# *AND THE LIGHT SHINETH IN DARKNESS*

## CHRISTIAN METAPHYSICS AND ETHICS IN CONTRAST WITH TODAY'S PHYSICALISTIC CONCEPTION OF REALITY

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# CHAPTER 1: REALITY IS NOT A CONSTRUCTION – About the darkness of physicalism

## Preface to the first chapter

In the present book, we would like to expound some fundamental ideas from a more extensive text[1], which was the result of a deep concern to us all regarded the unwarranted and misleading success of certain conceptions concerning reality inspired by physicalism. It is our purpose to criticize these conceptions and to propose an alternative view in order to be able to challenge the rash condemnation of Christianity.

This first chapter presents some remarks on a model of a worldview inspired by physicalism. In the second chapter, we would like to propose some central ideas of an alternative metaphysics.

## *1.1. Introduction*

Sometimes, the metaphysical question concerning the ultimate ground of being has been restricted to the mere technical question concerning its ultimate building-stones. This is a mistake, because reality is not a construction. Kant says that we can only understand nature to the extend in which we are able to construct it by ourselves; which means, properly, that we are unable to understand nature, because we cannot (re)construct it.[2] Spinoza distinguishes between what is *causa sui* (God, Nature) and things that have an exterior cause.[3] Also Gödel distinguishes between the creation of something (- out of nothing) and the construction of something (- out of something else which already has been created).[4] Concerning these important warnings, Kant, Spinoza and Gödel have been preceded by Augustinus, who criticises the unbelievers: *"Thus, forsooth, [they reason] from their carnal familiarity with the sight of craftsmen and house-builders, and artisans of all descriptions, who have no power to make good the effect of their own art unless they get the help of materials already prepared. And so these parties* [i.e.: the unbelievers] *in*

*like manner understand the Maker of the world not to be almighty, if thus He could not fashion the said world without the help of some other nature, not framed by Himself, which He had to use as His materials"[5].* Even in the case that God created things out of something (- e.g.: 'clay', 'matter unseen', 'matter without form'), He has been the creator of it - thus says Augustinus.

Apart from art and ethics, we can say that all man-made things are tools, or: extensions of our physical bodies. Our world is an instrument: it is our common, extended body. From nature we recruit the raw material or the elements for that instrument.

Because our world is a (man-made) construction, we tend to conceive nature in the same way: we tend to see nature as a construction that we can break up into elements in order to build up our world with them. But this is a mistake. Nature in its turn has not been built out of elements that have been retrieved from still somewhere else. Where we do believe so, we conceive ourselves as potential (re)constructors of nature, or as Gods.

Carnap disapproves of metaphysics for the reason that its propositions are not experimentally verifiable. But the claim of

applicability of this principle to the *whole* of reality, actually veils the conviction that reality can be (re)produced. In Logical Positivism, in Physicalism and in Micro-reductionism, we deal with the misconception Augustinus, Kant, Spinoza and Gödel warn against: the misconception in which man sees himself as God. He is not God, says Spinoza, because he is not *causa sui*.


By our conception, reality finds its foundation in its destination: all the 'lower' things come out of the 'higher' wherein they have their reason and their ultimate sense of being. It is our conviction that only in this way, a satisfactory 'explanation' of reality as a whole can be obtained.

Opposed to this conception stands the nowadays as successful as it is malicious conception concerning reality by physicalism, the newest form of materialism, in which things have been turned upside down. Materialism did not understand the cautious words of mentioned philosophers.

Physicalism is principally a part of atheism, because atheism accepts coincidence while denying any form of teleology: it rejects *a priori* the question of sense and pretends to find

satisfaction in a reductionistic know-how about micro- and macrocosm, which in fact are conceived as if they were nothing more than an accidental happening. It is ethically irresponsible that physicalism leaves man orphaned. In this text however, physicalism will get our attention in the perspective of its *cognitive* irresponsibility.

In the perspective as is being developed here, we will express some thoughts concerning physicalism. As a model for critique, we will consider the 'theory of forms' by Etienne Vermeersch.[6] We will give a resume of Vermeersch's basic intuitions. This will be followed by some general objections. We consider Vermeersch's own version of micro-reductionism, his conception concerning reality in relation to his conception concerning philosophy, his 'theory of forms' and, more generally, his physicalism. We point out some failures in Vermeersch's concept of culture and we fight his thesis of the ability in principle to construct human beings. Eventually, we demonstrate the irrelevance of Vermeersch' aesthetics which is based on his theory of forms.

## 1.2. Vermeersch's anthropology and epistemology

Each science and each philosophical doctrine has its own perspective on - and explanatory model of reality. Vermeersch regrets the mutual incommensurability in the different disciplines of science and philosophy. He believes true knowledge can only be found in a unitary science. In the footsteps of David Hume, Vermeersch believes that, due to this ultimate goal, first of all we will have to examine thoroughly the process of knowledge itself: what exactly does a man do when he processes information or when he communicates? Together with Vermeersch's concept of forms - which he believes is able to describe unequivocally the essence of knowledge -, cybernetics and information-theory give the terminology required for a model of the specific information-system that man is, as well as a working model in which the model has a central place: we will not understand the meaning of consciousness as long as we remain unable to build a machine that has exactly these attributes that make us believe in the presence of consciousness in other people. So, the ability to (re)construct something proves the ability to understand it. Vermeersch submits his attempt to

Popper's falsification criterion, but he also lays claim to the right of its existence as long as its absurdity has not been proven: possible condemnations must be proven if they are to escape scientific deficiency. In conclusion, Vermeersch believes that even the objects of social science can be reduced to mere physical stuff; he wants to do away with "the ghost in the machine", once and for all.[7]

### Some general remarks

In fact, it suffices that we prove the irrelevancy of the applicability of Carnap's verification principle to the reality as a *whole,* in order to be able to declare the basic intuitions of physicalism and its rejection of metaphysics to be invalid. Blinded by recklessness, yet the physicalist is not someone to come easily to an understanding with. So we will have to meet him on his own territorial, and we will try to question his thesis from the inside.

To begin with, Vermeersch's basic intuition, namely: *that the knowledge* about *the 'knowing subject' can teach us more about the knowledge* of *the 'knowing subject'*, is strikingly evident. For is not also the knowledge *about,* a

knowledge *of* the 'knowing subject'? So this intuition says little more than that knowledge benefits from knowledge.

### Information is mere 'information-for-us'

Concerning the pursued description of the knowing subject in terms of the mechanical, first of all two remarks must be made. In the first place, an information-system is not a knowing subject: it derives its sense from the (working) human: a pair of tongs does not pinch by itself and neither does an information-system do anything by itself: in both cases, it is their agent who carries out the act. Secondly, the presupposed knowledge concerning the act of knowing is in its turn submitted to the problem of self-reference: there is a fundamental discrepancy between information and the act of knowing: *without the act of knowing, a text does not give any information.*

Additionally, it may be remarked that this is also valid in the case that this information holds that there is a structural equivalence between the thing and its concept: in his theory of forms, E. Vermeersch puts the case that structural equivalence is a material matter. But we claim

that structural equivalence is a sort of information, and so it cannot exist until it is being known - by a subject.

## The instrument is nothing but its 'function for us'

Man reduces the *in se* neutral reality to an instrument, and he does do so by bestowing sense upon it and by transforming it into his own world. He does this for his own sake: he wants to live and to raise the quality of his life. Nevertheless, our world is nothing but a 'superficial' phenomenon: an animal is unable to distinguish it from the rest of the landscape: to an animal our houses mean nothing but rocks; manifestations of our language are nothing to them but sounds. No creature can see further than to where it reaches. Our instruments, and especially our own world, have no other existence but their 'function for us': the simplest lever alike, they all exist out of natural laws that we took advantage of in order to enlarge our grasp on reality. Obviously this applies to both our information- and communication-tools: they have no self, no needs and as a matter of course they have no need to communicate.

**Our body as the ultimate parameter of the world**

The world is visible, soil can be walked on, rain is wet and the wind is cold: the attributes of things, especially the attributes of our instruments, are related to *our bodily being*, which is *necessarily our ultimate parameter*. A book, like a machine, derives its functionality or its being from the acts of writing and reading. Further more, we describe an information-system by concepts derived from our own information-processing activity: the terms "sender" (or: "transmitter") and "receiver" are nothing but more general terms for "speaker" and "listener", or "writer" and "reader". As tools are modelled on the human body (because they are extensions of the body), the information-system is modelled on human communication.

Vermeersch, in his turn, wants to apply the terminology and the mechanical model suited to the theory of information, to man and his communication; in doing so, *he turns things upside-down*: the aeroplane, for which the bird stood model, is used in its turn as a model for the description of the bird.[8]

## Turing

Alan Turing states that when an expert, telephoning with a computer, does not realize he is not speaking to a human being, we must conclude that the computer and the human being are equivalent.[9] In that case we get a computer that has its own 'ego'. We indeed cannot prove the existence of that computer-'ego', but Turing would respond that we are also unable to prove the 'ego' of a human: so we have to trust the expert.

Nevertheless, we can verify by experiment that the reliability of an expert is not at all evident. Turing's computer is a *trompe l' oeil*. Even today the legendary Tijl Uilenspiegel has hypocrites applauding empty canvases. And we remember the suspicious death of Van Meegeren after he had confessed to be the author of a painting, experts thought to be by Vermeer.

## Purposefulness

No machine can properly take the initiative to create whatsoever. *But exactly this initiative,*

*this specific purposefulness, is of essential importance in relation to the act.*

On the other hand, the musicians in an orchestra performing the Brandenburg Concertos have only a technical part in this creation: in this quality they merely operate as the composer's instruments; though Bach is physically absent, these musicians are directed by him; the subjectivity of the performer is not of fundamental importance because the performer can be replaced by another one. However, the irreplacebility of the musician applies only to his willingness to function as a mere instrument of the composer. As a consequence, no one can judge the aesthetic qualities of the performer when he performs in a correct way an unknown piece of music. For this performer may be someone who perfectly governs the technical skills that can be imitated by a programmed pianola. By the way, it seems that education nowadays is perfectly satisfied by teaching this kind of acrobatics: for the solving of problems via problem-solving programs that must be learnt before, cannot be properly called 'problem-solving': this way of action is nothing but the mere application or execution of programs - a way of action that ignores creativity, out of a fundamental distrust in the

human person and a misplaced trust in *l' homme machine*...

