question, we must eliminate from our field of observation everything that has been brought into it by thinking.

(This is the state of unprejudiced observation.)

638. For the content of our consciousness at any given moment is always already interspersed with concepts in the most diverse ways.

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639. We must imagine that a being with fully developed human intelligence emerges from nothing and confronts the world.

640. What this being would become aware of, before it brings thinking into activity, is the pure content of observation.

641. The world would then show this being is a mere incoherent aggregate of sense-objects: colors, sounds, sensations of pressure, warmth, taste, smell; and, lastly, feelings of pleasure and displeasure.

642. This aggregate is the content of pure unthinking observation.

643. Over against it stands thinking, which is ready to unfold its activity when a point of attack is found.

644. Experience teaches us that he soon finds such a point himself.

645. Thinking is capable of drawing threads from one element of observation to another.

646. It connects definite concepts with these elements and thereby brings them into a relationship.

647. We have already seen above how a noise we encounter is connected with another observation by designating the former as the effect of the latter.

648. If we now recall that the activity of thinking is by no means to be regarded as merely subjective, we shall not be tempted to believe that such relationships which are established through thinking only have a subjective validity.

649. It will now be a question of seeking, through thinking consideration, the relation which the immediately given content of observation mentioned above has to our conscious subject.

650. Due to the variations of usage, it seems necessary to me that I come to an agreement with my reader about the use of a word that I must use in what follows.

651. I shall call the immediate objects of sensation which I have enumerated above, insofar as the conscious subject takes cognizance of them through observation, *perceptions* (or *percepts*).

652. I therefore designate by this word, not the process of observation, but rather the *object* of this observation.

653. I have not chosen the term *sensation* because it has a specific meaning in Physiology that is narrower than that of my concept of perception.

654. I can certainly call a feeling in myself a perception, but not as a sensation in the physiological sense.

655. I also come to a knowledge of my feeling through the fact that it becomes a *perception* for me.

656. And the way in which we come to a knowledge of our thinking through observation is such that we can also call thinking, in its first appearance to our consciousness, a perception.

657. The naïve (unreflective) man considers his perceptions, in the way they immediately appear to him, as things that have an existence entirely independent of him.

658. When he sees a tree, he first believes that it stands there in the form that he sees, with the colors that its parts have, *etc.*, at the place where his gaze is directed.

659. When the same man sees the sun in the morning appear as a disc on the horizon and follows the course of this disc, he believes that everything exists (in itself) and proceeds (by itself), just as he observes it.

660. He holds on to this belief until he encounters other perceptions that contradict those.

661. The child, who has not yet had any experience of distance, reaches for the moon and does not correct what, at first sight, it took to be real until a second perception contradicts the first.

662. Each widening of the circle of my perceptions compels me to correct my picture of the world.

663. This is evident in everyday life as well as in the spiritual development of mankind.

664. The picture which the ancients made of the relation of the Earth to the sun and the other celestial bodies had to be replaced by Copernicus with another one, because it did not agree with perceptions which were not known in those early days.

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665. A man who was born blind, after a successful surgery by Dr. Franz, said that before his operation he had formed a completely different picture of the size of the objects through the perceptions of his sense of touch.

666. He had to correct his tactile perceptions by his visual perceptions.

667. How is it that we are compelled to make such continual corrections to our observations?

668. A simple reflection brings the answer to this question.

669. When I stand at one end of an avenue, the trees at the other end, away from me, seem smaller and closer together than (those trees) from where I stand.

670. My perceptual picture changes as I change the place from which I make my observations.

671. The picture, in the form in which it approaches me, therefore, is dependent on a determining factor that does not belong to the object, but to me, the perceiver.

672. For this avenue with trees, it makes absolutely no difference where I stand.

673. But the picture that I get of it is essentially dependent on where I stand.

674. In the same way, it is completely irrelevant for the sun and the planetary system that we, human beings, look at them straight from the Earth.

675. But the perceptual picture that presents itself to us is determined by the fact that we inhabit the Earth.

676. This dependence of our perceptual picture on our point of observation is the one that is easiest to understand.

677. The matter becomes more difficult as we get to know the dependence of our perceptual world on our bodily and spiritual organization.

678. The physicist shows us that, within the space in which we hear a sound, there are vibrations of the air, and that the body in which we look for the origin of the sound also shows certain parts which are also vibrating.

679. We only perceive this movement (vibration) as sound if we have a normally organized ear.

680. Without such an ear the whole world would remain forever silent to us.

681. Again, physiology teaches us that there are people who perceive nothing of the magnificent display of colors that surrounds us.

682. Their perceptual image only shows nuances of light and dark.

683. Others only fail to perceive a certain color, *e.g.*, red.

684. Their picture of the world lacks this color tone, and it is therefore actually different from that of an average person.

685. I would like to call the dependency of my perceptual picture on my place of observation, “mathematical,” and its dependency on my organization, “qualitative.”

686. The proportions and respective distances of my perceptions are determined by the former, and the quality of these perceptions, by the latter.

687. The fact that I see a red surface as red — this qualitative determination — depends on the organization of my eye.

688. My perceptual pictures are therefore, at first, subjective.

689. The knowledge of the subjective character of our perceptions can easily lead to doubts as to whether they are based on anything objective at all.

690. If we know that a perception, *e.g.*, that of the red color or of a certain tone, is not possible without a specific structure in our organism, we can come to believe that it has no existence apart from our subjective organism, that it has no kind of existence without the act of perceiving of which it is the object.

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691. This view found a classical representative in George Berkeley, who held that, from the moment man became conscious of the importance of the subject for perception, he could no longer believe in the existence of a world without a conscious mind.

692. He says:

"Some truths there are so near and obvious to the mind that a man need only open his eyes to see them. Such I take this important one to be, *viz.* that all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth, in a word all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any subsistence without a mind, that their *being* is to be perceived or known; that consequently so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind or that of any other *created spirit*, they must either have no existence at all, or else subsist in the mind of some Eternal Spirit." (George Berkeley, *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*)

693. -----

694. For this view, nothing remains of the perception apart from its being perceived.

695. There is no color if none is seen, no sound if none is heard.

696. Extension, shape and movement, like color and sound, do not exist outside of the act of perception.

697. Nowhere do we see mere extension or shape, but always see them associated with color or other characteristics which are undeniably dependent on our subjectivity.

698. If these latter characteristics disappear when we cease the act of perception, so must the former ones which are bound to them.

699. This view meets the objection that: Even if shape, color, sound, *etc.*, have no other existence than within my act of perception, there must still be things that exist outside my consciousness and to which the conscious perceptual pictures are similar.

To this objection, the view replies: A color can only be similar to a color, a figure to a figure.

700. Our perceptions can only be similar to our perceptions, and to nothing else.

701. Even what we call an object is nothing but a group of perceptions connected in a definite way.

702. If I take away from a table its form, extension, color, *etc.*, — in short everything that is only my perception — then nothing more remains.

703. Pursued consistently, this view leads to the assertion: The objects of my perceptions are only present through me, and only insofar as, and as long as, I perceive them; they disappear along with my act of perceiving and have no meaning apart from it.

704. Apart from my perceptions, I know of no objects and cannot know of any.

705. Nothing can be objected to this assertion as long as I am only taking into account the general fact that perception is also determined by the organization of my subject.

(We can form a clearer idea of the view of Berkeley by reflecting on how we interact with that world inside an RPG game. Our perception is limited to what we see on the PC screen, and whatever is possibly happening beyond the dimensions of this screen, only the game engine determines. These happenings are only actually *generated* when they are supposed to enter the boundaries of the screen.

This view is summarized by the statement: "To exist is to be perceived." Since perception is *indeed* partly determined by the organization of the subject, a percept ceases to exist as the act of perception ceases. For example, suppose I *see* a chair in a room, then in this view I say: There *is* a chair. Then I leave the room to attend to other things, and while I am away someone takes the chair out of the room. Now I come back to the room and no longer see the chair there; then I say: The chair does not exist. This statement only seems awkward because, in our common worldview now, we *know* that someone must have displaced the chair. This view, however, does not take account of such *knowledge*: only the general fact that perception is *also* determined by the organization of the subject. Thus: no perception, no chair.)

706. The matter would present itself in an essentially different way, however, if we are able to specify what the function of our act of perceiving is in the coming about of a perception.

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(So far, we only know the general fact that perception is *also* determined by the organization of the subject. We can pursue matter in detail and see if we can specify exactly the activities involved in our act of perceiving before a perception arises.)

707. We would then know what happens with the perception during the act of perceiving, and we could also determine what must already be in it before it comes to be perceived.

708. With this our consideration leads over from the object of perception to the subject of it.

709. I perceive, not only other things; I also perceive myself.

710. The perception of myself has, at first, the content that I am what endures in the face of the perceptual pictures which are always coming and going.

711. The perception of my "I" can always appear in my consciousness while I am having other perceptions.

712. When I am absorbed in the perception of a given object, I am, for the moment, conscious only of this object.

713. The perception of my "I" can then enter into this.

714. I am now conscious, not only of the object, but also of my personality, which stands in front of the object and observes it.

715. Not only do I see a tree, but I also know that *it is I* who see it.

716. I also recognize that something is occurring within me as I observe the tree.

717. When the tree disappears from my field of vision, something of this occurrence remains behind for my consciousness: a picture of the tree.

718. During my observation, this picture has connected itself to my self.

719. My self has become richer; its content has acquired a new element.

720. This element I call my *mental picture* of the tree.

721. I would never be able to speak of *mental pictures* if I did not experience them in the perception of my self.

722. Perceptions would come and go; I would let them pass.

723. Only because I perceive my self and notice that *its* content changes with every perception do I see myself compelled to connect the observation of the object with my own change of condition and to speak of my mental picture.

724. I perceive the mental picture in my self in the same sense as I perceive color, sound, *etc.*, in other objects.

725. I can now also make the distinction of calling these other objects that confront me the *outer world*, while I designate the content of my self-perception as the *inner world*.

726. Misconceptions about the relationship of mental picture and object has brought about the greatest misunderstandings in modern philosophy.

727. The perception of a change in us, the modification that my self undergoes, was pushed to the fore and the object causing this modification was completely lost from view.

(That is, the mental picture was pushed out of our inner world into the outer world, between the observer and the actual object, thereby losing the object from view: thought of either as completely non-existent (Berkeley) or as hopelessly inaccessible (Kant). This is explained in meticulous detail in what follows, but the book precisely summarizes the situation here.)

728. It has been said: We do not perceive objects, only our mental pictures.

729. I supposedly know nothing about the table-in-itself, which is the object of my observation, but only about the change that is occurring in my self while I am perceiving the table.

730. This view must not be confused with that of Berkeley mentioned before.

Let us recall the quoted passage from Berkeley. According to his view:

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(a) Everything in Heaven and Earth does not have any *subsistence* without a mind (a perceiving subject). This means that, in this view, all our perceptions are *entirely* mental pictures that are 'pushed into the fore,' and thus are subjectively determined. There must be no other objects than this kind of mental pictures.

(b) To exist is to be perceived: so long as.., or else they are *subsisting* (*i.e.*, remain in being at the minimum) in the mind of some Eternal Spirit (God).

731. Berkeley maintains the subjective nature of the content of my perception, but he does not say that I can only know about my mental pictures.

732. He limits my knowledge to my mental pictures because he maintains that there are no objects outside of mental picturing.

733. What I see as a table, in the Berkeley sense, no longer exists as soon as I cease to gaze upon it.

734. This is why Berkeley lets my perceptions arise directly through the power of God.

(Indeed. All percepts *mysteriously* come into being and fade into nothing as I perceive them and cease to do so — where could these percepts be coming from then? In this view, we can find no other source for these percepts than God Himself. For they must be *subsisting* all along in the mind of some Eternal Spirit.)

735. I see a table because God calls forth this perception in me.

736. Berkeley therefore knows no other real beings than God and human spirits.

737. What we call world exists only within spirits.

738. Confronting this view is the Kantian view now predominating, which does not restrict our knowledge of the world to our mental pictures, not because it is convinced that there can be no things apart from these mental pictures, but because it believes that we are so organized that we can know only of the changes within our own selves, not of the things-in-themselves that are causing these changes.

739. From the fact that I only know my mental pictures, it does not conclude that there is no existence independent of these mental pictures, but only that the subject cannot immediately take such an existence into itself. — It cannot "imagine (such an existence), feign it, think it, know it, perhaps even fail to know it, other than through the medium of its subjective thoughts." (Otto Liebmann, *Zur Analysis der Wirklichkeit*, p. 28).

740. This view believes it is saying something that is absolutely certain, something that is immediately obvious without any proof.

741. "The first fundamental proposition that the philosopher has to bring to a clear consciousness consists in the recognition that our knowledge, *first of all*, extends to nothing more than our mental pictures. Our mental pictures are the only things that we have and experience directly; and precisely because we have direct experience of them, even the most radical doubt cannot wrest from us our knowledge of them. On the other hand, knowledge that goes beyond our mental picturing — I am taking this expression in the broadest possible sense, so that all psychical occurrences fall under it — is not proof against doubt. Therefore, *at the beginning of all philosophizing*, all knowledge that goes beyond mental pictures must be expressly presented as open to question."

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745. This is how Volkelt begins his book, *Immanuel Kant's Theory of Knowledge*.

746. What is presented here as if it were an immediate and self-evident truth is, in fact, the result of a thought-operation that proceeds as follows:

747. The naïve man believes that things, as he perceives them, are also present outside his consciousness.

748. But Physics, Physiology and Psychology seem to teach us that our organization is necessary for our perceptions, that consequently we can know of nothing except what our organization transmits to us from the things.

749. Our perceptions are thus modifications of our organization, not things-in-themselves.

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750. Eduard von Hartmann did, in fact, characterize the line of thought indicated here as one which leads necessarily to the conviction that we can only have direct knowledge of our mental pictures. (*cp.* Eduard von Hartmann, *Das Grundproblem der Erkenntnistheorie*, p. 16-40).

751. Because we find, outside our organism, vibrations of particles and of air, which manifest to us as sound, it is concluded that what we call "sound" is nothing more than a subjective reaction of our organism to those motions in the outer world.

752. In the same way, one finds that color and warmth are only modifications of our organism.

753. And, indeed, he is of the opinion that these two kinds of perception are evoked in us by the effect of processes in the outer world, which are completely different from that which is experienced as warmth or color.

754. When such processes stimulate the skin nerves of my body, I have the subjective perception of warmth; when such processes affect the optic nerve, I perceive light and color.

755. Light, color and warmth are therefore the responses of my sensory nerves to the external stimuli.

756. Even my sense of touch gives me, not the objects of the external world, but only my own states.

757. In the sense of Modern Physics, one could think that bodies consist of infinitely small particles, molecules, and that these molecules are not directly adjacent to one another but stand at certain distances from one another.

758. Between them, therefore, is empty space.

759. Across these distances they act upon one another through forces of attraction and repulsion.

760. When I put my hand upon a body, the molecules of my hand by no means touch those of the body directly, but there remains a certain distance between body and hand, and what I sense as the body's resistance is nothing more than the effect of the force of repulsion that its molecules exert on my hand.

761. I am absolutely external to the body and perceive only its effect on my organism.

762. To complement to these considerations, there is the theory of the so-called "specific sense energies" laid down by J. Müller (1801-1858).

763. It consists in the fact that every sense has the peculiarity of responding to all external stimuli in only one specific way.

764. If an action is exerted on the optic nerve, there is a perception of light, irrespective of whether the stimulation is due to what we call "light," or whether a mechanical pressure or an electrical current is acting on the nerve.

765. On the other hand, different perceptions are evoked in different senses by the same external stimuli.

766. It seems to follow from this that our senses can transmit only what occurs within themselves, but nothing of the outer world.

767. The senses determine perceptions according to their nature.

768. Physiology also shows that a direct knowledge of what the objects cause in our sense organs is out of the question.

769. By following the processes in our own body, the physiologist finds that, even in the sense organs, the effects of an external stimulus are already changed in the most varied ways.

770. We see this most clearly in the eye and ear.

771. Both are very complicated organs which essentially transform the external stimulus before they bring it to the corresponding nerve.

772. The already-changed stimulus is now conducted from the peripheral end of the nerve to the brain.

773. Here the central organs must in turn be stimulated.

774. From this it is concluded that the external process has undergone a series of transformations before it comes to consciousness.

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775. What is occurring in the brain is connected with the external process by so many intermediate processes that a resemblance to it is inconceivable.

776. What the brain finally conveys to the soul are neither the external process nor the processes in the sense organs, but only those in the brain.

(The *soul*? — I translate this, to myself, as the *psychical* or *subjective organization*. I also think this is intentional, as this should *alert* us about an inconsistency in this procedure of pursuing the course of transformation of an external process in the act of perceiving: We are easily following *external* processes, step by step, and then we come upon and must enter into a region of the *soul*.)

777. But the soul does not immediately perceive these either.

778. What we finally have in consciousness are not brain processes at all, but *sensations*.

779. My sensation of *red* bears no resemblance at all to the process that takes place in the brain when I encounter red.

780. The latter only appears again in the soul as an effect and is only caused by the brain process.

781. That is why Hartmann says: "What the subject perceives are therefore always only modifications of his own psychical states and nothing else." (*cp.* Eduard von Hartmann, *Das Grundproblem der Erkenntnistheorie*, p. 37).

782. When I have the sensations, however, these are still a long way from being grouped into what I perceive as "things."

783. After all, only individual sensations can be conveyed to me by the brain.

784. The sensations of hardness and softness are conveyed to me by the sense of touch, the sensations of color and light by the sense of sight.

785. Yet they are found united in one and the same object.

786. This unification must therefore first be accomplished by the soul itself.

787. This means that the soul assembles the single sensations conveyed by the brain into (whole) bodies.

788. My brain conveys to me individually my visual, tactile and auditory sensations, and indeed along quite different paths, which the soul then combines into the mental picture "trumpet."

789. This final link (the mental picture of the trumpet) of a process is what is given first of all for my consciousness.

790. There is nothing more to be found in this final link that is outside of me and originally made an impression on my senses.