## Introspection

To be concise: a third person cannot judge with scientific certainty the intentions of a (supposed) subject: he cannot judge its knowledge, its capacity to learn, its feelings or its consciousness. Because a criterion to prove the presence of such contents of consciousness will be necessarily limited to (dubious) *external* attributes: *an equivalence of external attributes with the internal cannot be proved, merely because, apart from intuition - a method without positive scientific statute - the inner can only be known through eventually external attributes.* *[10]*

### Does the ability to 'create' something imply the complete understanding of that thing?

Franklin's lightning conductor makes firewood of all former theories, for the ability to 'create' something implies the complete understanding of that thing, according to Vermeersch.

The urgency of praxis confirms indeed that each resolution of a problem makes the problematisation itself redundant. Nevertheless, the ability to make a thing does not necessarily imply the full understanding of that thing.

A good example is the problem of knowledge extraction: an expert solves a problem without being aware of the method he used. A fertile human couple is able to give birth to a child, but do the involved ones also have a full understanding of what exactly they are doing? I *can* live, for I *do* live, but in fact I do *not know* much about life. *The ability to execute something gives no evidence for the understanding of that matter, because the actor to whom this ability is being ascribed, does in fact not act with intellectual faculties only*. The age most suited for the learning of a language, lies far below the age one gets some understanding about what a language really is. Perhaps, in this case the theory will be an obstacle to the praxis. *Consequently, we cannot be astonished when the thinking about thought of man would turn out to be an obstacle to the act of thinking itself, as the previous remarks may suggest.* The problem of self-reference could appear as a curse that thwarts each attempt in this sense. Moreover, Vermeersch's

illustration of his thesis (that one proves one's knowledge of something by showing one's ability to 'construct' it), is misleading[11]: it is true that only an excellent musician is able to build a machine which produces adagios, but that argument does not work in the example of a 'God-man' considering all natural life to be superfluous by reducing it to a product of his own intelligence. For the product reproducing itself unlimitedly in that way, would not have solved the problem of death at all: suppose that I should make a perfect copy of a human individual and, after having done so, I would destroy 'the original', after all I would have murdered a man. The *existential* level of reality will always stay out of the reach of the machine.

## The gnome in the chest

Vermeersch submits his theory to Poppers *falsification-criterion* in order to judge the value of his theory. This criterion holds: "*that a theory that cannot be falsified (- this means: a theory, out of which phenomena that would mean the rejection of it in the case they should not occur, cannot be deduced), is worthless in relation to its cognitive meaning.[12] It is clear that Vermeersch's basic intuitions which fund his*

*total theory, cannot be falsified and, due to this criterion, are worthless in the cognitive sense.* The basic intuition in question, namely that the knowledge *about* the 'knowing subject' can learn us more about the knowledge *of* the knowing subject, is trivial and, as a consequence, it cannot be falsified. The cognitive value of the theory relies on the value of the basic intuition and, as a consequence, meets the same fate. Gödel foresees the existence of true statements, which are not provable nor can be rejected, though Vermeersch's thesis in no way illustrates Gödels theorem, for it is without content.[13]

Vermeersch namely requires that one must principally be able to prove one's contestation in order for it to be scientific. Now Vermeersch proclaims the ability in principle to (re)construct a human being and he denies his opponents the right to speak, as long as the opposite thesis (which is: the thesis that a human being cannot be (re)constructed) has not been proved. The absurdity of this demand becomes clear by means of a classical example by Vermeersch himself. Suppose I should proclaim that there is a gnome in the chest, a gnome who nevertheless disappears as soon as I open the chest. This thesis cannot be falsified and, as a consequence,

has no value in relation to its cognitive meaning; yet this is also the case concerning Vermeersch's basic intuition. So, proclaiming that I have a gnome in my chest, can I demand from my opponent to prove the truth of his opposite thesis? Because my thesis has no content, it cannot be proved nor rejected. Though this is what Vermeersch demands from his opponent: Vermeersch's 'gnome in the chest' is his 'ghost in the machine'. At the same time he adjudges himself the right to go on undisturbed with his project: "*In cases where no resolution has been found, each new attempt must be allowed to be tested as long as there has not been given any evidence of its absurdity*".[14]

Vermeersch goes even further: besides the human being, also human creations could be reduced to "*a complex whole of simple physically describable elements*".[15] But, of course: we can remark that this extreme form of micro-reductionism should have to be a particle of itself in order to be true![16] Who - or what - hunts '*the ghost in the machine*'? Is it not *the machine in the ghost*?

## Brains and thoughts

In conclusion we notice that the physicalist accepts that thoughts arise from the activity of the brain. Here, he seems to forget that the 'certainty' he relies on to explain thought, is less certain than the act of thinking itself: for the *activity* of the brain supposed to produce thinking, does not come to us but by thinking itself: the activity of the brain is in the first place a matter of thinking , as is the existence of a chair (- see: Kant's *Ding an sich*). But just as we cannot judge about the existence of the chair, we cannot do so about the existence of the activity of the brain either. *That the brain activity has to be presupposed in order to give a physicalistic explanation of thinking, is all we can say for certain; put otherwise: the brain activity is hypothetical and subordinated to thought itself.*

### *1.3. The delusion of micro-reductionism*

Inherent to physicalism is micro-reductionism, which reduces the mind to a biological process, and biology to physics. The universe would be built (- and here again we find this dangerous reduction of creation to a mere construction! -)

out of elements which form more complex wholes. The objects coming to existence in that way are being divided into eight levels: on level zero we find the logical-mathematical objects, on level one, the quarks or the most elementary building-stones of reality, and so it goes on via atoms and molecules until, at the end, at the seventh level, we get the groups of pluricellular organisms, and on level eight, their products. Vermeersch admits that there exists a parallel between, on the one hand, the levels mentioned and, on the other hand, the generality of the theories about the objects situated in the corresponding levels, and the number of descriptions of the structure in relation to the types of objects. In the first parallel there is a direct proportionality, in the second parallel there is an inverse one.

## Circular reasoning and contradiction[17]

Let us notice that such a division relies upon the degree of generality with which one *considers* these objects. In other terms: by considering the objects in view of their generality, one *creates*, through this specific perspective, the levels *1*, *2* or 3. On the other hand, by considering the objects in view of the discovering of specific

structures, one *creates*, just by that specific view, for instance the levels *5*, *6* and 7. In other terms, it is tautological to admit that one can ascertain that for instance with the levels *0* to *3* more general theories and less descriptions of structure in the concerning science should correspond, meanwhile for instance with the levels *5* to 7 more descriptions of structure in the concerning science do correspond. In still other terms: *the fact of the generality of the theories and of the specificity of the descriptions of structure is not following from the levels, but the existence of the levels in fact relies on the way one is considering the existing things.* Expressed in still another way: drawing one's attention to what things have in common, one creates the levels *0* or *1*. Drawing one's attention to the mutual differences between things, one creates for instance the levels *5, 6* or 7.

But what is more: according to this schedule, micro-reductionism itself will belong to level *8*: it will have to be a part of itself in order to be true. Yet this is impossible, for something cannot be itself and differ from itself at the same time. Otherwise said: something cannot be true unless it is equal to itself.[18]

## Accident and contingency

According to micro-reductionism, the existence of man is unnecessary for the existence of whatever else. In other terms: the human being is the most contingent being.

Now the micro-reductionist asserts that the elements of the universe put themselves together to more complex units, all the time. In this perspective, the human being still is a fairly complex unity. Considering him as being contingent, one must also judge the laws that effected him out of more elementary particles, and equally one must judge these more elementary particles as they are. Going on in this way, down to the more elementary, one must judge eventually *nothing* to be necessary. Yet if nothing is necessary, this pair of concepts 'necessity-contingency' becomes irrelevant.

If one considers on the contrary the human being as a necessary being, one must also consider the human products, containing the theory of micro-reductionism, to be necessary. Yet a necessary theory cannot consider man as being contingent without considering itself at the same time as being contingent. So this

supposition results into a contradiction and must be considered as an absurd one.

Subsequently, let us examine the thesis that the existence of man is not necessary for the existence of some other thing. True enough, micro-reductionism neglects the existence of goals, but at the same time it is even so true that everything has a reason of existence, and so all levels (which antecedent to humanity) are necessary for all levels they produce. But then one must accept also that eventually something must be necessary for the existence of quarks. Since at this point quarks are hypothetical constructions, their condition of possibility consists of nothing else but human consciousness. From this follows that man is not the most contingent being, for he is necessary for the existence of quarks ànd for everything quarks are necessary for. In other terms, this is not about necessary and contingent things in reality but about necessary and contingent *suppositions* of things in reality, which means that only necessary and contingent *suppositions* have relevance in this context.

Now let us consider the concept 'accident' more in general. One speaks about 'accident' when an event occurs that deviates from the predictions of a theory. But it is clear that by

reasoning in that way, one is guilty to induction. The fact that I am unable to predict an event by the hand of my ordering theory, does not give me the right to name this event 'accidentally'. My reasoning would be correct only by saying that in such a case my theory is incomplete. For a fact is necessary because of its factuality. The only thing I can say about an unpredictable event is, that in fact it is incompatible with my prediction, and that its unpredictability is not accidentally, for it results from the incompleteness of my theory. In other terms: accepting the incompleteness of my theory, I will also have to recognize the necessity of an unpredicted event, and, as a consequence, I cannot consider this event to be 'accidental'. Later we will give an application in connection with the Darwinist theory of the process of selection.

**Making music without noise**

Kant already wrote that we can only understand nature to the degree to which we would be able to construct it by ourselves. The significance of this proposition may not be underestimated: we are *not* able to (re)construct nature, for nature itself is not a construction. Because all the things

we construct by our hands and plans are made out of elements we find in nature, we are inclined to believe that nature itself is the result of such a process of construction. Giving in to this inclination, we are arguing by induction. Suppose we should analyze a tree into material components, we would find as a result a whole of different elementary particles such as water, carbon and others. In fact, this tree is not at all the result of a construction of such elementary particles, and reconstructing these particles would never result into a new tree. For our analysis has been limited to the *material* analysis of *one specific tree*. Everything beyond this, cannot be analyzed any more, and this fact excludes each imitative reconstruction. But first of all, reconstruction is impossible because a tree, and more generally nature as a whole, is not a construction. For instance, a parrot is able to imitate a human expression, but the essence of an expression, namely its sense, cannot be comprehended by the parrot, which makes its achievement irrelevant. The parrot only repeats sounds. And exactly in his reckless belief concerning the reconstruction of creation, man equals such a talking parrot, unaware of his grotesque attitude. Man with his mechanical world-view is comparable to the deaf musician who is unable to have the slightest feeling for

his own performance as a result of his own deafness: to him, the playing of music is hard labour, something comparable to the operating of a very complex machine. *As a matter of fact, physicalists now believe that nature is such an absurd orchestra without noise, and they believe so only because they are unable to hear.*

## 1.4. Rationality, freedom and creativity

Logical Positivism believes that philosophy should disappear. However it may be, metaphysics cannot be submitted to Carnap's verification principle, for metaphysical experiments are unthinkable.[19] Etienne Vermeersch speaks about the low rationality rate of philosophy: one cannot judge philosophical statements to be thoroughly rational. Science however, as a way to gain reliable knowledge by a clear language, logical-mathematical systems and statements that can be falsified in principle, is supposed to be thoroughly rational. Supposing statements should have been given a rate of rationality going from *0* to *1*, then philosophy should get a rate of circa *0.5*. For as the number of problems grows, the rate of rationality of the concerning statements scales down, according to Vermeersch.[20]

# Limited rationality

We agree with the conception held up in intuitionism by L.E.J. Brouwer, namely that arithmetic is a product of human creativity.[21] But because of methodological reasons we will now follow positivists for a while, and we will suppose that there exists a classical arithmetic, based on a number of statements related to elements and calculations on these elements. In such an arithmetic, statements such as: "*1+1=2*" can be perfectly falsified. But let us notice that in this case we can speak of the possibility to falsify only due to the agreements that constitute this arithmetic and by the force of which falsification can be executed. This implies that the rationality of this arithmetic is identical to the possibility of the fulfilment of the agreements that constitute this arithmetic. In other terms: acting rationally within this arithmetic just means the fulfilment of these agreements that constitute the arithmetic as it is. Yet because all acts within this arithmetic, as a result of the elements and the laws that constitute it, have been anticipated, we are always dealing with acts that are one hundred percent predictable. Yet an action that is a hundred percent predictable, is an action without

freedom. And an action without freedom is not an 'action' but an event that one undergoes.

Where positivists claim that such an arithmetic has a rationality rate that equals *1*, they in fact claim that rationality equals 'being determined'.

## Creative rationality

Let us take as a second example the above reasoning, and let us suppose at the same time that it can be considered as belonging to the sphere of philosophy, so that, according to Vermeersch, it gets an index of rationality equal to *0.5*. Let us remember also that positivists implicitly do define rationality as a determined action. Consequently, if this definition of rationality is correct, it must be considered as necessary, and it must get an index that equals *1*. Yet at the same time we considered the making explicit of this implicit definition as a philosophical activity. So, as a consequence to this reasoning, we must adjudge also to philosophy an index of rationality that equals *1*.

Let us remind here once more of the fact that, for methodological reasons, we presuppose the existence of such a totally determined arithmetic. For sure, here we are dealing with a

naive conception concerning arithmetic, yet one cannot understand how else one could imagine himself how he could distinguish between the 'thoroughly rational', according to Vermeersch, and the philosophical Vermeersch despises. Obviously Vermeersch forgets that the base of each so-called 'thoroughly rational' science cannot be anything else but the result of a philosophical and, consequently, a creative, human and not-absolute or fallible activity. Such an arithmetic distinguishes between itself and philosophy in the sense that this arithmetic has been constituted and so it is 'completed', while philosophy is not.[22] This arithmetic has nothing to offer apart from itself, and its practitioner *undergoes* it. Philosophy on the contrary, *grows*, and its practitioner *makes* it. The arithmetic mentioned concerns its own imaginary world; philosophy on the contrary concerns real things. Considering philosophy as being irrational, results into equalling irrationality with freedom as has been proved. Let us finally remark once more that even such an arithmetic cannot deal with the 'perfect' rationality mentioned, as proves the well-known *problème des partis* in the calculus of probabilities: in the end it is related to justice, to freedom and to the social sphere.[23]

Therewithal, pursuing rationality is not a part of rational behaviour, but of striving behaviour and passion, and in this way it could eventually degenerate into what Jon Elster calls 'hyperrationality'[24], in which one is no longer aware of its ultimate ground, namely the established truths and values, and this makes it even more dangerous.

### Freedom

Concerning freedom, we will have to restrict ourselves to a concise summary of our theses. We will have to omit their proof for now.[25]

(1) Freedom is always the freedom of a *subject*. (2) This always concerns a *choice*. (3) My freedom is being determined by the measure in which my *action*, for which my freedom is a condition, determines all my other actions. (4) The identification of Freedom and Rationality, by which Rationality has been identified with Determined Action, implies a specific conception concerning Freedom, so that this conception excludes the possibility of Freedom while holding on to the specific definition of the word. Subsequently the concept of Rationality is being postulated unjustly.

Defining freedom as determined action, one neglects the discrepancy between the ontic and the epistemic level and thus one excludes ethics. In this perspective one should also judge the behaviour of an atom of oxygen, which links itself to an atom of hydrogen as a 'rational' one. Though, in doing so, subjectivity is being denied.[26]

The concept of freedom can also be considered as resulting from an unjust induction from the epistemic to the ontic sphere: the experience of imprisonment necessarily precedes the concept of freedom. In other words: freedom is not experienced unless it is the result of the experience of its absence.[27] Next we can also examine the concept of 'necessary freedom' and find out that freedom is based on the possibility of destruction, for one is free to renounce this destruction. Eventually it follows that I determine myself to be free or not to be free. For the un-destroyed reality exists within my freedom ever since I renounced destruction.

### *1.5. The human being is not a machine*

Physicalists like to compare man to a machine, and subsequently they accept that man can be

considered as a machine that is only a little more complex than the machines we have produced until now. So, principally man should be constructable. The ethical consequences of such a theory are far-reaching: the robot earns respect as soon as Turing's expert judges as such. At the same time the human being itself degrades to the level of the machine: physicalists believe that a human being essentially is nothing more than a (very complex) machine.

In doing so, physicalists overlook some fundamental things. Until now we gave some general remarks on the basic intuitions of physicalism. We will now elaborate this question a little more.

## Interaction and communication

Physicalists have quite a stiff job considering the theory of information[28], and they speak about "*the mutual communication between machines, for instance between the transmitter and the receiver of radar signals*". Yet it is a very unfortunate thing to speak about 'communication' in this case, because communication presupposes the presence of at least two entities (- even in the case one talks to

himself, one has to split up himself in two parts). But a transmitter and a receiver do not make two entities: both are part of nature and they are not separable from it, unless by man himself, and even since that moment they become 'objects of culture': forms which have been determined by man himself. As soon as man disappears, the transmitter and the receiver are no longer objects of culture, they will belong to chaos: in that case they lose their character of being an entity and ever since that moment one can no longer speak of two entities and certainly not of communication.

If one nevertheless complies with the consideration that physical interaction between transmitter and receiver has to be labelled as 'communication', than one must consider all natural processes to be 'communicative processes', as we noticed before. The concept of communication then loses its content.

Thus, if one still wants to distinguish between communicative and non-communicative processes, it is clear that one has to come up with an adequate criterion. Because the physicalist rejects the subject (- the human being) as the criterion (- remember Vermeersch's speaking of "*the mutual communication between machines*"), he has to indicate a criterion within

the world of objects, more specifically within the world of natural objects (- for there is no such thing like objects of culture without human beings). Now it is evident that chaos cannot offer any criterion, for it does not even allow different objects or entities, for there is no such thing like an object without the presence of a subject.

On the contrary and as has been noticed before, each machine has to be considered as an instrument, a tool of a subject, a part of nature that by human interpretation (or action) becomes an extension of one or more physical operations (- muscle-power, sensory activity, brain-activity etcetera) of the subject.

## Action as a function of information

The theory of information says "*that the measure of information of a message depends on the measure of our uncertainty about the condition of the source and that this uncertainty depends in the first place on the number of possible choices that can be made*". For example: "*when our source only contains a small number of signs, our uncertainty about the choice of the message is not very strong; for in*

*that case we can expect beforehand our guess to be right. When a large number of possible messages occurs, our chance to guess the right one decreases".*

On the contrary, we can prove by a counter-example that this uncertainty is independent from the number of possible choices one can make.

Suppose an American receiver expects a message consisting of one single sign, let it be the sign "+" or the sign "-", concerning the atomic bombing on Hiroshima. At a given moment, a message that contains one single sign reaches him, yet because of a failure by the communication-system, he gets the sign "x". The receiver can interpret this sign in only two different ways; still, his uncertainty is maximal.

The theory of information replies to this objection in this way: "*As soon as we measure the quantity of information by its importance, we deal with a mere subjective situation. It is safer to arrange that we will consider the quantity of a message only as a function of its probability. (...) One might think that this is a narrow point of view, but in fact it is the only one which, for the time being, permits an*

*objective criterion and it is sufficiently intuitively acceptable to judge it to be valuable"*.

Thus, as a message is not relevant but on the condition that it has a meaning for a subject, the measure of information depends primarily on that meaning. Factually, the wish to get an objective message is responsible for the denial of this criterion of relevance. For instance it is possible that an uncertain information, however probable it might be, does not give any *information in view of an action*.[29]

### 1.6. The circularity of information theory

### Form recognition

E. Vermeersch defines information as a form[30]: a set of states of affairs of an energetic or a material substrate, which has been mutually identified and which has been discriminated from other states of affairs. Vermeersch: "*Now form only exists in so far as an information-system recognises certain things as forms"*.[31]

A lever does not lift: it is the subject that makes this action happen, while using the lever

as an expedient. In the same way the subject uses the sign as a carrier of the meaning. The sign itself does not carry any meaning (and consequently *is* not a sign) unless 'by order of' (/ 'by adjudication of') the subject. Without the subject, a lever is not a lever and a sign is not a sign. Without the subject there is no meaning at all in the sign. And an information system is not a subject.