791. The external object has been completely lost on its way to the brain and through the brain to the soul.

(Let us recall what the book stated before. Philosophy pushed the mental picture out of the perceiving subject and placed it between him and the corresponding object, and thereby loses sight of the actual object. Kantian view now calls this actual object the 'thing-in-itself' and maintains that it is forever inaccessible, in contrast to the Berkeley view which maintains that there is no such actual object at all – only the mental picture is there.)

792. It will be difficult to find another thought-structure in the history of the spiritual life of man which has been put together with greater acumen and which, on closer examination, falls apart.

793. Let us take a closer look at how it comes about. (— How the 'impressive' thought-structure falls apart.)

794. One begins, first of all, with what is given to naïve consciousness: with the thing that is perceived.

795. Then one shows that none of what is found in this thing would be there for us if we had no senses.

796. No eye: no color.

797. Therefore color is not yet present in what works upon the eye.

798. Color arises only through the interaction of the eye with the object.

799. This thing, therefore, is colorless.

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800. But the color is not present in the eye either, for there is a chemical or physical process that is first conducted through the (optic) nerve to the brain, and there triggers another.

801. Even this one is not yet the color.

802. It is first evoked in the soul by the brain processes.

803. There it still does not come into my consciousness, but is only transferred outwards by the soul onto a body.

804. On this body, I believe I finally perceive the color.

805. We have made a complete circle.

806. We have become conscious of a colored body.

807. That is the starting-point.

(This section summarizes the steps of observation described before that led to the conclusion: What we perceive naively as objective is *really* a modification of our soul-states.)

808. Now the thought operation begins. (that leads to Hartmann's *conclusion*.)

809. If I had no eye, the body would be colorless for me.

810. So I cannot attribute the color to the body.

(The other translation is: So I cannot *put* the color in the body. In this section, the thought-operation on the preceding procedure of observation has begun. If I had no eye, the body would be colorless for me; and so, where do I find this color? Not on the body. In other words, *I cannot attribute color to the body* and I must look for it elsewhere. When we say 'attribute to something', we are placing a quality onto a thing and believe that it is really an intrinsic property of the thing.)

811. I go in search for the color.

812. I seek for it in my eye: in vain; in the nerve: in vain; in the brain: likewise in vain; in the soul: I find it here indeed, but not connected to the body.

813. I only find the colored body again where I started.

814. The circle is closed.

815. I believe that I now recognize as a product of my soul what the naïve person believes as existing outside of himself in space.

816. As long as one stops here, everything seems to be in perfect order.

817. But the matter must be taken up once more from the beginning.

818. Until now, I have been dealing with a thing: with an outer perception, of which, as a naïve person, I had a completely wrong view.

819. I was of the opinion that the perception, just as I perceive it, had an objective existence.

820. Now I notice that it disappears along with my mental picturing: that it is only a modification of my psychical states.

821. Do I still have a right to start from the perception in my considerations?

822. Can I say of it that it acts upon on my soul?

823. From now on I must regard the table, which I used to believe worked on me and produced a mental picture in me, as itself a mental picture.

824. But it follows that my sense organs and the processes in them are also merely subjective.

825. I have no right to speak of a real eye, but only of my mental picture of the eye.

826. It is just the same with the nerve and brain processes and no less with the process in the soul itself, through which things are supposed to be built up out of the chaos of diverse sensations.

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827. If, assuming the correctness of the first circle of thoughts, I run through the steps of my cognitive act once more, this act shows itself as a web of mental pictures which, as such, cannot act on one another.

828. I cannot say: My mental picture of the thing acts on my mental picture of the eye, and the mental picture of the color arises from this interaction.

829. But I also do not need to do this.

830. For as soon as it is clear to me that my sense organs and their activities, my nerve and soul processes can also be given to me only through perception, the train of thought described shows itself in its complete impossibility.

831. It is correct that there is no perception for me without the corresponding sense organ.

832. But just as little is there a sense organ without perception.

(We must apply our *unprejudiced consideration* on this. Indeed, if there is no percept at all of a sense organ, then how can we *even* speak of it in any way? How can we *even* know that it exists in the first place? Therefore, while it is correct to say: No eye — no visual percepts, it is just as correct to say: No visual percepts — No eye. Yes, it sounds like mere 'semantics', but it results *in fact* from *unprejudiced consideration* of the matter at this point. Also, this *seems* to imply that perceptions *outside* the subject and the corresponding sense-organs *in* the subject *mutually* determine each other; and, thus, if there is a particular type of percept in the world, there must be an organ in the subject capable of intercepting such a percept! — This will be discussed later on, regarding 'imperceptible' percepts, after we have established a consistent basis for a monistic view.)

833. I can pass from my perception of the table to the eye that sees it, to the nerves of the skin that feel it; but what is occurring in these I can only learn from perception.

834. And then I soon notice that, in the process that takes place in the eye, there is not a trace of resemblance to what I perceive as color.

835. I cannot get rid of my color perception by pointing out the process in the eye that takes place in it during the act of perception.

836. Just as little do I find the color in the nerve and brain processes; I only connect new perceptions within my organism with the first, which the naïve man places outside his organism.

837. I only pass from one perception to another.

838. Furthermore, there is a break in the whole argument.

839. I am able to follow the processes in my organism right up to the processes in my brain, even if my assumptions become more and more hypothetical the closer I get to the central processes in the brain.

840. The path of *outer* observation ends with the processes in my brain, specifically with those that I would perceive if I could deal with the brain with physical and chemical instruments and methods.

841. The path of *inner* observation begins with sensation and extends to the construction of things from the material of sensation.

842. In the transition from the brain process to sensation, the path of observation is broken.

843. The way of thinking characterized here, which calls itself "critical idealism," in contrast to the standpoint of naïve consciousness, which it calls "naïve realism," makes the mistake of characterizing *one* group of perceptions as a mental picture, but accepting the other group precisely in very same sense as the naïve realism which it apparently refutes.

844. It wants to prove that perceptions have the character of mental pictures by accepting, in the naïve way, the perceptions of one's own organism as objectively valid facts and, in addition, overlooking the fact that it confuses two areas of observation between which it cannot find any mediation.

845. Critical idealism can refute naïve realism only by itself accepting that one's own organism is objectively existing, in the naive-realistic way.

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846. As soon as the critical idealist becomes conscious of the complete similarity of the perceptions in his own organism with the perceptions assumed by naïve realism as objectively existing, he can no longer rely on the former as a secure basis (for his argumentation).

847. He would also have to regard his subjective organization as a mere complex of mental pictures.

848. This, however, eliminates the possibility of thinking that the content of the perceived world is effected by one's spiritual organization.

849. He would have to assume that the mental picture "color" is only a modification of the mental picture "eye".

850. So-called critical idealism cannot be proven without borrowing from naïve realism.

851. The latter is only refuted by allowing its own presuppositions to apply unchecked in another area.

852. This much is certain from all this: Critical idealism cannot be proved by investigations within the field of perception, and thus perception cannot be divested of its objective character.

853. But still less may the statement: "*The perceived world is my mental picture*," be presented as self-evident and needing no proof.

854. Schopenhauer begins his major work, *The World as Will and Representation*, with the words:

855. 'The world is my mental picture:' — this is a truth which holds good for everything that lives and knows, though man alone can bring it into reflective and abstract consciousness. If he really does this, he has attained to philosophical wisdom. It then becomes clear and certain to him that what he knows is not a sun and an earth, but only an eye that sees a sun, a hand that feels an earth; that the world which surrounds him is there only a mental picture, *i.e.*, only in relation to something else, the consciousness, which is himself. If any truth can be asserted *a priori*, it is this: for it is the expression of the most general form of all possible and thinkable experience: a form which is more general than time, or space, or causality, for they all presuppose it; …

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858. The whole proposition fails because of the fact I mentioned above: that the eye and the hand are no less perceptions than the sun and the earth.

859. And one could object to statements of Schopenhauer, in his own sense and mode of expression: My eye, which sees the sun, and my hand, which feels the earth, are my mental pictures, just as the sun and the earth themselves are my mental pictures.

860. It is immediate clear that I thereby cancel his statement.

861. For only my real eye and my real hand, not my mental pictures "eye" and "hand," could have the mental pictures "sun" and "earth" as their modifications.

862. But critical idealism may only speak of these.

863. Critical idealism is completely unsuitable for gaining a view of the relationship between perception and mental picture.

864. It cannot make the distinction indicated on page ??? between what is occurring with the perception during the act of perceiving and what must already be there before it is perceived.

865. In order to do this, therefore, a different path must be taken.

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867. **CHAPTER V — THE ACT OF KNOWING THE WORLD**

868. From the foregoing considerations follows the impossibility of establishing, by examining the content of our observations, that our perceptions are mental pictures.

869. This is supposedly proven by showing that, if the process of perception occurs in the manner in which it is conceived according to the naïve-realistic assumptions about the psychological and physiological constitution

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of our individuality, then we are not dealing with things-in-themselves, but merely with our mental pictures of the things.

870. Now, if naïve realism, pursued consistently, leads to results that represent the exact opposite of its presuppositions, then these presuppositions must be designated as unsuitable for establishing a worldview and must be dropped.

871. In any case, it is inadmissible to reject the presuppositions and allow the conclusions to stand, as the critical idealist does who bases his assertion: "The world is my mental picture," on the course of argument described before.

872. (E. von Hartmann gives a detailed account of this proof in his essay, *The Fundamental Problem of Epistemology*.)

873. The correctness of critical idealism is one thing; the persuasiveness of its proofs is another.

874. How critical idealism stands with the former will emerge later in connection with our explanations.

875. But the persuasiveness of its proof is nil.

876. If a house is being built and the ground floor collapses while the first floor is being built, then the first floor collapses with it.

877. Naïve realism and critical idealism are related to each other as the ground floor is to the first floor.

878. Whoever is of the opinion that the entire perceived world is only a mental picture, *viz.*, the effect of things unknown to him acting on his soul, for him the real question of knowledge naturally does not concern the mental pictures which are present only in his soul, but rather the things which lie beyond his consciousness and are independent of him.

879. He asks: How much of the latter can we know *indirectly*, since they are *not directly* accessible to our observation?

880. With this point of view, one does not concern himself with the inner connection of his conscious perceptions, but with their causes of which he is no longer conscious and having an existence independent of him, while, in his view, the perceptions disappear as soon as he turns his senses away from the things.

881. From this point of view, our consciousness works like a mirror on which images of certain things also disappear at the moment its reflecting surface is not directed towards them.

882. But whoever does not see the things themselves, but only their mirror images, must learn indirectly through inferences from the behavior of the latter about the nature of the former.

883. Modern natural science stands at this point of view, which uses perceptions only as a last resort in order to obtain information about the processes of matter that stand behind them and are the only ones that truly exist.

884. If the philosopher, as a critical idealist, accepts any real existence at all, then his striving for knowledge, with the indirect use of mental pictures, is directly solely upon this existence.

885. His interest skips over the subjective world of mental pictures and goes straight for what produces them.

886. But he can go so far as to say: I am confined in my world of mental pictures and cannot escape.

887. If I think a thing behind my mental pictures, this thought is still nothing more than my mental picture.

888. Such an idealist will then either completely deny the thing-in-itself or at least assert that it has no meaning at all for us human beings, that is, it is as good as non-existent because we cannot know anything about it.

889. To a critical idealist of this kind, the whole world appears as a dream, in the face of which any urge for knowledge would simply be meaningless.

890. For him there can only be two kinds of people: the deluded, who take their own dream fantasies for real things; and the wise, who see through the nothingness of this dream world and who must gradually lose all desire to trouble themselves about it any further.

891. From this point of view, one's own personality can also become a mere dream image.

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892. Just as our own dream image appears among the dream-images in our sleeping state, so in the consciousness of our waking state the mental picture of our own "I" joins the mental picture of the outer world.

893. We are then given in our consciousness, nor our real "I", but only our mental picture of it.

894. Now, whoever denies that things exist, or at least denies that we can know something about them, must also deny the existence or the knowledge of his own personality.

895. The critical idealist then comes to the assertion: "All reality is transformed into a strange dream, without a life which is dreamed of, and without a mind which dreams it; into a dream which is woven together in a dream of itself." (Fichte, *The Vocation of Man*)

896. Regardless of whether one who believes that immediate life is a dream no longer suspects anything behind this dream or whether he relates his mental pictures to real things: life itself must lose all scientific interest for him.

897. But, while for one who believes that all that is accessible to us has been exhausted in dreams, all science is an absurdity, for someone else who believes that he is entitled to infer about things from his mental pictures, science consists in investigating these " things-in-themselves."

898. The first world view can be called *absolute illusionism*; the second is called *transcendental realism* by its most rigorous exponent, Eduard von Hartmann.

(In the sense of this world view, knowledge is called *transcendental* when it is aware that nothing can be asserted directly about things-in-themselves, but which indirectly draws inferences from the known subjective to the unknown, which lies beyond the subjective power (transcendental). The thing-in-itself, according to this view, is beyond the realm of the world *directly* cognizable by us, that is, it is transcendent. Our world, however, can be transcendentally related to the transcendental. Hartmann's view is called realism because it goes beyond the subjective, the ideal, to the transcendent, the real.)

899. These two views have in common with naïve realism that they seek to gain a foothold in the world through an investigation of perceptions.

900. But nowhere within this realm (of perceptions) can they find a stable point.

901. A major question for the adherent of transcendental realism has to be: How does the "I" bring about the world of mental pictures out of itself?

902. An earnest striving for knowledge about to a world of mental pictures given to us, which disappears as soon as we close our senses to the outer world, can be kindled (in us) insofar as it is the means of indirectly investigating the world of our self-existing "I."

903. If the things of our experience were mental pictures, then our everyday life would be like a dream and the knowledge of the true state of affairs would be like awakening.

904. Even our dream-images interest us as long as we are dreaming and thus not detecting their dream character.

905. At the moment of awakening, we no longer ask about the inner connection of our dream-images, but rather about the physical, physiological and psychological processes that underlie them.

906. Just as little can the philosopher, who regards the world as his mental picture, be interested in the inner connection of the details within it.

907. If he admits an existing "I" at all, then he will not ask how one of his mental pictures is connected with another, but what is occurring in the soul existing independently of him, while his consciousness is having a specific course of mental pictures.

908. If I dream that I am drinking wine which causes a burning in my throat, and then wake up with an irritation in my throat and coughing, then the dream-scenario ceases to have any interest for me at the moment of awakening. (Weygandt, *Entstehung der Träume*)

909. My attention is now directed only to the physiological and psychological processes through which the irritation in my throat came to be symbolically expressed in the dream-image.

910. Similarly, the philosopher, as soon as he is convinced that the given world has the character of mental pictures, must jump over it to the real soul behind it.

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(Again, soul! In the previous explanations, we used the term 'soul' to refer to our *subjective organization*, which is what, within ourselves, is producing the actual sensation from the modified perceptual processes coming from our brain. In the context of the current explanations, the '*real soul behind the mental pictures*' refers to the *world-organization* or *world-process* that is the *real origin* of the percept, which in transcendental realism we can only infer about from the mental pictures that we have.)

911. The matter is certainly worse if illusionism completely denies the "I"-in-itself behind the mental pictures, or at least considers it unknowable.

912. Such a view can very easily lead one to the observation that, in contrast to dreaming, there is the waking state through which we have the opportunity to see through dreams and to relate them to real conditions, but that we have no such state which stands in a similar relation to our waking conscious life.

913. Whoever professes this view lacks the insight that there is indeed something that is related to mere perception as experience in the waking state is related to dreaming.

914. This something is *thinking*.

915. The naïve man cannot be blamed for the lack of insight that is here pointed to.

916. He gives himself over to life and takes things as real as they present themselves to him in experience.

917. But the first step that is taken beyond this point of view can only consist in the question: How is thinking related to perception?

918. It makes no difference whether the perception continues to exist in the form given to me before and after my mental picturing, or not: if I want to say anything at all about it, it can only be done with the help of thinking.

919. When I say: "The world is my idea," I have expressed the result of a thinking process, and if my thinking is not applicable to the world, then this result is erroneous.

920. Thinking inserts itself between perception and every kind of statement about it.

921. We have already given the reason why thinking is mostly overlooked when contemplating things (see p. ???).

922. It lies in the fact that we direct our attention only to the object we are thinking about, but not at the same time to our thinking.

923. The naïve consciousness therefore treats thinking as something that has nothing to do with things, but stands quite apart from them and carries on its reflections of the world.

(Here we use the word 'reflection' to point out the fact that, for the naïve consciousness, thinking *simply* reflects the things of the words on its crystalline surface (as it were), making *mere* 'copies' of outer things for its own sole use. This is important to note here, because this seems *not* to be the case. How could these 'copies', solely out of their interactions with one another, give us very useful facts about the *outer* world? The results of mathematics and natural sciences are very compelling instances of this.)

924. The picture that the thinker creates of the phenomena of the world does not count as something that belongs to things, but as existing only in man's heard; the world is complete even without this picture.

925. The world is set and ready in all its substances and forces; and of this complete world man creates a picture.

926. Those who think in this way only has to be asked: By what right do you declare the world finished without thinking?

927. Does not the world bring forth thinking in man's head with the same necessity as it brings forth the blossom on the plant?

928. Plant a seed in the earth.

929. It puts out roots and stalks.

930. It opens into leaves and blossoms.

931. Set the plant before yourself.

932. It connects with a specific concept in your soul.

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933. Why does this concept belong any less to the whole plant than leaf and blossom?

(Again, here, we may have to reinforce our *unprejudiced consideration* of the matter. If we *provisionally* remove all the presuppositions and acquired knowledge from our souls, our pure thinking sees that this is *in fact* the case. But since we here enter into the naïve-realistic mindset, the inner tension evoked by these statements is quite a matter of course. The point is, at least, we should not see the book as asserting anything other than a fact.)

934. You say: "The leaves and blossoms are there without a perceiving subject; the concept only appears when man confronts the plant."

935. Quite so.

936. But leaves and blossoms also arise on the plant only when there is earth in which the seed can be planted, when there is light and air in which leaves and blossoms can unfold.