## Needs

The physicalist claims that the presence or the absence of consciousness in robots constructed by man would be no more verifiable than it is in third persons. If one at least refuses solipsism and keeps some common sense, one should not doubt this.

Factually, machines transform energy and matter, but they do not have any *need* to execute energetic-material transformations. The human being, on the contrary, does have this need: it transforms energy and matter out of its own need, and in the perspective of this very difference, machines can be considered as transformers of energy and matter in view of *human* needs. The human need thus executes

these transformations with the help of the body as through the use of tools. Machines are tools: they take over functions from the human body but they do not take over needs. Asserting that an engine has a need for fuel, one must remember that there can only be talk of 'needs' *in view of the human being*. The engine itself does not bother about the fuel.

In this very case, the function of the action is satisfaction of needs, and because a machine cannot have needs, the function of the action of a machine does not exist. So the machine does not 'act'; things just 'happen' to it.

In the case of the specific need for knowledge, this difference between the human being and the machine holds: "*(...) As soon as the human being proves by a meta-mathematical reasoning that the Gödel-proposition is true, he 'knows' that he has proven something*" - the machine on the other hand does not, as R. Hendrickx says. [32]

## Existential contradiction

If one accepts that a pair of tongs does not pinch, the same must be accepted dealing with a more complex tool or a machine. If one rejects

this, one must conclude that consciousness is being created by a certain level of complexity of the system.[33]

And then this ethical problem remains: suppose that a man has been reconstructed perfectly. In that case he should be at the same time an object (namely: the possession of the constructor) and a subject, which is counterfactual to the conditions of reality.

### 1.7. Shortcomings of Darwinism

We explained earlier in what way the individual act of making a choice actualises exactly that possibility which is being demanded from the individual by the extern reality - the problem; we also did explain how this happens on the penalty of the destruction of the individual. By this means, at the same time, and in an implicit way, we did define in terms of the Darwinist mechanism of selection, the individual anticipation of thinking. Let us explain first what we must understand by this.

In ethology, the behaviour of lower species of animals is being explained as an unreasoned and mechanical one, although it appears to be very ingenious: in there, the efficiency of behaviour

is being ascribed to a natural process of selection. Let us name this natural selection a 'selection by the group' and, in analogy, let us name the anticipation or the reasoning a 'selection by the individual'. In the case of a selection by the group, the inefficient reactions are being wiped out, not by the individual animal but by the whole set of differently reacting animals. In analogy, by anticipating or thinking in that way, one is doing nothing else than making selections: the individual reacts rationally (- in other terms: it anticipates as it whips out the inefficient reactions.

Notice now that none of both the processes of selection have their source in the individual or in the group: the generation of a choice by an individual, as well as the selection of the very best action within a group, are being forced from the individual or from the group by the external.

Comparing the selecting nature with a labyrinth now, we make sure that it is the labyrinth that is determining for what passes it and what does not. But this means that the outcome of the passage through the labyrinth was determined from beforehand, just as the result of the correct reasoning is being determined by its premises. Therefore the 'explanation' of nowadays world and man in terms of natural

selection, in fact is not an explanation, but a *postponement of the problem*. No matter whether man is being modelled out of clay or out of nature: as the clay is not responsible for the shape which comes out of it, so dead stuff is not responsible for the labyrinth which is being modelled out of it and which has not been able to generate something else than what came out of it indeed.

The argument of the existence of 'accident' or 'chance', in which an accidental happening is being defined as "a happening which escapes from causality" does not fit; until something will have been proven, one must accept that the case we do not perceive causal chains is being provoked by the shortage of our capacity of perception or by the shortage of our theory and not by the absence of causal chains. For concerning one and the same reality it is impossible to accept that some things would be subjected to causality while other things would not.

When we see a beautiful statue or picture, we will not suppose that coincidental circumstances such as hail, rain, accidental spots of colour and so on did cause it; we would rather think of an aware creator. As a consequence there cannot be any sound argument which should make more

acceptable the thesis that we should exist by accident rather than by the hands of an aware creator.[34]

### Determinism, teleology, freedom and sense

Let us consider the Darwinist process of natural selection again, and let us suppose in order to make things clear that only one description of the situation each moment of time would satisfy in order to give a full representation of the actual situation, and, at the same time, the differentiation from the one moment to the other would be a realisation of only one of the two possibilities (which, on that very moment, would not yet have been realised). Thus we get a simple schedule, representing a binary tree whereby each nod splits itself repetitively into a new fork.

Let us name the nods by the help of a series of natural numbers, their length representing the moment of time. Then we get this schedule:

| ( ) | (1) | (1,1) | (1,1,1) |
|-----|-----|-------|---------|
|     |     |       | (1,1,2) |
|     |     | (1,2) | (1,2,1) |
|     |     |       | (1,2,2) |
|     | (2) | (2,1) | (2,1,1) |
|     |     |       | (2,1,2) |
|     |     | (2,2) | (2,2,1) |
|     |     |       | (2,2,2) |

Now, suppose that the following different stages have been actualised: ( ), (*1*), (*1,1*) en (*1,1,1*). So, if the mechanism of natural selection is considered as being responsible for these specific (ontic) realisations of (epistemic) possibilities, this just means that the (epistemic) possibilities (*2*), (*1,2*), (*2,1*), (*2,2*) etceteras did not realise themselves on the ontic level and, consequently, they were impossible in the ontic sense. Let us repeat: what does not happen on the moment *t*, must be considered as being impossible as soon as the moment *t* has gone. On the contrary: what happens on the moment *t*,

has to be considered as being necessary as soon as the moment *t* has gone. For *nothing is more necessary than the fact, and this is true by force of the fact that it just happens*. For instance, when today is Monday, then it *must* be Tuesday tomorrow. This necessity however is not absolute at all: it just holds *by force of* the agreement that Tuesday must follow on Monday. Suppose that the day of tomorrow is being proclaimed Sunday, than tomorrow will be Sunday, notwithstanding the earlier agreement that now has been changed. The fact is always stronger than the necessity, because also the necessity is being determined by a fact (- for instance: an agreement). If we consider things from the 'end of the times' perspective, then we can see that the stage ( ) has not been the *cause* of (*1*); though on the contrary, the stage (*1*) has made necessary the evolution from ( ) to (*1*). In other terms: exactly those states of affairs that are possible epistemically do drive the present ontic states in a specific evolution and they do so with *necessity*. That makes that all present changes of the states of affairs are being conducted in a specific direction just by those states of affairs which will realise themselves in the future; so this means that the future (- not the possible future but the actual one) determines

the present.[35] Let us repeat that this is the case because nothing is more necessary than the fact.

Nothing does oblige us to follow the 'right' direction, yet if we do not do so, we will never reach the aim. Let us now suppose that whichever choice should bring one towards the aim: in that case the possibility to reject one's own freedom would be absent. So, the existence of the aim *requires* the possibility for us to reject the aim. In other words: participation in the final aim requires specific obligations from the participants.

Finally, let us notice that the concept of freedom often is being perverted totally today: what one names freedom is in many cases nothing else than an arbitrariness which rejects the existence of an Objective Order, resulting in self-destruction.[36] On the contrary, the self-restriction inherent to freedom is often been identified with a lack of freedom. How this ever could happen is the story of a madness whose roots are as dark as the roots of idolatry.[37]

## 1.8. The failure of physicalism

Realists - thus do name themselves the philosophers who believe in physics as the all-

embracing method to construct an adequate conception concerning the world: Physicalism. The physicalist believes in the existence of energetic-material substrates, which he pretends to be the one and only base of reality as a whole. He believes to be able to undo the object of things put in there by subjects, pretending that in this way an energetic-material substrate (abbreviated: *EMS*) is left.

In doing so, he overlooks the fact that such an *EMS* cannot be known. For, if something of it would be known, one had to ascribe this known to the 'knowing subject', rather than to a reality which should be independent from consciousness. But this evidently implies the existence of a reality that would be self-contained for consciousness. In that case, consciousness could only know what this reality is *not*. *As a consequence, the physicalist accepts in an implicit way the existence of a transcendent reality.[38]*

## Logic

Subsequently, let us consider the argument that the physicalist uses to choose physics as the basic method in order to construct his

conception concerning reality. He does argue namely that it is a clear ascertainment that, for instance, theologies do have mutual contradictions whereas in physics exists a consensus concerning things that have a truth-value and things that do not have one.

Let us make a supposition in order to make clear the shortage in this argument. Suppose there exist two theologies, named *A* and *B. C* is the name we give to physics. Now, put *A, B* and *C* as explanation systems on one row, without grouping them mutually; this means: without naming *A* and *B* theologies and *C* physics. Now, choosing one of the three, nevertheless which one, it is an evidence that such a choice cannot be justified by arguing that between the other two no consensus exists.

### Failures in the physicalistic concept of culture

In function of his 'theory of forms', E. Vermeersch elaborates the concept of culture by Kroeber and Kluckhorn. He distinguishes between *mental forms* and *exteriorised* ones, for instance on the ground of the fact that the substrate of the latter is being approachable for third persons, whilst that of the former either is

being ascertained indirectly or is being supposed.[39]

One problem is the implicit criterion that is being handled over here to distinguish between what is *direct* and what is *indirect*. I suppose that for instance in the case of the sensory perception of a thing, one can speak of a "substrate which is direct and approachable for third persons".

Looking at the leg of a fly by the help of a microscope, I am doing a far more indirect observation, but I accept that in this case it still concerns an *exteriorised form*. Though, using *an apparatus of observation which obliges me to interpret my observation in some way*, or otherwise: *an apparatus of observation which is 'interpreting' on the basis of its very construction*, the border between direct and indirect seems to become less clear. Thereupon: *are there not specific cases that bring me in uncertainty about the reproducibility of that thing that I believe to observe?* In the case I am blind, I am eventually able to testify by consensus the reliability of the observations one passed to me, but what about the consensus about the reliability of observations by instruments making observable substrates that are not directly observable? One can make an image of infra- or super-sonic *sounds*, one can

consider them as being real substrates by defining them, or as observable by certain not-human beings, or as waves. But notice that the latter case becomes problematic in respect of the initial *definition* of sound as being "something that can be heard (by someone)", which is being changed to: "specific waves in the air", and here one can ask himself in what way one can name a wave as a substrate, for not the air itself, but its specific movements are the things which make the 'sound' possible. On the other hand it is certainly true that we could not hold that our ears make an error each time we think that we hear sounds, while, based upon a physical definition of sound, one should be able to state that sounds factually are not sounds. *Considering the hearing as the criterion, one can speak about sounds, but considering the instrument as the criterion, it looks one comes closer to the substrate, yet the essence of the sound (which was the point of departure), does not longer exist beyond specific limits. So, do we not have to conclude that the essence of sounds relies as well on something that is external to us, as on something that is subjective, something that, as a consequence, it is not relevant to search for its substrate because, in doing so, the initial and essential signification is being replaced by another one?*

# Nature and Culture

Another impasse concerns the distinction made by the physicalist between *natural* and *cultural* objects. For instance, Vermeersch proclaims a mountain to be a *natural object "because the characteristics that make us identify it as a mountain are the result of the influence of natural laws"*. On the contrary, Vermeersch proclaims a plough to be *a cultural object "because the characteristics that make us recognise it as a plough are the result of the intervention of the human being"*.

Vermeersch bases the above mentioned distinction on the distinction between the human being and nature, in addition to which the human being is not been considered as being part of nature. But which criteria do permit Vermeersch to distinct the human being from nature? For, considering man to be a system of information and, at the same time, considering a system of information to be fully natural, consequently one has to consider the activities of the system of information to be essentially not-distinct from the activities of an animal system of information, or to be not-distinct from whatever natural activities, and even to be not-

distinct from the activities of human products (for instance: a windmill).

Now, a possible remark could be to consider the difference of complexity as a criterion. But this is rejectable, for the complexity of the different entities only gradually differs in a nearly continuous scale.

Opposite this, we accept the being of a subject to be the criterion, and we do so corresponding our second remark concerning the distinction that Vermeersch makes between a *natural* and a *cultural object*. For as Vermeersch considers a mountain to be a *natural object*, he overlooks that, in doing so, he necessarily initially ascribes an identity to nature in order to be able to consider and to name it subsequently as an object. One considers something to be a significant object as soon as it distinguishes itself from the environment as a significant whole to the subject. In other terms, the mountain becomes an object by its instrumentalisation; which means: it *becomes* an object-*in-view-of* a subject. Yet on itself it is not an object separated from the rest of nature. In other terms: as we do name objects which have been constructed in that way, the names or that what they are based on, are the actual authors of the distinct objects.

Consequently, both the object 'mountain' and the object 'plough' are *cultural*. In other terms: *natural objects* do not exist. Only nature as a whole can be considered to be an object. Yet accepting that the subject makes part of it, one arrives at a contradiction![40]

In conclusion, considering the thesis *that cultural objects are forms determined by man*, we can question the term 'determined' and, unless there has been given a criterion determining the significance of the term 'determination', we can demonstrate that this definition concerns *all* objects that ever can be *perceived* (- as we will see, this holds by force of the fact that perception itself makes these objects to be *forms*). For we can go on questioning this matter: does such a 'determination' concern only a 'manipulation' (by the help of hands or tools), or does it concern also 'the attribution of meaning', 'the name giving'? The limits between these different ways of 'determination' are vague and in fact they do not exist. By attaching a name to the things, man does interpret them. In doing so, there are no other objects left but cultural objects. For it is not defined what this 'determination' by man does contain.[41]

### *1.9. The physicalist unjustly manipulates Spinoza*

E. Vermeersch proclaims: "*A consequence of Spinozism, yet not made by Spinoza himself, is the following. Proclaiming that the material world as well as the spiritual world is a full expression of the Divine, one suggests that the Divine is being expressed in the material world in a complete way. So, one can conclude that the 'spiritual' attribute is superfluous and that reality (Divine) can be considered as being nothing else than an unending material world*".

Comparing, for instance, a thing to its definition, one can say that its definition expresses the thing in a complete way. Yet this does not imply that the thing becomes superfluous by the existence of its definition. The reason for this is that the definition expresses the thing in an *other* world than the world in which the thing exists. To be able to make the bridge from the thing's definition to the thing itself, one must have the world of the thing at one's disposal. Unless one accepts that there is no discrepancy between the epistemic and the ontic level. Spinoza however, does not want to make such a reduction. So he says that God is being expressed in the material as well as

in the spiritual world. But he does *not* say that God should express Himself in the material world and, through the material, into the spiritual world, the latter being a part of the former. As a consequence it is incorrect to accept the proposed reduction.[42]

### 1.10. The subject cannot be reduced to an object

E. Vermeersch accepts Wittgenstein's thesis that a sentence is true as soon as three conditions are fulfilled: (1) something in reality must correspond with the predicate of a sentence; (2) something in reality must correspond with the subject of the sentence; (3) with the syntax of the sentence, a concatenation of real things must correspond.

Now Vermeersch makes the following statement to define the human being: he reduces his subjectivity to an object (a machine) and states: "*I am a subsystem of a bigger system*". Let us now examine the conditions demanded in order to examine if (1) the "I" does exist; (2) "a subsystem of a bigger system" does exist; (3) the "I" and the "subsystem of the bigger system" are one and the same thing. The second condition is a convention I can ascertain myself of. The third

condition is an equality propounded by Vermeersch's own theory. The first condition, at last, has to be accepted on penalty of the falsification of the statement made by Vermeersch, containing that I am a subsystem of a bigger system. In other terms: Vermeersch's statement is true on the condition that a real "I" is corresponding with the term "I". Yet this real "I" has to be accepted as an evidence if one wants to make true statements about it. For as soon as one defines "I", one again has to deal with sentences of which the truth-value will be dependent from the question whether they do fulfil to these three conditions or not, due to Vermeersch's theory itself. It is clear that one can go on in this way infinitely, without ever have proved the truth-value of the statement in question.

For now it is clear that the physicalistic statement cannot be considered as being correct *but on the condition that first the "world" is being identified with the "world of physics"*. In this way, for instance, we could consider the world of music and suppose that a pianist is performing a sonata of Beethoven in a concert-hall with five hundred souls. On the occasion of a second performance, let us replace the pianist by a pianola and the five hundred souls by five

hundred chairs. Well then, regarding the mere physical happening concerning the world of sounds, both performances are identical. Though, in the latter case there cannot be talk of music, for the world of music is not the physical reality as it is being perceived by dogs, for instance. The world of music is only present with the presence of the human being who is its creator, and who is *aware of it*. His creation demands matter and energy but does not coincide with it for its essence is situated in its form, which means: in its sign value.

Equalising the two cases mentioned happens as soon as one accepts the possibility that a reality could be described by an "objective observer". Indeed, in physics there is being made systematically abstraction of the observer's subjectivity, yet the observation as it is cannot be made abstraction of: *as a matter of fact, this would imply the elimination of consciousness*.[43]

The world of music does not coincide with the physical reality of sounds, yet without this physical reality the world of music cannot be produced. So, does this actually imply that the world of music should be less real and less valuable than the physical reality?

In order to make things clear, let us compare these two statements: *(1) Nitrogen atoms are necessary for the human being, though the human being is far more important than this atoms; (2) A specific physical reality is necessary in order to make music, though music is more important than this physical reality.* So, a physicalist, describing how a flutist performing a piece of music is performing operations which cannot be declared by the mere force of matter and energy, in fact *a posteriori* does ascribe an energetic-material pattern of causality to this complex of operations, yet the intentional aspect of these operations is being overlooked.

*The existence of consciousness, which means: the existence of that what does not coincide with its object whilst it though has knowledge of it, is essential for the existence of the human being and of his world. The construction of a machine that would have awareness is impossible for it has to be composed out of mere objects.*

The physicalist's statement, namely: *that in the world there exists nothing else than matter and energy*, can imply two things, namely: or it implies that also extern to the world something can exist, or this statement contains superfluous information. We exclude the latter possibility

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and do concentrate on the former: in that case this proposition will imply a distinction between, on the one hand, "to exist" and, on the other hand, "to exist in the world". So only this possibility rests, that the term "world" signifies in this case: "reality". For it is impossible that something should exist without existing really, and this is the case by force of the fact that "to exist" means: "to exist in reality".

Concerning the physicalist's statement (- namely: *that in the world nothing else exists apart from matter and energy*), it is clear that it cannot be relevant but on the condition that a criterion of truth is being accepted. Yet in that case (- which is: the case that "the world" is being replaced by "the world of physics") the statement becomes tautological.

### 1.11. Why the human being cannot be (re)constructed

"To understand something actually means to be able to construct that thing", - thus sounds a device of Vermeersch's physicalistic anthropology. For the physicalist believes that everything and, as a consequence, also the human being, consists of *EMS (Energetic-*

*Material Substrates*), he also believes that the human being is, at least principally, (re)constructable.

Questioning ourselves first what might be the contence of a scientific declaration, which is the aim of each science, we will have to conclude the following: aiming to declare $X$, we must (1) rendering $X$ problematic; (2) situate $X$ in a context of things that are not rendered problematic, or things that yet have been declared, namely $A_1$, $A_2$, ..., $A_n$, and to do this in such a way that it is not problematic to accept that we can conclude to $X$ out of $A_1$, $A_2$, ..., $A_n$, and with the result that $X$ is being accepted.[44] Our first rule says *that it is thus evident that declarations are not possible but on the condition that not all things are being rendered problematic*.