937. This is exactly how the concept of the plant arises when a thinking consciousness approaches the plant.

938. It is quite arbitrary to regard the sum of what we experience of a thing through mere perception as a totality, as a whole, and that which results from *thinking* contemplation as a mere addition that has nothing to do with the thing itself.

(The word 'arbitrary' means 'based on random choice or personal whim, rather than any reason or system.')

939. If I am given a rosebud today, the picture presented to my perception is complete only for the moment.

940. If I put the bud in water, I shall get a completely different picture of my object tomorrow.

941. If I watch the rosebud without interruption, I shall see its condition today pass continuously into its condition tomorrow through innumerable intermediate stages.

942. The picture that presents itself to me at any specific moment is only an accidental section of the object that is in the continuous process of becoming.

(To emphasize the point here, we think about how the first cartoon animations were *actually* made. A small scene (in motion) has to be drawn frame by frame, each one a single event in a sequence that represents the small scene in motion. This is revealed by unprejudiced consideration: Every given thing for our observation appears as a *series* of single events. It is thinking that assigns to this thing the concept of 'series' — without thinking this series would just be a mere chaotic aggregate of sensory data. Mathematics, as a concrete example of unprejudiced consideration, knows this fact. — The concept of the *differential* precisely illustrates this, and this concept is at the very *foundations* of our present science. So, indeed, the picture (of a thing) presented to me at a specific moment is only a single 'frame' within an *infinite* sequence of 'frames' that correspond to the changes that a thing (appearing as a fixed single entity) is *actually* undergoing. That is also why this single 'frame' (in an infinite sequence) is an *accidental* one.)

943. If I do not put the bud in water, it will not develop a whole series of conditions that lie in it as a potential.

944. Likewise, I may be unable to continue observing the flower tomorrow and thus have an incomplete picture.

945. It is quite an arbitrary opinion, basing it on accidental occurrences, which declares of the picture presented at one particular time: This is the thing.

946. Neither is it admissible to declare the sum of its perceptual characteristics to be the thing.

947. It could very well be possible for a spirit-being to be able to receive the concept at the same time and unseparated from the percept.

948. Such a being would not even think of regarding the concept as something that does not belong to the thing.

949. It would have to ascribe to it an existence inseparably connected with the thing.

(The point here is: Even the sum of all the perceptual characteristics of a thing is not *yet* the whole thing itself. Again, through unprejudiced consideration, there is *no* reason why the concepts connected to the thing must be regarded as merely additional. This (conceptual) part of the thing *simply* occurs in us, separate from the thing. — Is this an enough reason to regard the concept as not belonging to the thing?)

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950. Let me make myself even clearer with an example.

951. If I throw a stone upwards through the air, I see it successively in different places.

952. I connect these places in a curve.

953. In mathematics I learn about different kinds of curves, one of which is the parabola.

954. I know that the parabola is a curve that is formed when a point moves according to a well-defined law.

955. When I examine the conditions under which the stone I have thrown upwards moves, I find that the curve of its motion is identical to that which I know as a parabola.

956. That the stone moves precisely in a parabola is a consequence of the given conditions and follows of necessarily from them.

957. The form of the parabola belongs to the whole phenomenon, just as much as everything else that comes into consideration about it.

958. The being described above, which would not have to take the detour of thinking, would be given, not only a sum of visual sensations at different places, but also, unseparated from the phenomenon, the parabolic shape of the trajectory, which *we* only add to the phenomenon through thinking .

(Let us re-imagine this example, the phenomenon of the ball being thrown upwards in the air by me. I see it casually as *a* stone moving first upwards then downwards in a curve (that I actually do not see, but I only *know*, especially if I know about the relevant concepts). The spirit-being we are talking about here would actually see this curve, so it would *never* think that the curve (which we *only* see conceptually) does not belong to the phenomenon.)

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959. It is not due to the objects that they are initially given to us without the corresponding concepts, but due to our spiritual organization.

960. Our whole being works in such a way that, for each thing within reality, the elements that are relevant to the thing flow towards it from two sides: from the side of *perceiving* and of *thinking*.

(Needs drawing.)

961. How I am organized to grasp things has nothing to do with their nature.

(For example, the law of the development of a particular seed is a law that belongs to the nature of the seed. I, as a human observer, perceive the how this natural law works and also conceive or make a mental picture of it, both according to *my* subjective organization. That is my own business. But the working of the natural law is the business of the outer world; they (clearly) unfold regardless of my presence.)

962. The break between perceiving and thinking is only present at the moment that I, the observer, confront the things.

(Again, without my presence and confronting things, the things will just go on their way unfolding the laws of their own nature. However, when I *do* confront them, the 'one uniform world going on its own way' *suddenly* becomes divided into thinking and perception — 'I' and the 'World' in terms of Chapter 2.)

963. Which elements do or do not belong to the thing, however, cannot depend at all on the way in which I arrive at a knowledge of these elements.

(Again: When I think about the thing and form concepts connected to the elements of it, [thus arriving at a knowledge of these elements], these concepts *apparently* belong to me because they occur in my presence. But this does *not* mean that these concepts do *not* belong to the thing.)

964. Man is a limited being.

965. First of all, he is a being among other beings.

966. His existence belongs to space and time.

967. As a result, only a limited part of the entire universe can be given to him.

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968. But this limited part connects to other things all around it, both temporally and spatially.

969. If our existence were so linked with things that every world-event were, at the same time, also *our* event, then there would be no distinction between us and things.

970. But then there would be no individual things for us either.

971. All events would then continuously merge into one another.

972. The cosmos would be a unity and a self-contained whole.

973. The stream of events would have no interruption anywhere.

974. Because of our limitations, what in truth is not an individual thing appears to us as individual.

975. Nowhere, for example, is the individual quality of red present all by itself.

976. It is surrounded on all sides by other qualities to which it belongs and without which it could not exist.

977. For us, however, it is necessary to single out certain sections of the world and to consider them by themselves.

978. Our eye can grasp only individual colors, one after the other, from the complex totality of colors; our intellect can grasp only individual concepts from a coherent system of concepts.

    (This is why we always seek *precise* terms to *identify* things in our serious endeavors like science.)

979. This isolation (of individual concepts from a totality) is a subjective act that is due to the fact that we are not identical with the world-process, but one being among other beings.

980. Everything now depends on determining the position of the being that we ourselves are in relation to the other beings.

981. This determination must be distinguished from merely becoming conscious of ourselves.

982. The latter rests on perceiving like becoming conscious of any other thing.

983. The perception of myself shows me a sum of characteristics, which I combine to form my personality as a whole, just as I combine the characteristics: yellow, metallic-shiny, hard, *etc.*, into the unity "gold".

984. The perception of myself does not lead me out of the realm of what belongs to me.

985. It must be distinguished from the determination of myself through *thinking*.

986. Just as I integrate an individual perception of the outer world into the world-context through thinking, so do I integrate the perceptions I have made of myself into the world-process through thinking.

    ('Zusammenhang der Welt' literally translates to "connection of the world" and, in the context of the previous course of explanations up to this point, it seems to refer to the *framework* of the world, where every piece fits precisely within the structure of the cosmos. We use the term 'world-context' since 'context' evokes a very similar sense of 'framework.' The 'world-context' seems to be related to perception as the 'world-process' is related to thinking: Thus, the 'world-process' refers to that which effects the *coherence* of the world; so that the 'world-context' and the 'world-process' together form the 'world-whole.' Yes, these are very elevated abstractions, but we need proper terms for them because we come across these *facts* in exercising unprejudiced consideration.

    Also these 'perceptions I have made of myself' do not include the physical body and organs, for they clearly belong to the outer world. Two proper examples of this are: 'I am wanting (this)' or 'I am feeling (that)'—these are clearly perceptions of oneself. Just as they are, they define me as a personality. But *thinking of* them brings them into the world-process, where natural laws are, and thus can be studied scientifically and yield applicable results for *all*.)

987. My self-perception encloses me within certain limits; my thinking has nothing to do with these limits.

988. In this sense I am a two-fold being.

989. I am enclosed within the region that I perceive to be my personality, but I am the bearer of an activity that determines my limited existence from a higher sphere.

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990. Our thinking is not individual like our sensing and feeling.

991. It is universal.

992. It only receives an individual character in every single human being because it is related to his individual sensation and feeling.

993. Individual people differ from one another through these particular colorings of the universal thinking.

994. A triangle has only one concept.

995. For the content of this concept it is irrelevant whether the human bearer of consciousness A or B grasps it.

996. But it will be grasped in an individual way by each of the two bearers of consciousness.

997. This thought is opposed by a common prejudice that is difficult to overcome.

998. This prejudice does not reach the insight that the concept of the triangle that my head grasps is the same as the one grasped by the head of my fellow human being.

(This prejudice is considerably reduced if one studies mathematics.)

999. The naïve man considers himself the creator of his concepts.

1000. He believes, therefore, that each person has his own concepts.

1001. It is a basic requirement of philosophical thinking to overcome this prejudice.

1002. The one unified concept of the triangle does not become a multiplicity by being thought by many.

1003. For the thinking of the many itself is a unity.

1004. In thinking we are given the element that unites our particular individuality with the cosmos into a whole.

1005. Insofar as we sense and feel (also perceive), we are individuals; insofar as we think, we are the all-one being that permeates everything.

1006. This is the deeper reason for our two-fold nature: we see an utterly absolute power coming into existence within us, a power that is universal, but we do not come to know it as it issues from the center of the world, but at a point on the periphery.

1007. If the former were the case, then the moment we become conscious we would know the whole riddle of the world.

1008. However, since we stand at a point on the periphery and find our own existence enclosed within certain limits, we must come to know the region that lies outside of our own being with the help of the thinking, which reaches into us from the universal world existence.

(These statements *may* seem outrageous at first, and comes off as something that we just *have to* believe. But, again, if we apply our *unprejudiced consideration*, a rock that is a few inches away from me is *as good a percept as* a certain thing out there in outer space ten million light-years away from me (that I can perceive as a twinkling small dot on the dark-blue dome of the sky). *My thinking permeates both these equally without respect to their proximity*. We are so overwhelmed by this *objective* fact that we feel compelled to shrink the activity of thinking into the confines of our heads: and it does as we wish! It is true that our thinking happens from our seemingly inconsequential corner of the vast cosmos, but this point is the very center of the universal cosmic existence itself transporting its activity to our tiny corner. This is why, despite this seemingly inconsequential existence, we do feel fully at home in the universe, and can *even* say to the devouring vastness before us: So, what?)

1009. Through the fact that thinking in us reaches out beyond our individual existence and relates to the universal existence of the world, the drive for knowledge arises in us.

1010. Beings without thinking do not have this drive.

1011. When other things confront them, no questions arise in them.

1012. These other things remain external to such beings.

1013. In the case of thinking beings, the concept comes forth to confront the external things.

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1014. The concept is that which we receive of the thing, not from without, but from within us.

1015. The balance, the unification of the two elements, the inner and the outer, is to be provided by *knowledge* (cognition).

1016. The perception, therefore, is not finished, closed off, but one side of total reality.

1017. The other side is the concept.

1018. The act of cognition is the synthesis of perception and concept.

1019. Only the perception and the concept of a thing make up the whole thing.

1020. The preceding explanations provide the proof that it is absurd to seek something in common in the individual things of the world other than the ideal content that thinking offers us.

(All things, no matter how wide their differences, have an *ideal content* which only thinking can grasp.)

1021. Every attempt that strives for a world-unity other than this coherent ideal content, which we acquire by thinking of our perceptions, is bound to fail.

1022. Not a human-personal God, not force or matter, nor the will without ideas (blind will of Schopenhauer) can count as a universal world-unity.

1023. These things all belong only to a limited region of our observation.

1024. We only perceive humanly limited personality in ourselves, force and matter in external things.

1025. As far as the will is concerned, it can only count as the active expression of our limited personality.

1026. Schopenhauer wanted to avoid making 'abstract' thinking the bearer of world-unity and instead sought something that presented itself to him directly as something real.

1027. This philosopher believed that we would never come to terms with the world if we regard it as the outer world.

1028. In fact, the meaning for which we seek of that world which is present to us only as our mental picture, or the transition from the world as mere mental picture of the knowing subject to whatever it may be besides this, would never be found if the investigator himself were nothing more than the pure knowing subject (a winged cherub without a body). But he is himself rooted in that world; he finds himself in it as an *individual*, that is to say, his knowledge, which is the necessary supporter of the whole world as mental picture, is yet always given through the medium of a body, whose affections are, as we have shown, the starting-point for the understanding in the perception of that world. His body is, for the pure knowing subject, a mental picture like every other mental picture, an object among objects. Its movements and actions are so far known to him in precisely the same way as the changes of all other perceived objects, and would be just as strange and incomprehensible to him if their meaning were not explained for him in an entirely different way. … The body is given in two entirely different ways to the subject of knowledge, who becomes an individual only through his identity with it. It is given as a mental picture in intelligent perception, as an object among objects and subject to the laws of objects. And it is also given in quite a different way as that which is immediately known to every one, and is signified by the word *will*. Every true act of his will is also at once and without exception a movement of his body. The act of will and the movement of the body are not two different things objectively known, which the bond of causality unites; they do not stand in the relation of cause and effect; they are one and the same, but they are given in entirely different ways — immediately, and again in perception for the understanding.

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1034. Through these arguments, Schopenhauer believed himself entitled to find the "objectivity" of the will in the human body.

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1035. He believed that, in the actions of the body, he can *immediately* feel a reality, the thing-in-itself in the concrete.

1036. Against these arguments it must be objected that we become conscious of the actions of our body only through self-perceptions and as such have no advantage over other perceptions.

1037. If we want to *know* their essence, we can only do so through *thinking* consideration, that is, by incorporating them into the ideal system of our concepts and ideas.

1038. Most deeply rooted in the naïve consciousness of humanity is the opinion that thinking is abstract, devoid of any concrete content.

1039. It could at most provide an "ideal" reflection world-unity, but never the world-unity itself.

1040. Whoever judges in this way has never it clear to himself what a perception is without the concept.

1041. Let us look at this world of perception: it appears as a mere juxtaposition in space and succession in time, an aggregate of disjointed details.

1042. None of the things that come and go on the stage of perception has any connection that can be perceived with any other thing.

1043. The world is there a multiplicity of objects of equal value.

1044. None plays a greater role than any other in the workings of the world.

1045. If we are to realize that this or that fact is of greater significance than the other, we must question our thinking.

1046. Without functioning thinking, the rudimentary organ of the animal, which has no significance for its life, appears to us as of equal value with the most important member of its body.

1047. The significance of the individual facts, in themselves and for the other parts of the world, only emerges when thinking weaves its threads from thing to thing.

1048. This activity of thinking is one *full of content*.

1049. For only through a very specific and concrete content can I know why the snail stands on a lower level of organization than the lion.

1050. The mere sight, the perception, gives me no content that could inform me about the perfection of the organization.

1051. Thinking brings this content, from the human world of concepts and ideas, to meet the perception.

1052. In contrast to the content of perception, which is given to us from the outside, the content of thought appears within us.

1053. The form in which the thought-content first appears we will call *intuition*.

1054. Intuition is to thinking what *observation* is to perception.

1055. Intuition and observation are the sources of our cognition.

(Concepts and ideas are the forms in the realm of thinking. They are filled with the *content* of intuition.)

1056. We are strangers to an observed thing in the world as long as we do not have the corresponding intuition within ourselves that supplements the piece of reality missing in our perception.

1057. Whoever does not have the ability to find the intuitions that correspond to things, full reality remains closed to him.

1058. Just as the color-blind sees only differences in brightness without color qualities, so the unintuitive can only observe unconnected fragments of perception.

1059. *To explain* a thing, *to make it understandable*, means nothing other than putting it into the context out of which it has been torn by the peculiarity of our organization described above.

1060. There is no thing that is separate from the world-as-a-whole.

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1061. All separation has only subjective validity for our organization.

1062. For us, the world-as-a-whole is divided into: above and below, before and after, cause and effect, object and idea, matter and force, object and subject, *etc.*

1063. What we encounter in the observation of details is connected through the coherent, unified world of our intuitions link by link; and through thinking we reassemble into one what we have separated through perception.

1064. The enigmatic nature of an object lies in its particular (separate) existence.

1065. But this is caused by us and can also be canceled again within the conceptual world.

1066. Except through thinking and perceiving, nothing is directly given to us.

1067. The question now arises: according to our explanations, what about the significance of perception?

1068. We have indeed recognized that the proof which critical idealism puts forward for the subjective nature of perceptions falls apart; but, with the insight into the incorrectness of the proof, it is not yet establish that the matter itself is based on an error.

1069. Critical idealism does not start from the absolute nature of thinking in its argument, but rests on the fact that naïve realism, pursued consistently, cancels itself out.

1070. How does the matter turn out when the absoluteness of thinking is recognized?

1071. Let us assume that a certain perception, *e.g.*, red, arises in my consciousness.

1072. The perception, as we continue to consider it, turns out to be related to other perceptions, *e.g.*, to a particular figure, to certain temperature and tactile perceptions.

1073. This connection I designate as an object of the sense world.

1074. I can now ask myself: Aside from what has been mentioned, what else is to be found in that section of space in which the above perceptions appear to me?

1075. I will find mechanical, chemical and other processes within this part of space.

1076. Now I go further and examine the processes that I find on the way from the object to my sense organs.

1077. I can find processes of motion in an elastic medium which, by their nature, have nothing in common with the original perceptions.

1078. I get the same result when I examine the further mediation from the sense organs to the brain.

1079. In each of these areas I make new perceptions; but what weaves as a connecting medium through all these spatially- and temporally-separated perceptions is thinking.

1080. The vibrations of the air that mediate the sound are given to me as perceptions just like the sound itself.

1081. Only thinking arranges all these perceptions together and shows them in their mutual relationships.

1082. We cannot say that, apart from what is directly perceived, there is anything other than what is known through the ideal connections (to be revealed by thinking) of the perceptions.

1083. The relation of the objects of perception to the subject of perception, which goes beyond what is merely perceived, is therefore merely ideal, that is, it can only be expressed through concepts.

1084. Only if I could perceive how the object of perception affects the subject of perception, or the other way around, if I could observe the construction of the perceptual structure by the subject, would it be possible to speak as does modern physiology and the critical idealism that is based on it

1085. This view confuses an ideal relation (of the object to the subject) with a process that could only be spoken of if it could be perceived.