Now it *looks* as if the act of rendering problematic specific things (- and, as a result of rule (1), this also consists that other specific things are *not* being rendered problematic or are accepted as they are) is an evidence. But we notice that an evidence always is an evidence in relation to a subject. So I can consider insects to be problematic and destroy them by using a poison, but in their turn, these insects consider

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the poison to be problematic and make themselves immune to it. In this way we come to formulate our *second rule: declarations (and, consequently, also the actions by which things are being rendered problematic or are being accepted) always are subject-related.*

Now, also values or valuations can be rendered problematic, and this results into the question: which values are important? We do notice that rendering problematic specific values (this means: making problematic the subject-linked and specific activity of 'rendering problematic') is *prior* to the declaration (or: the problematisation) as it is, and this is factually due to the essence of declaration, as has yet been defined.[45]

Eventually we can also mention the critical moment within micro-reductionism, namely the evidence of the fact that the ultimate building-stones of reality are condemned to stay undeclared and thus problematic, by force of the essence of declaration as it is. This critical moment has been described already *avant-la-lettre* by Thomas Aquinas as *the first cause* or *the unmoved mover.*

Now one can derive from this that science relies on what could be named "the ethical act".

So we state the ethical act to be prior to science as it is. In other terms: *each scientific activity is being based on ethical acts. Scientific activity essentially is ethical activity.*

The statement that the understanding of things is being found on the ability to construct them, does not hold still because of another reason, namely the essential provisionality of the epistemic, contrasting firmly with the absolute definitive character of the ontic. Out of which follows the human being to be principally not (re)constructable.

### 1.12. An application: the irrelevance of aesthetics found on the 'theory of forms'

In the former paragraphs, physicalism has been subdued to our criticism. Yet physicalism is not but a mere rejectable vision: it spreads its tentacles into all scales of human activity. It also develops an aesthetic on its own and claims to have found the final solution for the problem of beauty. The physicalistic definition is this caricature: "*Beauty is being defined by the optimum proportion of information and redundancy*".[46]

In order to declare the idleness of this statement, we will now consider this question from three different perspectives. First of all we will demonstrate this definition to be not exclusive and incomplete. Secondly we will render problematic the concept of "redundancy". Thirdly, we will demonstrate that beauty unjustly is being reduced to a proportion. Further on, we will defend our statement, that each attempt to reduce beauty to a mere epistemic question, is an absurdity.

Concerning our first perspective, we notice that the set of objects corresponding to the physical definition of beauty, also concerns things which have nothing to do with beauty, whilst there are also beautiful things which do not correspond to this definition; moreover, this definition fails to focus the essence of beauty. Suppose that I am attending lectures. Then I can consider a lot of things in it being redundant, for instance the illustration-material. I can also consider nothing of it all being redundant because what seems to be redundant, in fact should be a constituting factor due to the transmission of information. For each information is an information-*for-someone*. Repetitions of a leading theme in a piece of music can hardly be considered to be redundant,

for these structural variations situate the leading theme in a specific context that creates the wealth of the music.

But let us now consider two persons, the first being one head bigger than the second, and ask ourselves, as Plato did, whether the being bigger of the first is being caused by his head, whilst the rest of his body is redundant in that perspective. For sure that is not the case. One can talk about the size of things, mentioning the suitability of this specific abstraction, yet 'the' size does not exist as well as 'the' number does not exist if one cannot count things. So, the beauty of something is an abstraction as well and it is being constituted by concrete things that are not redundant at all, for their elimination should make such an abstraction impossible.

In the third place: stating that beauty is an equilibration between information and redundancy, Vermeersch constructs this statement based on his 'theory of forms'. Here we try to demonstrate that this definition unjustly reduces beauty to a question of information. Thereupon we affirm that beauty neither can be reduced to a question of forms.

Let us accept that *EMS's* are 'carriers' of forms. And let us notice first that it cannot be

relevant to speak about 'forms', except on the condition that there is a 'recognition of forms' within the subject. The necessity of this 'recognition of forms' is being acknowledged by Vermeersch.

Accepting in analogy information as the 'carrier' of beauty, we must also realise that discussing beauty cannot be relevant unless on the condition that there is a recognition of beauty within the subject.

In a substrate that must be presupposed necessarily, a form is being presupposed, on the condition of the presence of a 'recognition of forms' that must be presupposed necessarily within a subject that must be presupposed necessarily. In the same way a beauty is being presupposed in a form that is being presupposed necessarily, on the condition of the presence of a 'recognition of beauty' that must be presupposed necessarily within a subject that must be presupposed necessarily. If this is not the case, forms and beauty are nothing but illusions.[47]

In other terms: accepting forms to be real things, we also have to accept (1°) that the substrate is real; (2°) that the subject is real, (3°) that the recognition of forms by the subject is real. More precisely: the existence of forms has

to be thought of as being relative to the existence of the substrate, the subject and the recognition of forms by the subject.

Accepting that beauty is real, in analogy with the precedent we must accept the factuality of the form, the subject and the recognition of beauty by the subject as being real. More precisely: the existence of beauty has to be thought of as being relative to the existence of the form, the subject and the recognition of beauty by the subject.

In doing so, we can make a little calculation and state that: beauty exists on the condition that also the substrate, the form, the subject, the recognition of forms by the subject and the recognition of beauty by the subject does exist.

Notice: for initially we distinguished between the form and the beauty, we never will be allowed to make a relation between the recognition of forms and the recognition of beauty. In other terms: unless each form is being named 'beautiful', the form and the beauty are essentially separated, and so are the recognition of forms and the recognition of beauty.

When, according to Vermeersch, we should reduce the recognition of beauty to the recognition of a balance between information

and redundancy (or: desinformation), we analogously have to reduce as well the recognition of forms to the recognition of a balance between what is matter and what is non-matter (or: form).

Yet notice that in doing so, we necessarily again have to distinguish between these two manners of recognition of equilibrium. On the one hand, the subject is being supposed to be able to distinguish between matter and non-matter (- this is the recognition of forms -) and, on the other hand, the subject is being supposed to be able to distinguish supplementary between the recognition of forms, namely the distinction between informational and non-informational forms.

In order to be able to do so, beneath the recognition of forms, also the recognition of information is being required, for there is no other way to distinguish between forms that give information and forms that do not do so.

Considering this, we can conclude that already forms and bits of information are essentially different things. Aiming to distinguish additionally between beautiful bits of information and not-beautiful ones, according to Vermeersch's theory would signify (1°) the

ability to distinguish between forms which give information and forms which do not do so, and that is the ability to recognise information and, (2°), the ability to distinguish between beautiful bits of information and not-beautiful ones, and that is the ability to recognise beauty. We never will be allowed to make a relation between these two concepts.

Consequently, it is impossible to declare beauty by the theory of information, even as it is impossible to declare information by the theory of forms.

In other terms: the step from 'form' to 'information' cannot be made by the presupposition of the recognition of forms. For the recognition of forms can do nothing more but distinguishing between what is a 'form' and what is not. (- By the way: this separation exists by the force of an abstraction-process made by the subject; only by induction some reality can be presupposed to respond it; in other terms: in reality matter (non-form) and form are mutually interwoven and this unity is an ontic priority, comparable with the unity of space-time, whilst only in thought time and space have a separated existence). To be able to make the step from 'form' to 'information', one has to presuppose the presence of the subject's ability to recognise

information. In analogy, the step from 'information' to 'beauty' cannot be made, unless one presupposes the subject's ability to recognise beauty.

Hence, our double conclusion: in the first place we eliminate the possibility to define beauty by the theory of information (for this theory does not yet contain the concept of 'beauty', namely as the ability to recognise beauty). Moreover, we eliminate the ability to base a concept of information on a theory of forms (which not yet contains the concept of 'information', namely as the ability to recognise information).

In doing so, we hope to have demonstrated as well that the philosophical problem that also Augustinus had to fight, namely our incapacity to declare how any knowledge of reality can be possible without the intervention of God, cannot be solved by the theory of forms, nor by the theory of information, nor by aesthetics relying on it either.

## Conclusions

The claim for applicability of Carnap's logic-positivistic criterion of experimental verifiability

of the *whole* of reality, in fact disguises the physicalistic conviction that reality should be (re)constructable. We question the relevancy of certain worldviews based on physicalism, using Etienne Vermeersch's work as a model. To start with, information theory only can be a relevant model for an anthropology if considered between specific limitations. For one has to accept a severe distinction between the information tool and the subject. Purpose-mindedness, need, introspection, creativity, freedom, communication, justice, sense, and not at least *life* are some of the subject's attributes which ultimately never can be ascribed to the machine, the sophisticated it may be. When one though neglects this discrepancy between man and machine, one gets inevitable contradictions. The body is and remains the ultimate parameter of the world. Information is only present by means of the subject. Each need, and consequently also the need for knowledge, is absent in the machine. Rationality as an automatism is a false thought, as is mechanical creativity, freedom or (passive or active) artistic sense. A description of reality as a construction gives an unilateral, poor and incorrect perspective with an extremely limited declaration capacity.

# CHAPTER 2: AND THE LIGHT SHINETH IN DARKNESS – *Answering physicalism by means of Christian metaphysics and ethics*

## Preface to the second chapter

Out of a deep concern regarding the unwarranted and misleading success of specific conceptions concerning man and reality inspired by physicalism, the text of *Trans-atheïsme* arose, some central ideas of which are being reproduced in this book. In the first chapter we made some remarks on physicalism. In the present chapter we would like to introduce some ideas representing some essential items refering to our alternative.[48]

### 2.1. Introduction

The human being looks at the world by the means of eyes that have been built up by his own world. The world is a construction, made out of already existing, natural elements.

Though, what is new on it, does not exist in the world of nature: to a bird, a house means nothing but a rock and our words are nothing more than meaningless sounds. Our world has a meaning only *to us*, it *exists only to us*. In analogy, man can see these aspects of nature only in so far as they can be considered to be attributive to his world: he looks at nature as if it was nothing but a construction, his own world alike. Though this is a mistake in thinking, for nature on its turn has not been constructed out of elements that come from elsewhere again. Against this mistake, Augustinus, Kant, Spinoza and Gödel warn us: they claim the strictly difference between what has been created (what has been made out of nothing) and what has been constructed (what has been constructed out of already existing things).