1086. The proposition, "No color without a color-sensing eye," therefore, cannot mean that the eye produces the color, but only that there is an ideal connection, cognizable through thinking, between the perception "color" and the perception "eye."

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(The percepts "eye" and "color" are directly linked in the world-process. — This is the ideal relation spoken of. If I do not have eyes, I will not see anything at all; if my eyes have organic defects, I will not see some colors. What does our thinking declare then? That the percepts "eye" and "color" *are* directly related.)

1087. Empirical science will have to determine how the properties of the eye and those of colors are related to one another; by what mechanisms the organ of sight conveys the perception of colors, *etc.*

1088. I can follow one perception after another, how it relates spatially to others; and then bring that into conceptual expression; but I cannot perceive how a perception arises from the imperceptible.

(We can follow the process down to the minutest detail, but we cannot perceive how the perception arises in the subject. The process crossed over an obvious gap from the brain to the subject, who *somehow* perceives now a complete picture. Here, in the subject, the perception arose out of the blue!)

1089. All efforts to look for relations between perceptions other than thought-relations must necessarily fail.

1090. What, then, is a percept?

1091. This question, put in general terms, is absurd.

(This is because, as explained before, it is thinking that brings a percept in its proper place in the world-context. This question is absurd without taking thinking into account.)

1092. Perception always appears as a quite definite, as a concrete content.

1093. This content is directly given and completely contained in what is given.

1094. In relation to this given, one can only ask what it is, apart from perception, that is: what is it for thinking?

1095. Thus, the question of the "what" of a percept can only refer to the conceptual intuition that corresponds to it.

(This is why standard dictionaries give the definition of a word in terms of *other* things than the word itself: like drawing a *relevant* background for the thing, with the thing itself drawn as a blank outline. One must then apply *thinking* to imagine the thing from this drawing.)

1096. From this point of view, the question of the subjectivity of perception in the sense of critical idealism cannot be raised at all.

1097. Only what is perceived as belonging to the subject may be designated as subjective.

1098. Forming the link between the subjective and the objective does not belong to a real process in the naïve sense, that is, to a perceptible occurrence, but to thinking alone.

1099. It is therefore objective for us what presents itself to perception as lying outside the perceiving subject.

(In the course of arguments of critical idealism, the *somehow* completed sensory thing within the subject is, again, *somehow* projected outwards into the outer world. This process cannot be perceived at all, simply assumed to occur. The thing is *outside* the subject and the mental picture is *inside* the subject. They are related, *by thinking alone*, through a chain of events starting from the object leading to the mental picture. There is no projection that actually occurs. Thinking only declares plainly that the thing is *outside* the subject and the mental picture is *inside* him. Therefore, the thing *is* outside the subject!)

1100. My perceiving subject remains perceptible to me when the table now in front of me disappears from the field of my observation.

1101. Observing the table has brought about a change in me that also remains.

1102. I retain the ability to recreate an image of the table at any later time.

1103. This ability to bring forth an image remains connected with me.

1104. Psychology calls this image a "memory-picture."

1105. It is, however, what alone can rightly be called the *mental picture* of the table.

1106. This corresponds to the perceptible change in my own condition through the presence of the table in my field of vision.

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1107. And it does not mean a change in any "I"-in-itself standing behind the perceptual subject, but the change in the perceptible subject itself.

1108. Therefore, the mental picture is a subjective perception in contrast to objective perception when the object is present in the horizon of perception.

1109. The confusion of the subjective with the objective perception leads to the misunderstanding of idealism: "The world is my mental picture."

1110. It will now be our task to determine the concept of mental picture more closely.

1111. What we have said about it up to now is not the concept of it, but only points the way to where it is to be found in the field of perception.

1112. The precise concept of mental picture will then also make it possible for us to obtain a satisfactory explanation of the relationship between itself and the object.

1113. This will then also lead us across the boundary where the relationship between the human subject and the object belonging to the world is led down from the purely conceptual field of cognition into concrete individual *life*.

1114. Once we only know how we have to conceive the world, it will be easy to orient ourselves accordingly.

1115. We cannot be active with full vigor until we know the object of the world to which we dedicate our work.

1116.

1117. **ADDENDUM TO THE REVISED EDITION 1918**

1118. The view characterized here can be viewed as one to which man is naturally driven at first, when he begins to think about his relationship to the world.

1119. There he sees himself entangled in a thought-configuration that dissolves for him as he forms it.

1120. This thought-configuration is one for which a mere theoretical refutation does not do everything that is necessary for the task.

1121. One must *live through it* so that, through the insight into the error to which it leads, he can find the way out.

1122. It must appear in a discussion about man's relation to the world, not because one wants to refute others who he believes have an incorrect view of this relation, but because he must know what confusion every first reflection about such relation can bring.

1123. One must gain *the* insight into how one can refute *himself* with regard to this first reflection.

1124. It is from this the point of view that the preceding discussion (in this chapter) is to be understood.

1125. Whoever wants to develop for himself a view of the relation between man and the world becomes aware that he forms at least a part of this relation by producing mental pictures of things and events in the world.

1126. In this way, his gaze is withdrawn from what is *outside* in the world and directed to his inner world, to his life of mental pictures.

1127. He begins to say to himself: "I cannot relate to any thing or occurrence unless a mental picture arises in me."

1128. From noticing this state of affairs there is only one step to the opinion: "All I am experiencing are only my mental pictures; I only know of a world outside insofar as it is a mental picture in me."

1129. With this opinion, the naïve standpoint of reality that one assumes before contemplating his relationship to the world is abandoned.

1130. From this standpoint, he believes he is dealing with real things.

1131. Self-reflection drives him away from this standpoint.

1132. It does not allow the human being to look at a reality as the naïve consciousness believes it has before itself.

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1133. It only allows him to look at his mental pictures; *these* insert themselves between his own being and a supposedly real world such as the naïve standpoint believes it can claim.

1134. Man can no longer look, through the interposed world of mental pictures, upon such a reality.

1135. He must assume that he is blind to this reality.

1136. This is how the thought of a "thing-in-itself" that is inaccessible to knowledge arises.

1137. — As long as one remains in the contemplation of the relationship with the world into which man seems to enter through his life of mental pictures, he will not be able to escape this thought-configuration.

1138. One cannot remain at the naïve standpoint of reality if he does not want to close himself off artificially to the urge for knowledge.

1139. The fact that this urge for the knowledge of the relationship between man and the world is present shows that this naïve standpoint must be abandoned.

1140. If the naïve point of view gave something that could be acknowledged as truth, one could not feel this urge.

1141. — But one does not come to something else that he could regard as truth if he merely abandons the naïve point of view, but — without noticing it — maintains the way of thinking that this standpoint imposes.

1142. One falls into such a mistake when he says to himself:

1143. "I experience only my mental pictures, and though I believe that I am dealing with realities, I am actually only aware of my mental pictures of realities; I must therefore assume that only outside the sphere of my consciousness do the true realities exist, the "things-in-themselves," of which I know absolutely nothing directly, which somehow approach me and affect me in such a way that my world of mental pictures arises in me."

1144. Whoever thinks in this way only adds, in his thoughts, another world to the world before him; but, with regard to this (added) world, he would actually have to start all over again with his labor of thought.

1145. -----

1146. For the unknown "thing-in-itself", in its relation to man's own nature, is not thought of differently than the known thing from the naïve standpoint of reality.

1147. One escapes the confusion into which he comes when he exercises critical reflection on this naïve standpoint only when he notices that — *within* what man can experience perceptually in himself and outside in the world — there is something which can never fall victim to the fate of having the mental picture insert itself between the occurrence and the contemplating human being.

1148. -----

1149. And this is thinking.

1150. With regards to thinking, man *can* remain at the naïve standpoint of reality.

1151. If he does not do so, it is only because he has noticed that he must abandon this standpoint for other things, but does not realize that the insight thus gained is not applicable to thinking.

1152. When he becomes aware of this, he opens up access to the other insight that, *in* thinking and *through* thinking, he necessarily comes to know the very thing to which man seems to blind himself by inserting his life of mental picturing between himself and the world.

1153. — The author of this book has been reproached by a critic who is highly esteemed by him of remaining, in his considerations of thinking, at a naïve realism of thinking, of that kind when one considers the actual world and the mentally-pictured world as one.

1154. But the author believes that he has proved in these consideration that the validity of this "naïve realism" for thinking necessarily results from an unprejudiced consideration of it; and that naïve realism, which does not apply to anything else, is overcome through knowledge of the true nature of thinking.

1155.

1156. **CHAPTER VI — THE HUMAN INDIVIDUALITY**

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1157. The main difficulty in explaining mental pictures is found by philosophers to lie in the fact that we (as subjects) are not ourselves external things, and yet our mental pictures must have a form corresponding to the things.

1158. On closer examination, however, it turns out that this difficulty does not exist at all.

1159. We are certainly not external things, but we belong to one and the same world with external things.

1160. That section of the world that I perceive as my subject is traversed by the stream of the universal world-process.

1161. For my perception I am at first enclosed within the limits of my bodily skin.

1162. But what is inside in this bodily skin belongs to the cosmos as a whole.

1163. Therefore, in order for a relationship to exist between my organism and the object outside me, it is never necessary for something of that object to slip into me or make an impression on my spirit, like a signet ring on wax.

1164. The question: "How do I gain knowledge of the tree that stands ten paces away from me?" is put completely askew.

1165. It arises from the view that the boundaries of my body are absolute barriers through which information about external things enter me.

1166. The forces that work within the skin of my body are the same as those that exist outside.

1167. Therefore, I really am the things; not I, however, insofar as I am the perceiving subject, but I insofar as I am a part within the universal world-process.

1168. The perception of the tree exists with my "I" within the same whole.

1169. This universal world-process evokes the perception of the tree there as much as the perception of my "I" here.

1170. If I were not a world-knower, but a world-creator, then object and subject (perception and "I") would arise in one act.

1171. For they determine each other mutually.

1172. As a world-knower, I can find what is common to the two, which belong together as two sides of one being, only through thinking, which relates the two to each other through concepts.

1173. The most difficult to dismiss will be the so-called "physiological proofs" for the subjectivity of our perceptions.

1174. When I apply pressure on my skin, I perceive it as a sensation of pressure.

1175. I can perceive the same pressure through the eye as light, through the ear as sound.

1176. I perceive an electrical current through the eye as light, through the ear as sound, through the nerves of the skin as a shock, through the nose as the smell of phosphorus.

1177. What follows from this fact?

1178. Only this: I perceive an electric shock (or pressure), followed by a certain quality of light, or a sound, or a certain smell, *etc.*

1179. If there were no eye, no perception of a quality of light would accompany the perception of mechanical vibration in the surroundings, no perception of sound without the presence of an organ of hearing, *etc.*

1180. By what right can one say that without the organs of perception the whole process would not exist?

(Kind of related— Again, the facts we can gather from physiological proofs is only this: I perceive a (stimulus) — followed by a light, or a sound, or a smell, *etc.*; if there is no eye, no perception of light; no ears, no sound; *etc.* If my eye has a defect (cannot see red, for example), the red stimulus is as though blocked in my eye, does not reach subject, so I see a thing with no red color. This does *not* mean that thing (with red quality) does not exist. Also, there is no such thing as a red-all-by-itself, so, it is non-sense to ask: So, red does not exist *for* me?)

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1181. Whoever concludes from the fact that an electrical process in the eye produces light, therefore what we perceive as light is, outside of our organism, only a mechanical process of motion — he forgets that he is merely passing from one perception to another and certainly not to something outside of perception.

The physiological proof is merely passing from one perception to another, which it cannot relate *conceptually* (a law of phenomena that relates the perceptions) because it does *not* go beyond the perceptions. It means, it can find no explanation, in terms of natural laws, as to how one percept (mechanical process outside) causes the other percept (light).

Let us recall, as explained the previous chapter, it is thinking alone that connects perception to the subject through an ideal relation, and what does thinking *clearly* declare? That these perceptions are *outside* the subject — that these perceptions are *objective*.

Let us recall the argumentation of Critical Idealism: whatever *of* the original process that reaches the brain get *somehow* transmitted to the perceiving subject, who *somehow* assembles a whole thing from this transmission, and then *somehow* projects it outside of himself. This last *somehow* is the most dubious of all, but also the prejudice that is the hardest for us to let go: because we believe that thinking is barely, if at all, involved in this process.)

1182. Just as one can say: the eye perceives a mechanical process of motion in its surroundings as light, he can just as well assert: a lawful change in an object is perceived by us as a process of motion.

1183. If I paint a horse twelve times on the circumference of a rotating disc, precisely in the forms that its body assumes as it gallops, I can produce the appearance of motion by rotating the disc.

1184. I need only look through an opening in such a way that I see the successive forms of the horse at the right intervals.

1185. I do not see twelve pictures of the horse, but the picture of a galloping horse.

The one who asserts: "The eye perceives a mechanical process of motion in its surroundings as light," can further assert: "A *lawful* change in an object is perceived by us as a process of motion," as a response to our note to him about not being able to supply a conceptual explanation (*i.e.*, in terms of *laws of phenomena*). There is nothing 'off' about his phenakistoscope. On the other hand, here as well, he committed the same note we told him about, and even more clearly (applying it on a law of phenomena) — he is simply passing from percept to percept!

Again, as explained before, the problem with the argument of Critical Idealism is that those *somehows* in it are *assumed* to be perceivable (can be followed in observation) in the naïve way.

1186. The aforementioned physiological fact can therefore shed no light on the relation between perception and mental picture.

1187. We must find our way elsewhere.

1188. The moment a perception appears on my horizon of observation, thinking also becomes active through me.

1189. A member in my thought-system, a specific intuition, a concept, connects itself with the perception.

1190. When the perception then disappears from my field of vision, what remains?

1191. My intuition, with its relations to the particular perception, which formed at the moment of perception.

1192. The vividness with which I can later recall this relationship depends on the way in which my spiritual and physical organism is working.

1193. The *mental picture* is nothing other than an intuition related to a particular perception, a concept that was once connected to a perception and to which the relation to this perception has remained.

1194. My concept of a lion is not formed *out of* my perceptions of lions.

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1195. But my mental picture of the lion is certainly formed *from* perception.

1196. I can teach the concept of a lion to someone who has never seen a lion.

1197. I will not succeed in teaching him a vivid mental picture without his own perception.

1198. The *mental picture* is therefore an individualized concept.

1199. And now we have the explanation as to how the things of reality can be represented to us by mental pictures.

1200. .The full reality of a thing arises for us at the moment of observation from the coming together of concept and perception.

1201. The concept receives through a perception an individual form, a relation to this specific perception.

1202. In this individual form, which bears the relation to the perception as a characteristic, it lives on in us and forms the mental picture of the thing in question.

1203. If we come across a second thing with which the same concept is connected, we recognize it with the first as belonging to the same kind; if we encounter the same thing a second time, not only do we find a corresponding concept in our system of concepts, but also the individualized concept with its characteristic relation to the same object, and we recognize the object again.

1204. The mental picture thus stands between perception and concept.

1205. It is the definite concept pointing to perception.

1206. The sum total of what I can form mental pictures about may be called my experience.

1207. That person will have the richer experience who has a larger number of individualized concepts.

1208. A person who lacks any capacity for intuition is not capable of acquiring experience.

1209. He loses the objects again from his field of vision because he lacks the concepts that he should relate to them.

1210. A person with a well-developed ability to think, but with poorly-functioning perception as a result of dull sense organs, will be just as little able to gain experience.

1211. He can certainly acquire concepts in some way; but his intuitions lack living relationship to specific things.

1212. The unthinking traveler and the scholar living in abstract conceptual systems are equally incapable of acquiring rich experience.

1213. Reality presents itself to us as perception and concept, and the subjective representation of this reality as mental picture.

1214. If our personality expressed itself merely as knowing, then the sum of everything objective would be given in perception, concept and mental picture.

1215. However, we are not satisfied with relating the perception to the concept with the help of thinking; we also relate it to our particular subjectivity, to our individual "I."

1216. The expression of this individual relation is the feeling, which expresses itself as pleasure or displeasure.

1217. *Thinking* and *feeling* correspond to the twofold nature of our being, which we have already contemplated on.

1218. *Thinking* is the element through which we participate in the universal cosmic-process; *feeling* is that through which allows us to withdraw ourselves into the confines of our own being.

1219. Our thinking connects us to the world; our feeling leads us back into ourselves and thus makes us individuals.

1220. If we were merely thinking and perceiving beings, our whole life would have to flow in monotonous indifference.

1221. If we could merely *know* ourselves as self, we would be completely indifferent to ourselves.

1222. Only through the fact that we experience the feeling of self along with self-knowledge, and pleasure and displeasure along with the perception of things, do we live as individual beings whose existence is not exhaust-

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ed with the conceptual relationship in which they stand to the rest of the world, but who also have a particular value for themselves.

1223. One might be tempted to see in the life of feeling an element that is more richly saturated with reality than the thinking contemplation of the world.

1224. To this it must be replied that the life of feeling, after all, has this richer meaning only for my individual self.

1225. For the world as a whole, my life of feeling can only be of value if the feeling, as a perception of my self, enters into a connection with a concept and is integrated into the cosmos in this roundabout way.

This is not some meta-fizzling or metaphysical twaddle. How does a feeling-percept become integrated into the cosmos (world-as-a-whole)? Only when we can *explain* how it comes about, in the same way that we can *explain* (*i.e.*, by means of conceptual expression) a series of percepts as being, *in reality*, woven together by laws of phenomena. As long as we do not *explain* how a feeling-percept comes about in us, it is only relevant for ourselves.

1226. Our life is a continuous oscillation between living in the universal world-process and our individual being.

1227. The further we ascend into the universal nature of thinking, where the individual ultimately interests us only as an example, as an instance of the concept, the more the character of the particular being, of the quite specific individual personality, becomes lost in us.

1228. The further we descend into the depths of our own life and let our feelings resonate with the experiences of the outside world, the more we separate ourselves from the universal existence.

1229. A true individuality will be the one who reaches furthest up with his feelings into the region of the ideal.

1230. There are people with whom even the most general ideas that take root in their heads still have that particular coloring that unmistakably shows them to be in connection with their bearer.

1231. There are other people whose concepts come to us without any trace of peculiarity, as if they had not sprung from a being of flesh and blood at all.

1232. Our mental picturing already gives our conceptual life an individual character.

1233. Everyone has, after all, his own point in the world from which he views the world.

1234. His concepts connect themselves to his perceptions.

1235. He will think the universal concepts in his own particular way.

1236. This particular determination is a result of our location in the world, of the sphere of perception that is connected to our place in life.

1237. Certainly, this determination stands in opposition to another, which is dependent on our particular organization.

1238. Our organization is indeed a specific, fully-determined entity.

1239. We each combine particular feelings with our perceptions, and indeed in the most varying degrees of intensity.

1240. This is what is individual about our own personality.

1241. It is what remains over when we have all taken into account the determining factors of our place in life (our milieu).

(It may appear that, if we 'take into account everything in us that is connected to our place in life', there would be nothing left, in the sense that we would *cease* to exist at all. But this is an illusion. The state of unprejudiced consideration itself, which we all *know* well, shows that this is not the case at all. Something *indeed* remains.)

1242. A life of feeling that is completely devoid of thoughts would have to gradually lose all connection with the world.

1243. For the human being, who is meant for wholeness, the knowledge of things will go hand in hand with the training and development of the life of feeling.

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1244. Feeling is the means through which concepts first gain concrete *life*.

1245.

1246. **CHAPTER VII — ARE THERE LIMITS TO KNOWING?**

1247. We have established that the elements for explaining reality are to be taken from two spheres: perception and thinking.

1248. As we have seen, it is due to our organization that the full, complete reality, including our own subject, appears to us at first as a duality.

1249. Cognition, the act of knowing, overcomes this duality by combining into the whole thing the two elements of reality: perception and the concept worked out through thinking.

1250. Let us call the manner in which the world confronts us, before it has gained its real form through cognition, the "world of appearance" (or "world of phenomena"), in contrast to the unified whole composed of perception and concept.

1251. Then we can say: The world is given to us as duality (Dualistic), and cognition elaborates it into unity (Monistic).

1252. A philosophy which starts from this basic principle can be called monistic philosophy or *monism*.

1253. It is opposed to the theory of two worlds or *dualism*.

1254. Dualism does not assume two sides of the unified reality that are merely kept apart by our organization, but rather two worlds that are absolutely different from each other.

1255. It then looks for principles of explanation for one world in the other.

1256. Dualism is based on an incorrect conception of what we call cognition.

1257. It separates the whole of existence into two realms, each having its own laws, and lets these realms stand outside each other.

1258. It is from such a Dualism that the distinction has arisen between the object of perception and the "thing-in-itself," which was brought into science by Kant and has not been dispelled to this day.

1259. According to our explanations, it lies in the nature of our spiritual organization that a particular thing can be given only as perception.

1260. Thinking then overcomes the particularity by assigning each perception its lawful place in the world-as-a-whole.

1261. As long as the separate parts of the world as a whole are determined as perceptions, we are simply following a law of our subjectivity in this act of separation.

1262. But if we consider the sum of all perceptions as one part and then contrast this with a second part in the "things-in-themselves," we are philosophizing into the blue.

(This is because we know for sure *now* that there are no such things as these "things-in-themselves" behind our perceptions. Insisting on such notion will lead us to 'philosophizing into the blue.')

1263. We are then engaging in a mere play of concepts.

1264. We are constructing an artificial opposition, but we cannot gain any content for the second part of it, for such a content for a particular thing can only be drawn from perception.

1265. Every kind of existence that is assumed outside the realm of perception and concept is to be relegated to the sphere of unjustified hypotheses.

1266. The "thing-in-itself" belongs to this category.

1267. It is only quite natural that the Dualistic thinker cannot find the connection between his hypothetically assumed world-principle and what is given in experience.

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1268. A content for the hypothetical world-principle can only be gained if one borrows it from the world of experience and deceives himself about this fact of borrowing.

1269. Otherwise it remains a concept empty of content, a non-concept that only has the form of the concept.

1270. The Dualistic thinker then usually asserts: The content of this concept is inaccessible to our cognition; we could only know *that* such content is there, not *what* is there.

1271. In both cases it is impossible to overcome Dualism.

1272. If one brings a few abstract elements of the world of experience into the concept of the thing-in-itself, it still remains impossible to trace back the rich concrete life of experience to a few properties which are themselves only taken from perception.

1273. Du Bois-Reymond thinks that the imperceptible atoms of matter produce sensation and feeling through their position and motion, and then comes to the conclusion that we can never arrive at a satisfactory explanation of how matter and motion produce sensation and feeling, because: "It is absolutely and forever inconceivable that a number of carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, *etc.*, atoms should not be indifferent as to their own position and motion, past, present, or future. It is utterly inconceivable how consciousness should result from their joint action. [If their respective positions and their motion were not indifferent to them, they would have to be regarded as each possessed of a consciousness of its own, and as so many monads. But this would not explain consciousness in general, nor would it in the least assist us in understanding the unitary consciousness of the individual.]"

    (Du Bois-Reymond, *The Limits of Natural Knowledge*.)

1274. -----

1275. This conclusion is characteristic of this whole school of thought.

1276. Position and motion are isolated (abstracted) from the rich world of perceptions

1277. These are transferred to the imaginary world of atoms.

1278. Then comes the astonishment that concrete life cannot be developed from this self-made principle borrowed from the world of perception.

1279. The fact that the Dualist who works with a concept of the "in-itself" that is completely devoid of any content cannot come to any explanation of the world follows from the definition of his principle given above.

1280. In any case, the Dualist sees himself compelled to set insurmountable limits to our ability to know.

1281. The adherent of a monistic world view knows that everything he needs to explain a given phenomenon of the world must lie within the domain of this phenomenon.

1282. What prevents him from doing so can only be accidental limitations of time or space, or deficiencies in his organization.

1283. And not of the human organization in general, but only of his particular individual one.

1284. It follows from the concept of cognition, as we have defined it, that one cannot speak of the limits of cognition.

1285. Cognition is not an affair of the world in general, but a business that man has to settle with himself.

1286. Things require no explanation.

1287. They exist and interact according to the laws that can be discovered through thinking.

1288. They exist in inseparable unity with these laws.

1289. Then our selfhood confronts them and at first grasps only that which we have designated as perception.

1290. But within the inner being of this selfhood there is the power to also find the other part of reality.

1291. Only when the selfhood has also united for itself the two elements of reality, which are inseparably connected in the world, that the satisfaction of cognition occurs: the ego has arrived at reality again.

1292. The preconditions for the coming into existence of cognition are therefore *through* and *for* the "I."

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(That is, from *whatever* the act of knowing emerges, we are certain that it is *through* and *for* the "I." This *whatever* should not be mistaken for a *hazy somewhat:* we simply do not know it *yet*, but we are certain that cognition does *not* arise from *nothing*, for we do it ourselves all the time.)

1293. It is the "I" that sets to itself the questions of cognition.

1294. And it takes them from the completely clear and transparent element of thinking.

1295. If we set ourselves a question that we cannot answer, it must be that the content of the question are not in all respects clear and distinct.

1296. It is not the world that poses the questions to us, but we ourselves.

1297. I can imagine that I lack every possibility of answering a question that I find written down somewhere, without knowing the sphere from which the content of the question is taken.

1298. Our cognition involves questions that are posed to us by the fact that a sphere of perception conditioned by place, time and subjective organization is confronted with a conceptual sphere that points to the totality of the world.

1299. My task consists in reconciling these two spheres, which are well known to me.

1300. There can be no talk of a limit of knowledge.

1301. This or that may, at any one time, remain unexplained because our scene of life prevents us from perceiving the things that are involved.

1302. But what is not found today may be found tomorrow.

1303. The barriers caused by this are only transitory which can be overcome with the progress of perception and thinking.

1304. Dualism makes the mistake of transferring the opposition between object and subject, which has meaning only within the field of perception, to purely imaginary entities outside of it.

1305. But since the things which are separated within the horizon of perception are only separated as long as the perceiver refrains from thinking, which cancels all separation and makes it known as merely subjectively determined, the Dualist transfers (abstracted) determinations to entities (supposedly) behind the perceptions which, even for these perceptions, have no absolute validity but only a relative one.

(Since the Dualist has an *incorrect* view of cognition, he sees things as absolutely separate from one another. Thus, the characteristics (determinations) that he transfers to his fantasized 'things-in-themselves' standing behind the things (as perceptions) have no absolute but only *relative* validity, even for the things themselves. Again, as explained before, this is because our perceptions are always limited by our milieu and subjective organizations.)

1306. In doing so, he breaks down the two factors relevant to the process of cognition, perception and concept, into four: (1) The object-in-itself; (2) the perception that the subject has of the object; (3) the subject; (4) the concept that relates perception to the object-in-itself.

1307. The relation between the object and the subject is a *real* one; the subject is really (dynamically) influenced by the object.

1308. This real process is said not to fall within our consciousness.

1309. But it is said to evoke in the subject a counter-effect to the effect emanating from the object.

1310. The result of this counter-effect is said to be the perception.

1311. This is what first falls within our consciousness.

1312. The object has an objective reality (independent of the subject), the perception a subjective reality.

1313. The subject refers this subjective reality to the object.

1314. The reference is an ideal one.

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1315. Dualism thus splits the process of cognition into two parts.

1316. The one part, the production of the perceptual object from the "thing-in-itself," it leaves *outside* our consciousness; the other part, the linking of the percept with the concept and the relating of the concept to the object (the thing-in-itself), takes place *inside our consciousness*.

1317. Under these presuppositions it is clear that the dualist believes he is gaining in his concepts only subjective representations of what lies *outside* his consciousness.

1318. The objective-real process in the subject through which perception comes about, and all the more so the objective relations among the "things-in-themselves" remain inaccessible to direct knowledge for such a dualist; in his opinion man can only obtain conceptual representations of the objectively real.

1319. The bond of unity among things, which connects them to one another and objectively with our individual spirit (as "thing in itself"), lies beyond consciousness in a Being-in-Itself, of which we could also only have a conceptual representation in our consciousness .

In this section, we are going *into* the Dualist mindset. There are two distinct worlds:

(1) There is the real world of 'things-in-themselves' – which includes our 'I'-in-itself – which interact by *dynamic* influences (forces), and all these are *outside* of our consciousness;

(2) Now, from this 'I'-in-itself, the consciousness of the subject is projected throughout this real world, covering every 'thing-in-itself' within it, even more so the forces of interaction among the 'things-in-themselves' – these are in fact thoroughly covered without any trace, and thus remain, *outside* the consciousness, in the real world.

The perceptual objects, on the other hand, are produced by the subject through the forces of interaction in the real world, *outside* of consciousness, between the 'thing-in-itself' and the 'I-in-itself' of the subject. Therefore the perceptions only have subjective reality, which is *related* by the subject to the 'thing-in-itself' (the object). And, since the real forces are thoroughly hidden in this subjective perceptual world of ours, this relation must be an *ideal relation* – one that is formed *merely* by the thinking of the subject.

Everything happens now *in* our consciousness. Besides this ideal relation just mentioned, we also form concepts corresponding to the *perceptual object* through our thinking, and *think* (an ideal relation) that the concept *refers* to the 'thing-in-itself' in the real world that lie behind the perceptual object.

1320. Dualism believes that the whole world will evaporate into an abstract scheme of concepts if it does not posit real relations alongside the conceptual relations among the objects.

1321. In other words: the ideal principles that thinking discovers seem too airy to the Dualist, and he is still looking for real principles by which they can be supported.

1322. Let us take a closer look at these real principles.

1323. The naïve man (naïve realist) regards the objects of external experience as realities.

1324. The fact that he can grasp these things with his hands, see them with his eyes, counts for him as a testament of reality.

1325. "Nothing exists that cannot be perceived" is indeed to be regarded as the first axiom of the naïve man, which is just as well recognized in its converse: "Everything that can be perceived exists."

1326. The best proof for this assertion is the naïve man's belief in immortality and spirits.

1327. He imagines the soul as fine, sensible matter, which under special conditions can even become visible to ordinary people (naïve belief in ghosts).

1328. In contrast to this real world of his, the naïve realist regards everything else, especially the world of ideas, as unreal, "merely ideal."

1329. What we add to objects through thinking is mere thought *about* things.

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----- HERE WE START USING THE MORE EFFICIENT TERM 'PERCEPT' -----

1330. Thought adds nothing real to the percept.

1331. But the naïve man considers sense-perception as the only testament of reality, not only with regards to the existence of things, but also with regards to that of occurrences (processes).

1332. In his view, one thing can act upon another only when a sense-perceptible force issues from the thing and seizes the other.

1333. Earlier physics believed that very fine substances stream out of (material) bodies and enter the soul through our sense-organs.

(In the earlier editions of the book, the following line was included at this point: "The ancient Greek philosophers, who were Naïve Realists in the best sense of the word, held a theory of vision according to which the eye sends out feelers which touch the objects." Today we call this theory the "extromission theory" of vision.)

1334. The actual seeing of these substances is only impossible because of the coarseness of our senses in proportion to the fineness of these substances.

1335. In principle, reality was granted to these substances for the same reason that it is granted to the objects of the sense-world, namely, their form of existence, which was thought to be analogous to that of sense-perceptible reality.

1336. For the naïve consciousness, the self-sustained essence of what can be experienced ideally is not regarded as real in the same sense as what can be experienced through the senses.

1337. An object grasped in "mere idea" is regarded as a mere chimera until conviction of reality can be supplied by sense perception.

1338. To put it briefly, the naïve man demands the real evidence of the senses in addition to the ideal testimony of his thinking.

1339. In this need of the naïve man lies the reason for the emergence of the primitive forms belief in revelation.

1340. For the naïve consciousness, the God who is given through thinking always remains only an "*imagined*" God.

1341. Naïve consciousness demands manifestation through means that are accessible to sense-perception.

1342. God must appear in the flesh, and one will place value only on such things as proof of divinity by changing water into wine, which can be ascertained by the senses, and little on the testament of thinking,

1343. The naïve man also imagines cognition itself as a process analogous to sensory processes.

1344. Things make an impression on the soul, or they send out images that penetrate through the senses, and so on.

1345. What the naïve man can perceive with his senses he regards as real, and what he has no such perception of (God, soul, cognition, *etc.*), he imagines as analogous to what he perceives.

1346. If naïve realism wants to establish a science, it can only see such a science as an exact *description* of the content of perception.

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1347. The concepts are only a means to an end for it.

1348. They are there to provide ideal counterparts for the perceptions.

1349. For the things themselves they mean nothing.

1350. To the naïve realist, only the individual tulips that are seen or can be seen are regarded as real; the one idea of the tulip is for him an abstraction, as the unreal thought-image that the soul has put together from the characteristics common to all tulips.

1351. Naïve realism, with its basic principle: "Everything that is perceived is real," is refuted by our experience, which teaches us that the content of perceptions is of a transitory nature.

1352. The tulip I see is real today; in a year it will have disappeared into nothingness.

1353. What has endured is the *species* Tulip.

1354. But for naïve realism this species is "*only*" an *idea*, not a reality.

1355. Thus this worldview finds itself in a position of seeing its realities come and go, while what it regards as unreal, in contrast to its realities, endures.

1356. Therefore, naïve realism must allow something ideal to exist alongside perceptions.

1357. It has to take in entities that cannot be perceived with the senses.

1358. He comes to terms with this by thinking their form of existence as analogous to that of sense objects.

1359. Such hypothetical realities are the invisible forces by which sense-perceptible things interact.

1360. One such thing is heredity, the effects of which lingers on beyond the individual, and which is the reason that a new one develops from the individual that is similar to it, and through which the species is maintained.

1361. Another such thing is the life-principle permeating the bodily organism; another is the soul, for which the naïve consciousness always finds a concept that is formed analogously with sense-perceptible realities; and finally there is the Divine Being of the naïve man.

1362. This Divine Being is thought of as active in a way that corresponds exactly to that which can be *perceived* in man himself, *i.e.*, anthropomorphically.

1363. Modern physics traces the sense-impressions back to processes in the smallest particles of bodies and in an infinitely fine substance, the ether or something similar.

1364. What we feel as warmth, for example, is the motion of parts of the body that causes the warmth within the space occupied by it.

1365. Here again something imperceptible is thought of as analogous to what perceptible.

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1366. In this sense, the sense-perceptible analog to the concept "body" is, say, the interior of a room, closed on all sides, in which elastic balls are moving in all directions, colliding with one another, bouncing against and off the walls, *etc.*

1367. Without such assumptions, the world for naïve realism would collapse into an incoherent aggregate of perceptions, without any mutual relation, and which does not combine into any kind of unity.

1368. But it is clear that naïve realism can only arrive at this assumption through an inconsistency.

1369. If it wants to remain true to its principle: "Only what is perceived is real," then it must not assume a reality where it perceives nothing.

1370. The imperceptible forces that issue from (involve) perceptible things are, in fact, unjustified hypotheses from the standpoint of naïve realism.

1371. But because it knows no other realities, it equips its hypothetical forces with perceptual content.

1372. It thus applies a form of existence (that of perception) to a region where the only means making a statement about this form of existence is lacking: sense-perception.

1373. This self-contradictory worldview leads to metaphysical realism.

1374. In addition to the perceptible reality, it also constructs an imperceptible one, which it thinks of as analogous to the first.

1375. Thus, metaphysical realism is necessarily Dualistic.

1376. Wherever metaphysical realism notices a relation between perceptible things (mutual approach through movement, the entrance of an object into consciousness, *etc.*), there it posits a reality.

1377. However, it can only express the relation it notices through thinking, but it cannot perceive the relation.

1378. The ideal relation is arbitrarily made into something similar to the perceptible.

1379. Thus, for this trend of thought, the real world is composed of the perceptual objects that are in eternal becoming, coming and going, and of the imperceptible forces by which the perceptual objects are produced and which are permanent.