Carnap submits the meaningfulness of propositions to their experimental verifiability. Positivists implicitly require this principle to be appropriated to the *whole* of reality, whilst an experiment can only concern what is constructable - by man. In physicalism we find an exponent of this mistake.

Rejecting on the contrary nature to be a construction, two possibilities remain: either nature is *causa sui* (its own cause) - and that is

Spinoza's conception -, or it has been created, which means: made out of nothing. We believe in the latter theory. The question is now how we can imagine ourselves the latter possibility.

Bach creates his Matthäus-Passion by the help of pen and paper. He gives a form to matter. Matter is the vehicle of this information without being conscious of it. This information has not any meaning unless it is given to a subject with sensory perception, memory and a specific apprehension. Without this subject, the information simply does not exist. There exists no Matthäus-Passion without an observer. The Matthäus-Passion is a gift from the one subject to the other, and it cannot be thought of in another way, because it does not exist without any receptor. The Matthäus-Passion comes out of nothing and it does not mean anything. But as a gift it comes to life.

Similarly, reality on itself is nothing: unless as a gift, it comes to life. A gift, from God, to humanity.

By his Matthäus-Passion, which expresses Bach's own being, the beloved composer has given himself to us. Bach did not succeed in it but by maintained efforts, self-sacrifice and distress. His gift is a sacrifice. By his work,

Bach has sacrificed himself to us, his fellow men. In this way Bach has proved that we do exist for him: he has acknowledged us.

Similarly, the gift which is reality is the sacrifice of Someone, expressing the being of that Person, and proving in this way that this Person acknowledges us, or loves us.

The lover cannot reach his welfare but by laying his fortune in the hands of the beloved one. So he has to take the risk of being rejected. The fact that we are able to reject God's reality, proves God's faith in the human being. On the other hand, no one is able to reject one's love without bringing deep harm to himself. Therefore, life obliges us to the practise of eternal love. The essence of life is sacrifice. Sacrifice only exists as a gift, as something that has to be given and passed in order to be able to exist. The Lamb of God.[49]

Heidegger says that I am not aware of the chalk I use to write with until the moment it breaks into pieces. Consciousness is born out of problem. Our attention towards reality is awakened by its problematic character. Reality causes pain. In fact, there exists no living being that does not try to avoid pain. Pain obliges our development to go into a specific direction. We

learn to maintain specific values, and on them we fund our truths, and our conception concerning reality.

By nature we evaluate pain in a negative way. Nevertheless Bach tortures himself with respect to the writing of his Matthäus-Passion. One has to conclude that there must exist something more valuable than painlessness. This more valuable thing is the sacrificing of one's self to the others. While only by the sacrifice of one's self - and this is Love - death can be conquered. Now sacrifice can only exist in being passed; it obliges man to pass it, and so it conquers mortality. Our immortality lies in our willingness towards Love, which makes us true human. There is no severer punishment for man than condemning himself by renouncing his chance to participate in humanity.

Reality expresses Gods being which is Love. We can participate in it by following the given path.

Problems awake our attention, and we get conscious of something that exists external to us. By solving problems, we develop our consciousness and our conception concerning reality, which is our knowledge. Our knowledge is based on valuations and, as soon as a certain

level is being reached, these valuations have the character of ethical acts. Eventually our conception concerning reality depends on how we do act as ethical subjects. If we follow the path of Love, then, in Love, our conception concerning reality will coincide with reality itself.

The flame does not enlighten itself, so Mannoury says.[50] This is also true with respect to the flame of knowledge. Therefore, true knowledge is not for the learned. This knowledge is for the poor of mind, for the sorrowful, for them who hunger for justice, the merciful, the peacemakers and the prosecuted for the sake of justice.[51]

## 2.2. And the Light shineth in darkness

I am not aware of the chalk that I use to write with until the moment that it breaks, so Heidegger says. This is also true with respect to reality itself: only its problematic character makes reality 'visible'. This problematic character of reality becomes concrete in suffering. Only because reality makes us suffering, we can get aware of it. Our pain is our only sensitivity to reality as it is.

Upon all other things, pain is the thing which I do avoid, and at the same time I cannot run away from it, because I *am* the one who *has* this pain: I perfectly coincide with my pain. In my pain, my being is fighting itself. Although this is all I could ever wish, I cannot run away from my pain, while at the same time my pain is my self. As far as I *am*, I am *pain*, and as far as I *escape from* pain, I *lose* myself at the same time. This is clearly not a paradisiac situation. Later we will see that we cannot escape from this hell until we become able to desire to suffer in order to save *the other's* soul.[52]

My pain is my sense to reality and it is my self. At the same time, in my pain, the whole reality develops itself as an alarming dilemma, an invincible struggle, a torment of Tantalus or Sisyphus, a true condemnation. My ego, the reality and the relation between those two, as a matter of fact are compressed into pain, just like the universe has been compressed into one single point the moment before it exploded in the Big Bang.

The only way to escape from this condemnation, is to accept pain being our teacher: pain obliges us to develop in a specific direction. It is pain that teaches us that fire is hot. It is pain that brings to us all knowledge of

reality. Our whole conception concerning reality we are obliged to pain. We get aware of an order external to us. We also learn to value this order, because we have to comply with it - if we do not do so, we will suffer and die.

Physical pain teaches us that fire is hot; it is our teacher of physics. Now there is also an order external to us, which has a super-natural character, while it shows itself in the fact of the supernatural pain, named: 'guilt' or 'remorse'. Also with respect to this reality, the thesis of Heidegger holds. As the physical pain makes us aware of a natural order external to us, and of our body by which we participate to that nature, so the pain of our souls makes us aware of the supernatural order which is external to us, and of our soul, by which we participate in the supernatural.

It is true that no one can prove to another one that he feels pain, for pain is known only by introspection. Though this does not mean that the fact whether one has pain or not, should be a mere illusion. Nor, and for the same reason, someone is able to prove whether he is happy or not, whereas also in this case the happiness or the unhappiness is not a mere illusion. The fact that a man can spend his last precious hours adjusting an old guilt, indicates the presence of

an almost spontaneous believe in a reality which, aside from all mortal things, is not submitted to time.

Higher than the reality of pleasure and pain, stands the reality of happiness and unhappiness. The self-indulgence and the fear for pain are natural strivings, which do not deal with the super-natural striving for happiness: the striving for happiness subordinates self-indulgence and fear for pain; it curbs the natural strivings.

Everyone knows that the good makes happy and the evil makes unhappy. The essence for the good and the evil lies in the presence or absence of good intentions; this means that good and evil are a matter of the *will*. One can make errors regarding his knowledge, but he cannot do so regarding his will. For that reason no unhappy man can appeal to the erring.

Happiness is by definition what we want; unhappiness is what we do not want. So the question arises how it can ever be possible that someone obviously has wanted what he cannot be wanting.

For the realisation of unhappiness, the existence of time is a condition. In choosing for sweets today whilst in revolting against tooth decay tomorrow, one denies the law that eating

sweets and having healthy teeth are mutually incompatible. One who on the contrary acknowledges this law, is being forced to make a choice. So the primordial law is the obligation to choose. The unhappy one is the one who denies this primordial obligation to choose: he rejects the external order and, in doing so, he ruins himself. So the unhappiness results from the denying of one's own heteronomy.

So the ability to carry the order of law is a higher power than the power of the will, as, in analogy, the power of the will is a higher power than knowledge, and knowledge is higher than sense-awareness. This is, once again, an application of Heidegger's thesis: as knowledge arises out of the problematic feelings, so the will arises out of the problematic knowledge, and out of the problematic will arises the ethical acting or the acting according to the (will of) the law.

Let us now return to our conception concerning reality and let us consider successively the world of death matter, the world of life and, at last, the reality of ethics. The ordaining principle that we recognise in the world of matter is causality. We stress that here we have to deal with the *induction* of a concept inherent to the (higher) world of life, to the (lower) world of death matter. The basic

principle that we recognise in life, is the *striving principle*. Again we have to deal with induction, namely the induction of a concept inherent to the (higher) ethical world into the (lower) world of life. Obviously, a world can only be described or understood from the viewpoint of a world that transcends the former. For, as Mannoury notices: the flame does not enlighten itself. Considering this datum, we can make some specific conclusions concerning our conception of reality.

First of all, let us consider causality. When, in external reality, we see certain events taking place repetitively and in a specific succession, we conclude that the former events *cause* the latter ones. Yet this conclusion is not right. For using the verb 'to cause', we factually use a concept out of our *Lebenswelt*: in that case we think about ourselves as being acting subjects. We induce this acting into the external world: in doing so, we consider and describe things in the external world *as if* they could act or 'cause'. But in fact this cause is being induced into the external by the subject. So it is only relevant to speak about causality on the condition that the subject has the freedom to choose the condition by itself. Thus there is talk of induction when I say that the rain makes me wet, whilst on the

contrary I can easily say: "When it rains, and I do (or I do not) use an umbrella, then I do (or I do not) become wet". The law: "The rain makes wet" is only in force as the second term of an implication in which the acting subject is situated in the first term. Naming the latter law "metacausative", we can say that metacausation necessarily has an epistemic character. So knowledge is not knowledge of the world, but it is knowledge of a conception concerning the world (which is part of the world and which interacts with it). To be formulated in a correct way, a law has to obtain the subject in the way mentioned. Thus we can see that acting is the link between thinking and being. The world of the ontic sphere can be approached by the epistemic sphere. To be in force, a law requires my (possible) awareness of it, for the validity of a law only exists by the force of subjectivity.

Something analogous applies concerning the world of life: we can only describe it from the ethical point of view. Life cannot be defined unless into our definition the concept of striving is being adopted - a concept that is relevant in the domain of ethics. Also the epistemic sphere has to be described out of the ethical point of view: truths are being carried by valorisations, they have a specific truth-*value*. The essence of

a proof is situated in the acceptance, in the making acceptable of the thing that has to be proven, and not in the demonstration of its factuality, as yet Aristotle did explain.[53] So the proof is much more connected with an act than with a fact. And it then concerns a conscious and a free act, which means: a valorisation. Now, our valorisations are being fund ultimately by essential needs. Because our needs have an absolute character (- when my hunger is not being satisfied, I will starve -), the same thing holds concerning values that are being constituted by our needs: an eating man can be considered as absolutely normal. It looks as if the value of food is relative to the one who wants to live, but precisely because we *are* the ones who want to live, the value of food is absolute for us.