1380. Metaphysical realism is a contradictory mixture of naïve realism and idealism.

1381. Its hypothetical forces are imperceptible entities with perceptual qualities.

1382. It has decided, besides the region of the world for whose form of existence it has a means of cognition in perception, to admit another region in which this means fails, but which can be discovered only through thinking.

1383. But it cannot decide at the same time to acknowledge the form of existence that thinking conveys to him, the concept (the idea), as an equal factor alongside perception.

1384. If one wants to avoid the contradiction of imperceptible perception, he must admit that, for us, there is no other form of existence for the relations between perceptions mediated by thinking than that of the concept.

1385. The world presents itself as the sum of perceptions and their conceptual (ideal) references if one discards the unjustified component of metaphysical realism.

1386. In doing so, metaphysical realism merges into a worldview which demands the principle of perceptibility for perception and thinkability for the relations between perceptions.

1387. This worldview cannot admit a third region of the world, besides the world of perception and concepts, for which both these principles, the so-called real principle and the ideal principle, are valid at the same time.

1388. When metaphysical realism asserts that, in addition to the ideal relationship between the perceptual object and its perceiving subject, there must also be a real relationship between the "thing-in-itself" of the perception and the "thing-in-itself" of the perceptible subject (the so-called individual spirit), this assertion rests on the erroneous assumption of an imperceptible process that is analogous to the processes of the sense-world.

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1389. If metaphysical realism says further: "I come into a conscious-ideal relationship with my world of perception; but I can only come into a dynamic (force) relationship with the real world." — There he commits no less the same error.

1390. There can only be talk of a dynamic relation within the world of perception (in the sphere of the sense of touch), but not outside of it.

1391. We shall call the worldview characterized above, into which metaphysical realism finally merges when it sheds its contradictory elements, *monism*, because it combines one-sided realism with idealism into a higher unity.

1392. For naïve realism, the real world is a sum of perceptual objects; for metaphysical realism, in addition to perceptions, reality also belongs to imperceptible forces; monism replaces the forces with the ideal connections that it gains through its thinking.

1393. These connections are the *natural laws*.

1394. A natural law is nothing other than the conceptual expression for the connection between certain percepts.

1395. Monism is never in a position of asking for other principles of explanation of reality besides percepts and concepts.

1396. It knows that in the entire realm of reality there is *no reason* to do so.

1397. In the world of perception, as it is immediately available to perception, he sees something half real; in the union of this world with the conceptual world he finds full reality.

1398. The metaphysical realist can object to the adherent of monism: It may be the case that, for your organization, your knowledge is complete in itself, that not one link is missing; but you do not know how the world is reflected in an intelligence that is organized differently from yours.

1399. The answer of monism will be: If there are intelligences other than the human ones, if their percepts have a different form than ours, then only what comes to me from these percepts, through perception and concept, has meaning for me.

1400. Through my perception, and indeed through this specifically human mode of perception, I, as subject, am opposed to the object.

1401. The connection of things is, in this specific way, interrupted.

1402. The subject restores this connection through thinking.

1403. In doing so, it has re-united itself with the world-as-a-whole.

1404. Since it is only through our subject that this whole seems torn at a place between our percept and our concept, true cognition is also given in the re-union of these two.

Sounds meta-fizzling? We need a drawing here.

We see, when confronting an object in contemplative observation, the subject is cutting it out of the world-whole, like cutting out a drawn figure from the whole drawing, leaving out only an empty outline on the paper it is on. The cut figure (percept) is seized by the cutter (subject), and the paper with the empty outline (the torn world or the concept) now imposes this lack, this empty form, very clearly. When the cutter wants to make the drawing whole again (cognition), he brings the cut figure back into its correct place in the paper with empty figure-outline: and what results from this is that the restored paper has the figure in *even* sharp, more palpable outline! (knowledge)

Here, again, we almost missed thinking! It is in every stage of this example: the cutter that is doing the work from start to finish is thinking. This is no surprise.

1405. For beings with a different world of perception (*e.g.* with twice the number of sense organs) the connection would seem broken at another place, and the restoration would accordingly have to take a form specific to these beings.

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1406. Only for naïve and metaphysical realism, both of which see in the content of the soul only an ideal representation of the world, does the question of the limits of knowledge exist.

1407. For them, what is outside the subject is something absolute, something self-contained, and the content of the subject is an image of it that stands entirely outside this absolute.

1408. The completeness of one's knowledge depends on the greater or lesser similarity of those image to the absolute object.

1409. A being with lesser number of senses than man will perceive less of the world, one with more of such will perceive more of the world.

1410. The former will therefore have a less complete knowledge than the latter.

1411. For monism the matter is different.

1412. The organization of the perceiving being determines the form where the world-context appears torn apart into subject and object.

1413. The object is not absolute, but only relative with respect to this particular subject.

1414. Therefore, the bridging of the opposition can only occur in the quite specific way that is peculiar to the human subject.

1415. As soon as the "I", which is separated from the world in perception, reintegrates itself into the world-context in thinking contemplation, then all further questioning, which was only a consequence of the separation, ceases.

1416. A being of a different kind would have a knowledge of a different kind.

1417. Ours is sufficient to answer the questions posed by our own nature.

(As explained in the previous Chapters: Perception is *not* subjective in the sense that they are not produced *by* the subject. It is the world-process itself that places them *outside* the subject: they are truly *given*. To say that percepts are subjective implies they are thoroughly produced by the subject. — But this is not the case as clarified by the explanations of the previous Chapters. On the other hand, the world-process itself (which else?) determines the percept according to the organization of the subject. So the *human* kind (species) of organization perceives this way, *another* kind of organization perceives another way. But the questions of knowledge that we have only arise from the way we are separated from the whole; so, these questions only concerns us.

In monism, it is the *thinking* subject that determines the percept. *Not* just the subject who produces thinking. There is a great difference here. Monism regards *thinking* as the *world-process* itself that unfolds its activity within man. Outside of man, it is the *laws of phenomena* that weave the myriads of single percepts together into a coherent unity. It is the thinking (the world-process) that determines the percept according to the organization of the subject through which it acts. In this way, monism sees the matter described in this section.

Important — Acknowledging this *fact*: Thinking is the world-process itself unfolding its activity from within man, changes a lot of how must see the matter presented in these explanations, particularly the arguments of Critical Idealism and Naïve Realism, who do not acknowledge this fact.

1418. Metaphysical realism must ask: By what means is what is given as perception given? By what means is the subject affected?

1419. For monism, perception is determined by the subject.

1420. But, at the same time, the subject has in thinking the means of cancelling out the determination that it has itself evoked.

1421. Metaphysical realism faces another difficulty in trying to explain the similarity of the world-pictures of different human individuals.

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1422. It must ask itself: How is it that the world-picture which I construct from my subjectively determined percepts and my concepts is the same as that which another human individual constructs from the same two subjective factors?

1423. How can I infer at all, from my own subjective world-picture, that of another person?

1424. From the fact that people come to terms with one another in practice, the metaphysical realist believes he can infer the similarity of their subjective world-pictures.

1425. From the similarity of these world-pictures he then further infers the likeness to one another of the individual spirits (or the "I's-in-themselves") underlying the individual human perceiving subjects.

1426. This inference is thus one that draws, from a sum of effects, the character of the underlying causes.

1427. From a sufficiently large number of cases we think we can recognize the state of affairs well enough to know how the inferred causes will behave in other cases.

1428. We call such an inference an inductive inference.

1429. We shall find ourselves compelled to modify the results of the inference if something unexpected occurs in a further observation, because the character of the result is, after all, determined only by the individual form of the observations already made.

1430. But the metaphysical realist asserts: This conditional knowledge of the causes is completely sufficient for practical life.

1431. The inductive inference is the methodological basis of modern metaphysical realism.

1432. There was a time when peopled believed that something could be developed from concepts that is no longer a concept.

1433. It was believed that, from the concepts, once could know the metaphysical real beings which metaphysical realism after all needs.

1434. This kind of philosophizing is one of the things that have been overcome today.

1435. Instead of this, however, one believes that he can infer, from a sufficiently large number of perceptual facts, the character of the "thing-in-itself" that underlies these facts.

1436. Just as it was done from concepts in earlier times, one thinks today that he can develop the metaphysical from perceptions.

1437. Since one has the concepts before himself in transparent clarity, he believed that he could derive the metaphysical from the concepts with absolute certainty.

1438. The perceptions do not present themselves with the same transparent clarity.

1439. Each subsequent perception presents itself somewhat differently than the ones of the same kind that preceded it.

1440. Basically, therefore, what has been inferred from the preceding perceptions is somewhat modified by each succeeding one.

1441. The form that one gains for the metaphysical in this way can there only be called a relatively true one; it is subject to correction by future instances.

1442. The metaphysics of Eduard von Hartmann, who set the motto on the title page of his first major work: "Speculative Results gained by the Inductive Method of Science," bears a character determined by this methodological principle.

1443. The form that the metaphysical realist at present gives to his things-in-themselves is one obtained through inductive inferences.

1444. Through considerations on the process of cognition, he is convinced of the existence of an objective-real world-context alongside the "subjective" connection cognizable through perception and concept.

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1445. How this objective reality is constituted, he believes he can determine from his perceptions by means of inductive inferences.

1446.

1447. **ADDENDUM TO THE REVISED EDITION (1918)**

1448. The unprejudiced observation of our experience in perception and concept, such as the preceding explanations has attempted to describe, will always be disturbed by certain mental pictures that arise on field of natural sciences.

1449. Standing in this field, one says to himself: Colors are perceived in the light-spectrum from red to violet through the eye.

1450. Beyond the violet, however, there are forces in the (electromagnetic) spectrum that do not correspond to any color perception of the eye, but to chemical effects; likewise, beyond the limit of the red, there are radiations that only have the effects of warmth.

1451. Through considerations of this and similar phenomena, one comes to the view that the scope of man's perceptual world is determined by the scope of his human senses, and that he would have a completely different world before him if he had additional or altogether different senses.

1452. Anyone who indulges in such extravagant fantasies, which the brilliant discoveries of recent research into nature offer quite an enticing opportunity to engage in, can certainly come to the confession: Only that which is capable of acting upon his senses, which are formed out of his organization, falls into man's field of observation.

1453. He has no right to regard what he perceives, which are limited by his organization, as in any way decisive for reality (a standard to which reality must conform).

1454. Every new sense would have present him a different picture of reality.

1455. All this is, within appropriate limits, a thoroughly justified opinion.

1456. But if someone allows himself to be misled by this opinion from the unprejudiced observation of the relationship between perception and concept, as has been made in these explanations, then he blocks his way to a knowledge of the world and of man that is rooted in reality.

1457. Experiencing the essential nature of thinking, *i.e.*, the active elaboration of the conceptual world, is something completely different from experiencing a perceptible object through the senses.

1458. Whatever additional senses man might have, none of them would give him reality if he did not think and permeate what he has perceived with concepts; and every sense of whatever kind, permeated in this way, gives man the possibility of living within reality.

1459. The fantasy of possible, completely different perceptual picture with other senses has nothing to do with the question of how the human being stands in the real world.

1460. One must see that *every* perceptual picture receives its form from the organization of the perceiving being, but that the perceptual picture that is permeated by the experienced thinking-observation leads the human being into reality

1461. It is not the fantastic depiction of how different a world would have to look through non-human senses that can cause man to seek knowledge about his relationship to the world, but the insight that *every* perception gives only a part of the reality contained in it, so that it leads away from its *own reality.*

1462. This insight is then accompanied by the other: that thinking leads into that part of reality which is concealed by the perception itself.

(Recall the previous example. The cut figure is the half of reality in the perception. The paper with the empty outline of the figure is the other half, the concept, and is what the perception conceals by itself. Putting them back together in the correct place is the act of cognition.— Now we have the drawing full again, but this time, the outline of figure is more palpably outlined!)

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1463. It can also be disturbing for the unprejudiced observation of the relationship between perception and concept worked-out by thinking as presented here when, in the field of physical experience, the need arises to speak, not at all about immediately (vividly) perceptible elements, but about non-perceptible magnitudes, such as electric or magnetic lines of force, etc.

1464. It may seem as though the elements of reality that physics speaks of have nothing to do with either the perceptible or with the concept worked-out in active thinking.

1465. But such an opinion rests on self-deception.

1466. First of all, it is important that *everything* worked-out in physics, insofar as it does not represent unjustified hypotheses which should remain excluded, is gained through perception and concept.

1467. If the physicist has a correct instinct for knowledge, what appears to be an imperceptible content is placed in the field where the perceptions lie, and it is thought-out with concepts which are properly applied in this field.

1468. The strengths of electric and magnetic fields, etc., are essentially not gained through any process of cognition other than through that which takes place between perception and concept.

1469. An increase or modification of the human senses would produce a different perceptual picture, an enrichment or modification of human experience; but, even with respect to *this* experience, real knowledge would have to be gained through the interaction of concept and perception.

1470. The *deepening* of cognition depends on the forces of intuition (see p. ???) that live in thinking .

1471. This intuition can, in that *experience* which take shape in think, dive into the greater or lesser depths of reality.

1472. Through the expansion of one's perceptual-picture, this diving can receive stimulus and thus be promoted indirectly.

1473. But this diving into the depths, as a striving towards reality, should *never* be confused with being confronted with a broader or narrower perceptual-picture in which only half of reality is *always* present, as determined by the cognizing organization.

1474. Whoever does not lose himself in *abstractions* will see that it is also comes into consideration for our knowledge of the human being, the fact that Physics must *infer* the existence, within the field of percepts, elements for which no sense is attuned, as there is for color or sound.

1475. The *concrete* nature of man is not only determined by what, through his organization, he places before himself as immediate perception, but also by the fact that he excludes other things from this immediate perception.

(Our physical, concrete existence is *not only* characterized by the kind of things that we are able to immediately perceive, *i.e.*, physical objects, but also what we *seem* to have chosen not to perceive. This '*seem*' refers to the fact that the world-process – which is the thinking within us – has itself determined that we are *not to* perceive other things. Just imagine if we can perceive the physical forces all around us, all the time. — Would we be able to live normally at all? The world-process certainly arranges the world with perfect wisdom!)

1476. Just as life requires the unconscious state of sleep, besides the conscious waking state, so does man's experience of himself requires, besides the sphere of his sense-perception, another sphere, indeed a much greater one, of non-sense-perceptible elements in the realm from which the sense-perceptions originate .

1477. All this was already expressed indirectly in the original presentation of this book.

1478. The author adds these expansions of the content here because he has found that some readers have not read it carefully enough.

1479. — It should also be borne in mind that the idea of perception as developed in this book should not be confused with that of external sense-perception, which is but a special case of it.

1480. One will see from what has already been said, but even more from what will be explained later, that here everything that comes to the human being sensuously *and spiritually*, before it is grasped by the actively worked-out concept, is regarded as perception.

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1481. In order to have perceptions of a psychical or spiritual kind, senses of the kind usually meant are not necessary.

1482. One could say that such an extension of the ordinary linguistic usage is inadmissible.

1483. But it is *absolutely necessary* if one does not want to be tied up in certain areas by such current usage in the expanding of our knowledge.

1484. Whoever speaks of perception *only* in the sense of sense-perception will never arrive at a concept that can be used for the purposes of cognition concerning *this* sensory perception.

1485. One *must* sometimes expand a concept so that it receives its appropriate meaning in a narrower area.

1486. At times one must also add something else to what is first thought in a concept, so that what is thus thought finds its justification or even re-adjustment.

1487. Thus one finds it stated on page ??? of this book: "The mental picture is therefore an individualized concept."

1488. It was objected to me that this was an unusual use of the word.

1489. But this usage of the word is necessary if one wants to find out what representation actually is.

1490. What should become of the progress of knowledge if one made the objection to everyone who is compelled to set concepts straight: "That is an unusual usage of the word."

1491.

1492. **PART II — THE REALITY OF FREEDOM**

1493.

1494. **CHAPTER VIII — THE FACTORS OF LIFE**

1495. Let us recapitulate what we have gained in the preceding chapters.

1496. The world confronts the human being as a multiplicity, as a sum of details.

1497. One of these details, a being among beings, is he himself.

1498. We designate this form of the world as *given*, and insofar as we do not develop it through conscious activity, but simply find it, as *perception*.

1499. Within the world of perceptions we perceive ourselves.

1500. This self-perception would simply remain as one among the many other perceptions if something did not emerge from the midst of this self-perception that proves capable of connecting all the perceptions one with another, that is, capable of connecting the sum of all other perceptions with that of our self.

1501. This emerging something is no longer a mere perception; nor is it simply found like the perceptions.

1502. It is brought forth through activity.

1503. It appears at first bound to what we perceive as our self.

1504. In its inner significance, however, it reaches beyond the self.

1505. It adds ideal determinations to the single perceptions, which, however, relate to one another and are founded in a whole

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1506. What is gained through self-perception is determined ideally (by this something) in the same way as all other perceptions and it is contrasted with the objects as subject or "I".

1507. This something is *thinking*, and the ideal determinations are concepts and ideas.

1508. Thinking therefore first expresses itself in the perception of the self; but is not merely subjective, for the self designates itself as a subject only with the help of thinking.

1509. This relation of the self to itself (by means of thinking) is a determination of our personality in life.

1510. Through it we lead a purely ideal existence.

1511. Through it we feel ourselves as thinking beings.

1512. This determination of life would remain a purely conceptual (logical) one if no other determinations of our self came into play.

1513. We would then be beings whose life was exhausted in establishing purely ideal relationships among the perceptions themselves, and between them and ourselves.

1514. If we call this establishing of such a thought-relation an "act of knowing (cognition)," and the condition of our self gained through it "knowledge," then we would have to regard ourselves as merely knowing or cognizant beings if the above assumption applies.

1515. But this assumption does not apply.

1516. We relate the perceptions to ourselves, not only ideally (i.e., through concepts), but also through feeling, as we have seen.

1517. We are therefore not beings with a merely conceptual content to our life.

1518. The naive realist, in fact, sees in the life of feeling a more real life of the personality than in the purely ideal element of knowledge.

1519. And, from his point of view, he is quite right when he puts the matter in this way.

1520. On the subjective side, feeling is at first exactly the same as perception is on the objective side.

    (On the objective side, perception is the simply given. Feeling is, *as immediately perceived*, the same simply given on the subjective side. They are! — A particular feeling, at first glance, *simply* happens to us.)

1521. According to the principle of naïve realism: "Everything that can be perceived is real," therefore feeling is the guarantee of the reality of one's own personality.

1522. However, the monism defined here must bestow on the feeling the same complement which it considers necessary for perception if it is to present itself in full reality.

1523. For this monism, feeling is an incomplete reality which, in the first form in which it is given to us, does not yet contain its second factor: the concept or the idea.

1524. That is why feeling, just like perception, appears everywhere in life *before* cognition.

1525. At first, we feel ourselves as existing entities; and only in the course of gradual development do we get through to the point where the concept of our self emerges from within the dull feeling of our own existence.

1526. What only emerges later *for us*, however, is inseparably bound-up with our feeling from the beginning.

1527. This fact leads the naïve man to believe that, in feeling, existence presents itself to him directly, in knowledge only indirectly.

1528. The cultivation of his life of feeling will therefore seem more important to him than anything else.

1529. He will only believe that he has grasped the world-context when he has taken it into his feeling.

1530. He seeks to make feeling, rather than knowledge (thinking?), the means of cognition.

    Recall: If we call this establishing of such a thought-relation an "act of knowing (cognition)," and the condition of our self gained through it "knowledge," …

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To make feeling the means of cognition means we connect perceptions with feeling-relations.

1531. Since feeling is something quite individual, something equivalent to perception, the philosopher of feeling makes something that has significance only within his own personality into a principle of the world.

1532. He seeks to pervade the whole world with his own self.

1533. What the monism defined here strives to grasp in the concept, the philosopher of feeling seeks to achieve with his feeling, and regards this togetherness-with-the-objects as the more immediate.

1534. The tendency just described, the philosophy of feeling, is often called *Mysticism*.

1535. The error of a mystical way of viewing things that is based solely on feeling consists is that it wants to *immediately-experience* what it should know, that it wants to raise something individual, feeling, to something universal.

(Here, to *immediately-experience* something means to experience it at once, without thinking of it at all. Our proper definition of experience is the sum of all that which one can make mental pictures of, which is the correct definition even with respect to facts of ordinary life. Every percept will just pass us by if our thinking did *not* touch it and made *no* mental picture in us. Would we be even able to recall such an event in this case?)

1536. Feeling is a purely individual act, the relation of the outside world to our subject, insofar as this relation finds expression in a purely subjective experience.

Feelings can be taken as a purely subjective experience. In this case we just let them go on, as we simply observe ourselves savor a pleasure or endure a pain. But we can also try to *explain* why we feel such pleasure or pain; in this case, we permeate the feeling with *thinking* and form specific concepts in relation to them. For example, through thinking, we can discover *why* we have developed a certain *aversion* to some kind of food. — We can find that it we have *learned* bad that it is harmful to the body (which is an objective thing). In this case, the particular feeling of distaste ideally connects to something beyond our own subjective nature.

That is just a simple real-life example. For many of our feelings, the ideal connections to their source *necessarily* reaches back to a life (in the same world) preceding the present one. Yes, this is *hypothetical* life-process; but one can find a sufficient justification for it, this along the way of thinking we are applying here, in the book *Theosophy*.

However, as explained in the Preface, there is no need for us to dive into the process of reincarnation at all, now or ever. The fact being emphasized here is just: Our feelings and drives, being percepts, are ideally connected to the world-whole, and thus their definite causes can be traced by thinking even across vast intervals of time and space (which both belong to the world-context). We simply do not know *yet* how.

1537. There is another expression of the human personality.

1538. Through its thinking, the "I" participates in the universal life of the world; through thinking, it relates the percepts to itself in a purely ideal (conceptual) way, and also itself to the percepts.

(Again, universal life of the world. Phrases like this should not sound awkward to us now, and should give their meaning clearly from the context alone.)

1539. In feeling, the "I" immediately-experiences the relation of objects to itself as subject; in *willing*, the reverse is the case.

1540. In willing, we also have a percept before us, namely, that of the individual relation of our self to what is objective.

The *wanting to do something* also involves a percept, but a *mental picture* as a percept. For example, when I want to draw a rose on that paper, my *wanting* is directed to the mental picture of 'me drawing a rose on that paper', which is the individual relation of my self to the paper (object). The mental picture *explains* what specific *lawful occurrences* me and the paper will undergo soon.

Note that, in the case of willing, the ideal relation goes forward into the future; and, in the case of feeling, it goes backward into the past.

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1541. What is not a purely ideal factor in willing is just as much an object of perception as is the case with anything in the outer world.

    The mental picture is the effect on me of an *ideal relation* (a law of phenomena) that connects my subject to the object. Let us call this ideal relation for now the (objective) *motive force*. — It consists in the *laws of phenomena* involved in what *shall* happen to me and the object (soon). This motive force is what mostly matters in act of will. Everything else is just as good as any perceptual object, even the subjective mental picture itself. (This is because we are certain that *there will be* differences between the mental picture formed through our subjective laws and the actual, objective, fulfillment of it which are brought about by the laws of phenomena. All that matters to us, in our acts of will, is the fulfillment.)

    Note that, in willing, the world-process is reaching out, through a constellation of phenomenal laws, from the subject to the object. In feeling, the world-process is reaching out from the object to the subject. In the latter, therefore, one can easily be led to believe that existence of an object is immediately known in feeling—again, because in this case the world itself reaches out to the subject, thus the world itself seem to make itself known. On the other hand, in willing, one may feel the need to infer some universal world-will because, in this case, it is the individual subject that is reaching out to the world.

1542. Nevertheless, the naïve realist will again believe that he has before himself a far more real existence than can be attained through thinking.

1543. He will see in the will an element in which he is *immediately* aware of an occurrence, a causation, in contrast to thinking, which first grasps the occurrence in concepts.

1544. For such a point of view, what the "I" accomplishes through its will represents a process that is immediately-experienced.

1545. The adherent of this philosophy believes that, in willing, he has really got a hold of the world-process at a corner.

1546. While he can only follow the other occurrences by perceiving them from the outside, he believes that, in his willing, he is experiencing a real occurrence quite directly.

    With regards to other processes, he can only follow them from the outside of these processes through his perceiving, while in his willing he *experiences* one of these processes himself! As stated above, what mostly matters in willing is the ideal relation, the motive force, between the subject and the object. This motive force is what our person here is experiencing, everything else is secondary.

1547. The form of existence in which the will appears to him within the self becomes for him a real-principle of reality.

1548. His own will appears to him as a special case of universal world-process; this latter appears to him as universal willing.

1549. The will becomes the world-principle as feeling becomes the principle of cognition in the feeling-mysticism.

1550. This way of viewing things is called *will-philosophy* (Thelism).

1551. What can only be experienced individually is made by will-philosophy into the constitutive factor of the world.

1552. Will-philosophy can just as little be called a science as feeling-mysticism.

1553. For both assert that they cannot make-do with the conceptual penetration of the world.

1554. Both require a real principle in addition to the ideal principle of existence.

1555. With a certain justification. (This is justified to a certain extent.)

1556. But since we only have perception as a means of grasping these so-called real-principles, the assertion of feeling-mysticism and will-philosophy is identical with the view that we have two sources of knowledge: that of thinking and that of perception, the latter of which presents itself in feeling and willing as individual experience.

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1557. Since the immediate-experiences that outpour from one source cannot be taken up directly by these worldviews into the thoughts that outpour from the other, the two modes of cognition (perceiving as immediate-experiencing and thinking) exist side by side without any higher mediation.

Note that, for feeling-mysticism and will-philosophy, perception presents itself as the *immediate-experience* of feeling and willing, respectively. These modes of perception are their means of cognition of existence. This is not the case for our monism: here, a percept refers directly to its ideal content, and that feeling and willing are both of them percepts. On the other hand, in the two other views, what thinking brings is only something extra, an add-on, and they cannot deal with these thoughts directly.

Take note of the title of Schopenhauer's work: "The World as Will *and* Idea"

1558. Besides the ideal principle that can be attained through cognition, there is supposed to be a real-principle of the world that is to be immediately-experienced and cannot be grasped in thinking.

1559. In other words, feeling-mysticism and will-philosophy are naïve realism, because they subscribe to the proposition that what is immediately perceived is real.

1560. Only, in contrast to the original naïve realism, they commit the inconsistency of making a specific form of perception (feeling or willing) into the sole means of cognizing existence, while they can only do this if they subscribe the general principle that what is perceived is real.

These two worldviews clearly distinguishes perception into two kind: the immediately-perceived and the *others*. They do not acknowledge the fact that thinking precedes every other kind of perception. (As explained in Chapter 3, it is not possible to observe thinking as it occurs, but only its 'trail' (which nevertheless is still thinking), *e.g.*, a previous thinking process, or an imaginary thinking process, etc.

1561. Therefore, they would also have to ascribe the same cognitive value to external perception.

1562. Will-philosophy becomes Metaphysical Realism when it transfers the will to *those* spheres of existence in which an immediate-experience of it is not possible as it is in one's own subject.

1563. It assumes hypothetically a principle outside the subject, for which subjective experience is the sole criterion of reality.

1564. As a metaphysical realism, the will-philosophy succumbs to the criticism given in the preceding chapter, which overcomes the contradictory element of every metaphysical realism and acknowledges that the will is a universal world-process only insofar as it relates ideally to the rest of the world.

1565.

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ADDENDUM TO THE REVISED EDITION OF 1918

The difficulty of grasping the essential being of thinking through observation lies in the this: that this essential being has all too easily slipped away from the observing soul when it wants to bring this essential being into the direction of its attention.

Then all that remains for it are dead abstracts, the corpses of living thinking.

If one considers only these abstracts, he will easily find himself compelled to enter into the "life-filled" element of the mysticism of feeling, or into the metaphysics of the will, as the case may be.

He will find it strange when anyone wants to grasp the essence of reality in "mere thoughts."

But whoever brings himself to truly having *life in his thinking*, he comes to the insight that weaving his life in mere feelings or beholding it through the will-element cannot even compare to the inner richness of the life of thinking which, in itself, he experiences as ever at rest, and yet, at the same time, ever in motion. — Let alone that feeling or willing be placed above thinking.

It is precisely because of this richness, this inner fullness of experience, that its counterpart in the ordinary state of our soul appears dead, abstract.

No other human soul-activity is so easy to misjudge as thinking.

Willing, feeling — they warm the human soul, even when re-living their original conditions (in memory).

Thinking all too easily leaves one cold in this re-living; it seems to dry up one's inner life.

But this is only the strongly expressing shadow of its reality, interwoven with light and warmly immersed in the phenomena of the world.

This immersion occurs with a power that flows in the activity of thinking itself, which is the power of love in a spiritual form.

One may not raise the objection: Whoever sees love in active thinking is transferring a feeling into it, love.

For this objection is in truth a confirmation of what has been asserted here.

Whoever turns *to* the essential being of thinking will find in it both feeling and will, and these also in the depths of their reality; whoever turns away from thinking and only towards "mere" feeling and willing loses true reality from these.

Whoever wants to *experience intuitively* in thinking will also do justice to experiences of feeling and willing; but the mysticism of feeling and the metaphysics of the will cannot do justice to the intuitive-thinking penetration of existence.

The latter will only too easily come to the conclusion that *they* stand in the real, but the intuitive thinker, unfeeling and estranged from reality, forms a shadowy and cold world-picture in "abstract thoughts."

CHAPTER IX—THE IDEA OF FREEDOM (SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY)

The concept of the tree is conditioned for cognition by the perception of the tree.

I can only single out a very specific concept from the universal system of concepts in relation to a particular perception.

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1587. The connection between concept and perception is indirectly and objectively determined by thinking about the perception.

1588. The connection of the perception with its concept is cognized (known) after the act of perception; but their belonging-together is determined in the thing itself.

1589. The process presents itself differently when cognition, when the relationship of man to the world that occurs in cognition, is considered.

1590. In the preceding explanations, an attempt was made to show that this relationship can be elucidated through an unprejudiced observation of it.

1591. A correct understanding of this observation leads to the insight that thinking can be directly intuited (intuitively grasped) as a self-contained being.

1592. Whoever finds it necessary to draw on something else to explain thinking as such (a self-contained being), such as physical brain processes, or unconscious spiritual processes lying behind the conscious thinking that is being observed, fails to grasp what the unprejudiced observation of thinking gives him.

1593. Whoever observes thinking lives, during this act, directly in a spiritual, self-sustaining weaving of being.

This is what this *unprejudiced consideration* reveals about *its own* activity: It is weaving its own being from its own substance, in the realm of the spiritual (in the sense of Chapter 2). We have gained simple insights into this fact in Chapter 3, but now this insight of ours must have grown so that it can withstand many oppositions or objections to it. Remember, other than what the state of unprejudiced consideration can grasp immediately, whatever else we import into this state justifies itself! — This is precisely because this state is one with the world-process that *declares* reality upon every other thing or process in the world. This fact should be clear.

1594. Yes, one can say that whoever wants to grasp the essence of the spiritual in the form in which it *first* presents itself to man can do this by observing his self-sustaining thinking.

1595. In the consideration of thinking itself, there coincides what otherwise always has to appear separately: concept and perception.

When we are contemplating our own thinking, we are having a percept being its own concept, or vice versa.

1596. Whoever does not see through this will be able to see, in the concepts worked-out from perceptions, only shadowy reproductions of these perceptions, and that the perceptions will bring him the true reality.

1597. He will also construct a metaphysical world after the pattern of the perceptual world, calling it: the atomic world, the world of will, the unconscious spiritual world, etc., according to his way of mental-picturing.

We must also take note that all the views we have described here are *all* constructed by sound thinking. And we should never think that their thinking is wrong or askew or whatever. For some reason, however, they *missed* the clear facts given by the unprejudiced consideration of thinking. They skipped this truly fundamental prerequisite, and jumped over to building-up conclusions upon *incorrect* assumptions on the real nature of thinking.

1598. And it will escape him that, with all this, he has only hypothetically built-up a metaphysical world according to the pattern of *his* perceptual world.

1599. But whoever sees through what is present with regard to thinking will recognize that only a part of reality is present in the perception and that the other part belonging to it, which alone allows it to appear as full reality, is *experienced* in his thinking-penetration of the perception.

"What is present with regard to thinking" is the world-process itself.

1600. He will not see, in what appears as thinking in his consciousness, a shadowy afterimage of a reality, but a self-sustaining spiritual being.

1601. And of this essential being he can say that it becomes present to him in consciousness through *intuition*.

1602. Intuition is the conscious experience, taking place in the purely spiritual, of a purely spiritual content.

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(The 'spiritual… spiritual… spiritual' here, and throughout this book, is meant in the sense of the dichotomy explained in Chapter 2. The characterization of thinking that we gained through unprejudiced consideration necessarily leads to the fact that it is *not* a material process (again, in the sense of Chapter 2). For one, there is nothing in the material world that is so *self-sustaining* as thinking; everything here is just one link in the chains of causality, comes-about and perishes, etc., etc. Thinking is necessarily a spiritual process!)

1603. The being of thinking can be grasped only through an intuition.

1604. Only when one has struggled through to the acknowledgment of this truth, gained through unprejudiced consideration, about the intuitive nature of thinking, does he succeed in clearing the way for a view of the body-soul organization of man.

1605. He recognizes that this organization can have *no* effect whatsoever on the essential being of thinking.

1606. Quite obvious facts *seem* to contradict this at first.

1607. Human thinking appears in ordinary experience only in connection with and through this organization.

1608. This appearance (of thinking) asserts itself so strongly that its true significance can only be seen through by one who has recognized how nothing of this organization plays a part in the essential being of thinking.

1609. But such a person will then no longer fail to see how peculiar the relationship of the human organization to thinking is.

1610. For this organization effects nothing in the essential being of thinking, but rather recedes when the activity of thinking occurs; it suspends its own activity, it vacates a space; and in the space thus freed up, thinking appears.

This 'vacating of space for thinking' follows *necessarily* from the fact that the essential being of thinking is independent of the material *and* yet its activity is clearly very pronounced in the body (particularly brain). It must be that the thinking itself *presses into* the bodily organization. Easy? The first fact, however, we ought to first *win* the acknowledgement of it through our practice of unprejudiced consideration.

1611. The essential being that works in thinking is responsible for two things: first, it suppresses the human organization in its own activity, and second, it puts itself in its place.

1612. For the first, the repression of the bodily organization, is also the result of the activity of thinking, namely, that part of it which prepares the *appearance* of thinking.

1613. -----

1614. One can see from this in what sense thinking finds its counterpart in the bodily organization.

1615. And when he sees this, one will no longer be able to misapprehend the significance of this counterpart for thinking itself.

1616. When one walks over a softened ground, his footprints dig into the ground.

1617. He will not be tempted to say that the footprints were formed by forces of the ground, from below upwards.

1618. He will ascribe to these forces no part in the formation of the footprints.

1619. Just as little will anyone who observes the being of thinking, in the unprejudiced way, ascribe any part in this being to the imprints in his bodily organization, which arise due to the fact that thinking prepares its appearance through his body.

(In the writings that have followed this book, the author has shown in various directions how the above view makes itself felt in psychology, physiology, etc. Here, it is intended to characterize only what results from the unprejudiced observation of thinking itself.)

1620. But a significant question arises here.

1621. If the human organization has no part in the *essential being* of thinking, what significance does this organization have within the whole being of man?

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1622. Well, what happens in this organization through thinking has nothing to do with the essential being of thinking, but with the emergence of the "I"-consciousness out of this thinking.

1623. The real "I" certainly lies within the very being of thinking, but not the "I"-consciousness.

1624. Whoever observes thinking in the unprejudiced way sees through this.

1625. The "I" is to be found within thinking; "I-consciousness" arises when the traces of the thinking-activity, in the sense described above, become engraved in the general consciousness.

1626. (In this way, the "I"-consciousness arises through the bodily organization.

1627. But one should not confuse this with the assertion that, once the "I"-consciousness has arisen, it remains dependent on the bodily organization.

1628. Once created, it is absorbed into thinking and henceforth shares its spiritual being.)

1629. The "I"-consciousness is built upon the human organization.

1630. From this organization flow the acts of will.

1631. In the direction of the preceding explanations, an insight into the connection between thinking, conscious "I" and acts of will can only be gained if one first observes how an act of will emerges from the human organization.

The second paragraph of this Chapter up to the sentence above is the revision of the following paragraphs from the original edition of this book. It is clearly an elaboration of the rather brief discussion of the will in Chapter VIII.

In my willing, the percept is the content of my individual existence, whereas as the concept is the universal element in me. What enters into an ideal relation to the outside world through the concept is my own immediate-experience (of willing), a percept of myself. And indeed I perceive myself as an active being that affects the outer world. In cognizing (knowing) my own will, I connect the concept to a corresponding percept, namely, the particular expression of my will. In other words: I integrate my individual faculty (will) into the universal world-process through my thinking. The content of the concept for an external percept appearing on the field of my experience is given by intuition. Intuition is the source for the content of my entire conceptual system. The percept only shows me which concept I have to apply, in any given case, from the totality of my intuitions. The content of a concept is conditioned by percept, but not produced by it; rather it is given intuitively and connected to percept through thinking. The conceptual content of an act of will can just as little be derived from this act of will. It is gained through intuition.

If the conceptual intuition (the ideal content) of my act of will occurs before the related percept, then the content of my individual act is the result of an ideal determination. The reason that I single out a specific intuition from the sum of the intuitions possible for me cannot be sought in one perceptual object, but lies in the mutual, purely ideal interdependence of the members of my conceptual system. In other words, I cannot find any determining elements for my will in the perceptual world, but only in the world of concepts. The will is determined by the idea. — The conceptual system that corresponds to the external world is also conditioned by this external world. Which intuition corresponds to a percept must be determined from the latter; and how this intuition is then combined with the rest of our edifice of ideas is again dependent on its intuitive content. The percept thus directly determines its concept and, thereby, also indirectly conditions its position in the conceptual system of the world. The ideal content of an act of will that precedes it and is lifted out of the conceptual system is determined only by the conceptual system itself. —An act of will that depends on nothing else than this ideal content must itself be regarded as ideal, as something determined by the idea. Of course, this does not mean that all acts of will are determined only by ideas. All the factors that determine the human individual have an influence on his willing.

1632. For the individual act of will, the following come into consideration: the motive and the mainspring of action.

1633. Motive is a conceptual or mentally-pictured factor; the mainspring of action is the directly-determining factor of the will in the human organization. (or the factor in the human organization that directly determines the will)

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1634. The conceptual factor or motive is the momentary determining factor of willing; the mainspring of action is the enduring (permanent) determining factor in the individual.

1635. The motive of willing can be a pure concept or a concept with a specific reference to perception, i.e., a mental picture.

1636. Universal and individual concepts (ideas) become motives of willing because they affect the human individual and determine him to act in a particular direction.

1637. But one and the same concept, or one and the same mental picture, has different effects on different individuals.

1638. They cause different people to do act in different ways.

1639. Willing is therefore not merely a result of a concept or a mental picture, but also of the individual constitution of a human being.

1640. We shall call this individual constitution – following Hartmann in this respect – the characterological disposition.

1641. The way in which concept and mental picture affect the characterological disposition of man gives his life a definite moral or ethical stamp.

1642. The characterological disposition is formed by the more-or-less enduring life-content of our subject, i.e., by our content of mental pictures and feelings.

1643. Whether a mental picture that is presently arising in me stimulates me to will something depends on how it relates to the rest of my content of mental pictures and also to my peculiarities of feeling.

1644. My content of mental pictures, however, is again determined by the sum of those concepts that have come into contact with percepts in the course of my individual life, i.e., those that have become mental pictures.

1645. This again depends on my greater or lesser capacity for intuition and on the scope of my observations, i.e., on the subjective and objective factors of my experiences, on the inner determinations and the scene of life.

1646. My characterological disposition is particularly determined by my feeling-life.

1647. Whether I feel pleasure or displeasure in a certain mental picture or concept will determine whether I want to make it a motive for my action or not.

1648. — These are the elements that come into consideration in an act of will.

1649. The immediately present mental picture or concept which becomes my motive determines my goal, the purpose of my willing; my characterological disposition determines me to direct my activity towards this goal.

1650. The mental picture of taking a walk in the next half-hour determines the goal of my action.

1651. However, this mental picture is only raised to the motive of the will when it encounters a suitable characterological disposition, i.e., when, through my life up till now, I have formed mental pictures of the advisability of taking a walk, of its value for my health; and, further, when the mental picture of taking a walk is associated with the feeling of pleasure in me.

1652. We therefore have to distinguish: (1) The possible subjective dispositions that are suitable for turning certain mental pictures and concepts into motives; and (2) the possible mental pictures and concepts that are capable of influencing my characterological disposition in such a way that an act of will results.

1653. The former represent the *mainsprings*, the latter the *goals* of morality.

1654. We can find the mainsprings of morality by examining the elements of which our individual life is composed.

1655. The first stage of individual life is *perception*, particularly sense-perception.

1656. Here, we stand in that region of our individual life where a percept is immediately translated into will without the intervention of a feeling or a concept.

1657. The mainspring of action which comes into consideration here is designated simply as *instinct* (or *drive*).

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1658. The satisfaction of our lower, purely animal needs (hunger, sexual intercourse, etc.) comes about in this way.

1659. What is characteristic of the instinctive life consists in the immediacy with which a particular percept triggers the will.

1660. This way of determining the will, which originally belongs only to the life of the lower senses, can also be extended to the percepts of the higher senses.

1661. We let the percept of an event in the outer world be followed by an action (of ours) without reflecting on it and without attaching a special feeling to the percept, as is the case in our conventional dealings with (other) people.

1662. The mainspring of action in this case is called *tact* or *moral taste*.

1663. The more often such a direct triggering of an action by a percept takes place, the more likely the person concerned will prove to act purely under the influence of tact; that is, tact becomes his characterological disposition.

1664. The second stage of human life is *feeling*.

1665. Certain feelings are attached to the percepts of the external world.

1666. These feelings can become mainsprings of action.

1667. When I see a starving person, my pity for him can become the mainspring of my action.

1668. Such feelings are, for example: the feeling of shame, pride, the sense of honor, humility, remorse, compassion, the feeling of vengefulness and gratitude, piety, loyalty, the feeling of love and duty.

    (A complete compilation of the principles of morality (from the standpoint of metaphysical realism) can be found in Eduard von Hartmann's *Phenomenology of Moral Consciousness*.)

1669. Finally, the third stage of life is *thinking and mental picturing*.

1670. By mere reflection, a mental picture or concept can become the motive for an action.

1671. Mental pictures become motives because in the course of life we continually link certain goals of the will to percepts which keep recurring in a more-or-less modified form.

    This refers to *learned habits* and *skills*, not the natural ones. For example, the percept of a messy room is one that recurs quite regularly. The goal (mental picture) of cleaning the room: we *often* link this goal to percepts similar to 'a messy room'. And in doing this constantly, we acquire a characteristic disposition. We can no longer stand a messy room; we feel the need to clean it up whenever we see one, even if the room is not even ours.

1672. Hence, it happens that with people who are not entirely without experience, mental pictures of actions, which they have carried out or seen carried out in a similar case, always come into their consciousness along with certain perceptions.

1673. These mental pictures hover before them as the determining model for all later decisions; they become elements of their characterological disposition.

1674. We can call the mainspring of action just described: *practical experience*.

1675. Practical experience gradually passes into purely tactful action.

1676. When certain typical pictures of actions are so firmly bound up with mental pictures of certain situations in life that, when such a situation arises, we pass directly from the percept into willing, skipping all reflection based on experience, then this is the case.

1677. The highest stage of individual life is conceptual thinking without reference to any specific perceptual content.

    The previous three stages should be very familiar to us. This one may require the state of unprejudiced consideration. It *seems* to refer to what we call creative impulses or moments of genius, *e.g.*, artistic inspiration, scientific intuition and invention, religious-philosophical revelations, etc.

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I am an average person who for now remains at the third stage. But we can gain some insight into this lofty level through our unprejudiced consideration.

1678. We determine the content of a concept by pure intuition from the ideal sphere.

1679. Such a concept then at first contains no reference to any specific percept.

1680. When we enter into willing under the influence of a concept that points to a percept, i.e., a mental picture, it is this percept that determines us indirectly by way of conceptual thinking.

1681. When we act under the influence of intuitions, then our mainspring of action is *pure thinking*.

1682. Since one is accustomed in Philosophy to calling the pure ability to think as "reason," it may also be justified to call the mainspring of morality characterized at this stage: "practical reason."

1683. The clearest account of these mainsprings of the will has been given by Kreyenbühl (*Philosophische Jahreshefte*, Vol. XVIII, Issue 3).

1684. I consider the article he wrote on this subject among the most important works of contemporary Philosophy, namely, Ethics.

1685. Kreyenbühl calls the mainspring of action under discussion: "practical a priori," that is, an impulse to action that flows directly from my intuition.

1686. It is clear that such an impulse can no longer be counted, in the strict sense of the word, in the sphere of one's characterological disposition.

1687. For what works here as a mainspring of action is no longer something merely individual in me, but the ideal and consequently universal content of my intuition.

1688. As soon as I recognize the justification of this (ideal) content as a basis and starting point of an action, I enter into willing, regardless of whether the concept was already there within me beforehand, or only enters my consciousness immediately before my action; that is, regardless of whether the concept was already present in me as a disposition or not.

Let us recall that it is thinking that determines the subject and the object, and we know that the concepts of these two entities are not empty abstractions but realities which are filled with intuitive content. The concept of the subject, in particular, the spiritually lawful constitution of the percept subject, is the "I"- or individual-consciousness. And the content of the individual-consciousness *include* mental pictures and proper universal concepts, too, which this book calls 'my conceptual system'. Indeed, if our individual consciousness only contained mental pictures, we would never gain knowledge. Through thinking, we *acquire* (quite literally) the concepts we find as our own property.

Now this concept that we have are connected to other concepts that we may not have acquired yet. And these other concepts are what our *pure thinking* can grasp and impel us to act!

In the first half of the book, we only the thinking subject. But, as we all know, the subject also feels and acts. So, the spiritual constitution of the subject includes the capacity for feeling and willing. In relation to the capacity of will, this spiritual constitution has what we have designated as 'mainsprings', which must ideally connect to a mental picture or concept to activate the will. These mainsprings must all be ideally-related or else we would never feel a coherent individual consciousness. And these ideal-relations of mainsprings constitute the characterological disposition.

Also, remember, we experience pure thinking even in simple activity of reflection or contemplation. We acquire new intuitions through that, and bring us what we call our creative moments! It does not have to be grand, but it must be acknowledged. We cannot do this act all the time, but we must practice it regularly. In this way, we will dispel our self-constructed barriers to our own cognition, and maybe then pure intuitions will come to us more often. Practice, Acknowledge, Appreciate!

1689. A real act of will occurs only when a momentary impulse to action works on the characterological disposition in the form of a concept or a mental picture.

1690. Such an impulse then becomes the motive of willing.

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1691. The motives of morality are mental pictures and concepts.

1692. There are Ethicists who also see a motive of morality in feeling; they claim, for example, that the goal of moral action is the promotion of the greatest possible quantity of pleasure in the acting individual.

1693. However, pleasure itself cannot become a motive, only a *mentally-pictured pleasure*.

1694. The *mental picture* of a future feeling, but not the feeling itself, can work on my characterological disposition.

1695. For the feeling itself is not yet there at the moment of the action, but is only to be brought about through the action.

1696. But the *mental picture* of one's own well-being or that of others is rightly regarded as a motive of willing.

1697. The principle of bringing about the greatest sum of one's pleasure through one's actions, i.e., to achieve individual happiness, is called *egoism*.

1698. One seeks to attain this individual happiness either by being ruthlessly concerned only with his own well-being and also striving for this at the expense of the happiness of other individuals (pure egoism), or by promoting the well-being of others, either because he is indirectly expecting a favorable influence on his own person from the happiness of these other individuals, or because he is fearing that his own interests will be endangered by harming them (morality of prudence).

1699. The particular content of the egoistic principles of morality will depend on what mental picture one has of his own happiness or that of others.

1700. He will determine the content of his egoistic striving according to what he regards as a good thing of life (well-being, hope of happiness, deliverance from various evils, etc.).

1701. Thus, the purely conceptual content of an action is to be regarded as a motive of a broader kind.

1702. This content does not refer to a particular action alone, as does the mental picture of one's own pleasure, but to the justification of an action from a system of moral principles.

1703. These moral principles, in the form of abstract concepts, can regulate one's moral life, without his worrying about the origin of these concepts.

1704. We then simply feel our submission to the moral concept that hovers over our actions as a commandment, as a moral necessity.

1705. We leave the justification of this necessity to those who demand our moral submission, that is, to the moral authority that we acknowledge (head of the family, state, social custom, ecclesiastical authority, divine revelation).

1706. A special kind of these principles of morality is that in which the commandment does not present itself to us through an external authority, but through our own inner life (moral autonomy).

1707. We then hear within ourselves the voice to which we have to submit.

1708. The expression of this voice is the *conscience*.

1709. It signifies a moral progress signified when one no longer simply makes the commandment of an external or internal authority the motive for his action, but when he strives to understand the reason that some maxim of action should work as a motive in him.

1710. This progress is that from authoritative morality to acting out of moral insight.

1711. At this level of morality man will seek out the needs of the moral life and allow his actions to be determined by the knowledge of them.

1712. Such needs are: (1) the greatest possible good of all mankind purely for the sake of this good; (2) the progress of culture or the *moral* development of humanity towards ever greater perfection; (3) the realization of individual moral goals that are purely intuitively grasped.

1713. The greatest *possible good of all mankind* will of course be understood by different people in different ways.

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1714. The above maxim does not refer to any particular mental picture of this good, but to the fact that each individual who acknowledges this principle strives to do that which he regards as most beneficial to the good of mankind as a whole.

1715. For one in whom a feeling of pleasure attaches itself with the goods of culture, c*ultural progress* proves to be a special case of the previous moral principle.

1716. He will only have to accept the downfall and destruction of some things that also contribute to the well-being of mankind.

1717. But it is also possible that someone sees in cultural progress a moral necessity that is apart from an associated feeling of pleasure.

1718. Then this is for him a separate moral principle alongside the previous one.

1719. Both the maxim of the common good and that of cultural progress rests on a mental picture, i.e., on the relation that one gives the content of moral ideas to certain experiences (percepts).

    The mental picture *depicts* the way one applies the content of moral ideas to certain percepts. Again, this 'content of moral ideas' are natural-lawful processes; its mental picture is the 'picture' in the moral agent (subject) of how it unfolds according to natural laws. We need to remind ourselves of this again and again.

1720. But the highest conceivable principle of morality is one which does not contain any such relation from the outset, but springs from the source of pure intuition and only afterwards seeks the relation to a percept (to life).

1721. The determination of what is to be willed proceeds here from a different authority than in the preceding cases.

1722. Whoever subscribes to the moral principle of the common good will first ask, in all his actions, what his ideals contribute to this common good.

1723. One who professes the moral principle of cultural progress will do the same here.

1724. But there is a higher principle, which in the individual case does not start from a certain single moral goal, but which attaches a certain value to all moral maxims, and in any given case always asks whether one or the other moral principle is more important.

1725. It can happen that, under certain circumstances, someone sees the promotion of cultural progress as the right one and makes it the motive for his actions; under other circumstances, that of the common good; and, in the third case, the promotion of his own well-being.

1726. But when all other determining factors come second, then the conceptual intuition itself comes first.

1727. Thus the other motives step down from the leading position, and the ideal content of the action alone works as its motive.

1728. Among the stages of the characterological disposition we have designated as the highest that which works as *pure thinking*, *practical reason*.

1729. Among the motives we have now designated conceptual intuition as the highest.

1730. Upon closer reflection, it soon turns out that at this level of morality the mainspring and the motive coincide, that is, that neither a predetermined characterological disposition nor an external, normatively-assumed moral principle has an effect on our actions.

1731. The action, therefore, is not a template that is carried out according to any rules, and also not one that is carried out automatically on external stimulus, but is determined solely through its ideal content.

1732. The prerequisite for such an action is the capacity for moral intuitions.

1733. Whoever lacks the capacity to experience the particular moral maxim for each individual case will never achieve truly individual willing.

1734. The exact opposite of this principle of morality is that of Kant: Act in such a way that the principle of your action can be valid for all people.

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(This is the *categorical imperative* that Kant formulated: Act according to the principle that you would wish all rational people to follow, as if it were a universal law.)

1735. This statement is the death of all individual impulses to action.

1736. What is authoritative for me cannot be how *all* people would act in a particular case, but what for me must be done in such a case

(Original: Not how all people would act can be decisive for me, but what I have to do in the individual case.)

1737. A superficial judgment could perhaps object to these statements: How can an action be shaped individually by the particular case and the particular situation and yet be determined purely ideally by intuition?

1738. This objection rests on a confusion of the moral motive with the perceptible content of the action.

(The perceptible content of the action is the mental picture of the action.)

1739. The latter can be a motive, and indeed is, for example, in cultural progress, in acting out of egoism, etc.; in acting on purely moral intuition, it is *not* a motive.

1740. My "I" of course directs its gaze on this perceptible content, but it does not allow itself to be *determined* by it.

1741. This content is used only to form a *cognitive concept*; but the "I" does not take the *moral concept* belonging to it from the object.

1742. The cognitive concept from the specific situation that I am facing is only at the same time a moral concept if I am standing on the standpoint of a particular moral principle.

1743. If I wanted to stand on the ground of the general morality of cultural development alone, then I would go about the world with a fixed marching route.

1744. From every event that I perceive and can occupy my mind, a moral duty arises at the same time: to do my tiny part so that the event in question is placed at the service of cultural development.

1745. In addition to the concept, which reveals to me the naturally lawful connections of an event or thing, the latter also has a moral label attached to them which contains an ethical instruction for me, the moral being, on how I have to conduct myself.

1746. This moral label is justified in its sphere; but, from a higher standpoint, it coincides with the idea that occurs to me in relation to the concrete case.