Yet also the description of the reality of ethics requires a concept which transcends the mere moral domain. The essence or the sense of duty and law are not being comprehended but by Love. Let us declare this first.

Kant says that we cannot state anything about the thing on itself (*Ding an Sich*), though we may suppose that the thing on itself exists, we may act as if it is a fact because otherwise we

could not think about the world. This is Kant's 'transcendental idealism'.

Now it is our thesis that the thing on itself exists conditionally: it exists as a consequence of an *acknowledgement*. Though only in an indirect way this acknowledgement concerns the thing on itself. In the first place we have at our disposal the possibility to *acknowledge* the fellow man as a human being-on-itself or as a subject that is equivalent to us. We nevertheless can remain solipsistic, or we can consider the fellow man as mere employable either, yet we can also *acknowledge* the fellow man. In doing so, we take into account the other in our acting, as we do take into account ourselves in our acting. Only on that condition the thing, or the whole world, appears to us *as a function of our acknowledgement of the fellow man*. More than just out of necessity, we can employ things in order to give an expression to our love to the others (and to God), and it is in that sense that we acknowledge the existence of (the value of) things and of the world.

This acknowledgement does not exist unless it manifests itself, which means: unless it is principally demonstrable that it is not being conditioned by an external influence. Because Lucifer, representing the intellect, ascribes Job's

devotion to the mutual rewards he gets for it from his Creator, God cannot do anything else than granting Lucifer's request to punish Job for his devotion. Only on the condition that despite this punishment Job stays devote, he really gives evidence of a non-conditioned love. True love manifests itself only on the condition one persists in it, notwithstanding the martyrdom it causes.

Let us make clear in another way how values can be the fundament of truths and facts. Kant says that we may not lie, because if everyone would be lying, it would become impossible to lie. This is the 'categorical imperative'. Yet we can produce also another, more strictly reason for this imperative: the general mendacity would provoke the end of language itself: for language obtains its only reason for being from the speaking of truth. In this way, our whole reality is being constituted by *valorisation*.

## 2.3. The suffering and the soul

**'Sein' and 'Sollen'**

Atheistic moral philosophy submits ethics to knowledge, and in doing so existence is being considered as being essentially tragic: we cannot do what is good, for we lack the ultimate knowledge of reality. The problem focuses the so-called "happiness of the evil ones".[54] Atheistic moral philosophy denies the "naturalistic fallacy": the gap between 'Sein' and 'Sollen'.

This atheistic conception concerning ethics contains a contradiction: it considers a (consequentialistic) ethic[55] to be possible on the condition that reality would be predictable and thus determined. Yet in that case also the freedom to choose between good and evil (and that are ethics) would be fictional.

Let us demonstrate now the insolubility of "naturalistic fallacy". The problem can be reduced to the question whether an imperative (for instance: *tomorrow you* must *study*) can be reduced without lost of significance to a

prediction (*tomorrow you* will *study*). Apart from the fact that you cannot succeed unless you study, in this example my prediction is being made true by your *promise* that you want to succeed. So, my certainty that you will study is not slighter than is my certainty concerning your intention (to succeed). Commanding you to study, I do nothing else but the thing which I believe you as well want to be done; commanding you, I thus give expression to my faith in you. This is an implicit way to express this: "If you do not study, you are putting to shame my thrust, and then you are acting unethically. Now then, transcribing the command into a prediction, there is specific loss of signification, for in there my specific judgement of value disappears: if not coming true my prediction, I did make a *mistake*, but in not obeying my order, you did *deceive* me.[56]

In consequence one can also question the objectivity of values. Misjudging a specific value, one believes to act in an amoral way, in spite of the fact that such a misjudgement though is immoral following the judgement of them who acknowledge that value. But an act is objectively immoral in so far as it is being condemned by them who are suffering because of the misjudgement of this specific value. The

deceiver is objectively guilty because the victim factually is suffering from the deceit.[57]

## Suffering and thought concerning suffering

In order to be able to expend on the suffering, we address ourselves to Christian thinking which, since two millennia and pre-eminently gives a central place to suffering. First of all, we have to distinguish between suffering and thought concerning suffering. Considering the priority of action on thought, we can conclude that for instance egocentrism can be conquered only by conquering egoism first. The same thing holds in authentic Christianity: "In this I will recognise you as my children, that you love each other". There has not been written: "that you *know* you have to love each other". Secondly, we can also *think* about suffering without *realising* ourselves its reality, so that this way of thinking is rather a kind of a game. The one who did not experience suffering, cannot think about it in a relevant way. Moreover: the experience of suffering determines the relevance of thought as it is, for our absolute limitations (suffering and death) are the ultimate criteria for our actions (of which thinking is a specific form).

But what is suffering? The reality of suffering is undeniable because each being experiences not to want it. As a consequence, also the reality of the will is undeniable.

### Suffering 'for the sake of'

Research about thought concerning suffering in great world religions and philosophy of life, shows that Christianity has a unique place here: only by Jesus Christ there has been addicted a meaning to the 'suffering for the sake of'.[58]

This fact implies that in the case the guilt for the suffering is being ascribed to sin, we may not make the mistake to identify the sinner with the victim (- what yet does happen indeed for instance in Hinduism, for in that conception each person has to expiate his own sins (*karma*)): because the term 'for the sake of' only concerns the victim for the sake of whose welfare is being suffered.

For as a matter of fact we do not suffer because of the stone that felt on our head, yet it is the other's lovelessness that hits us. It is for the sake of Love that we renounce revenge and for the sake of Love we principally will not set bounds to the other's freedom in order to avoid

that he should harm us - we *must* offer our other cheek in order to give him the opportunity to participate in Love, and to do so necessarily in freedom.

### The responsibility for the suffering of others

As we can oppose suffering to pleasure, even so we can oppose it to joy; painlessness or pleasure and joy are two essentially different states of affairs. It is heroic to brace ourselves against our own pain, but as well it is cowardly to make ourselves insensible for the suffering of *others*. Pain is a physical matter (for instance: a disease), or a matter of the intellect (for instance: a misunderstanding), but remorse concerns the soul: in that case one has been *wanting* the evil, one has acted against the ethical law, one has neglected one's duty to make a choice. Persevering action in this way, one does not act 'rightly' or 'wrongly', for the will is not submitted to human knowledge. Though such a man kills for himself everything that reaches above knowledge, inclusive of his own will. Everything that overcomes him and everything he does, he will disclaim repudiate and impute it to circumstances: he considers the criminal as a victim of his environment or illness, and in

doing so he reduces the good to the 'healthy', the 'allowed' or the 'rightful', thus seeing over the head that such a criteria ultimately have no grounds at all. He replaces punishment by treatment and education by training, for he accepts that man is not able to will and, as a consequence, has no responsibility for his acts. Again, hereby he forgets that nothing else but responsibility can offer the ultimate ground to the action, also in the case that this action concerns his specific judgement, namely that the human being should not be responsible for his action. So, again we deal with a contradiction.

Opposite to this stands the man who is prepared to *accept the responsibility* for his acts. The value of this way of action is not submitted to the criterion of 'rightness': here it concerns an act that enriches the agent's world. He accepts the challenge and the risk to fail. Such a man is constructive and open towards the world and towards his fellow-man. He assumes the existence of the will and the will-power, and also the perspective on a better world; there is a way to perfection, an aim. His world of striving (which is his soul) is not a superficial appearance, but it is the signification of existence itself. As the visibility of the world is being derived from the factuality of our eyes, the

ethical dimension is being derived from the human willingness to *accept* responsibility for his actions.

Now, this willingness to accept responsibility is nothing else but the willingness to exist, which means: not to reject reality. As the fellow-man is suffering, I do not respond to this reality by killing him (as is being done in the case of abortion and euthanasia), for this cannot be an answer towards the living suffering people. Now the only possible responsibility contains the acceptance of responsibility for the suffering one, through which we deal in the hope that has been given to him in doing so.

### The 'mind-body problem'

Different from the physical pleasure, there is the (not physical) joy that is located in the soul. Let us consider the mind-body problem in this perspective. J. Shaffer distinguishes between the three following approaches, none of which does satisfy[59]: (1°) *the third person account*: something has consciousness as soon as it responds to stimuli. In this, the response is an exteriorisation of an 'intern' awareness of pain, which is being identified with consciousness.

Yet it is clear that this responding does not prove the existence of pain, or the presence of consciousness.

Here we can refer to our remarks on Turing's criterion.[60] Moreover, we can add that Shaffer's remark is also in force concerning the pain of third persons: we can *acknowledge* it, but we can feel only our own pain. As I switch over to the acknowledgement of the other, no one can reproach me with this, on penalty of contradiction, for the one who convokes me for this, in doing so, he already is acknowledging me: to him I am the third person, as well as the one I do acknowledge is the third person to me. [61]

(2°) The (materialistic) *identity theory* identifies movements of the soul with physical states of affairs or processes. Also this theory Shaffer does reject, for it has no meaning wanting to localise mental processes, for instance in the brain.

Let us remark that already *processes* and, in consequence, also *physical* processes, are as little physical as the existence of time: to this is being needed a perceiver with a memory. Describing the body as being physical, and accepting that it is submitted to transformations,

one implicitly accepts that the not-physical aspect (namely the transformation) causes the physical one. In stead of starting from matter and doubting the existence of the spiritual, one could start with the same evidence from the spirit and doubt the physical. None of both the starting-points brings an explanation for the 'mind-bodyproblem'. So it is of no meaning to take serious a strictly distinction between body and soul.

(3°) *Psycho-physical interactionism* proposes that conditions of consciousness can be caused by physical conditions and the reverse. This approach is being split up into two further approaches: (a) *psycho-physical parallelism,* which denies a direct mutual causality between body and soul: in there, there should not be any correlation but the one which is factual for instance concerning two clockworks going parallel time. (b) *epiphenomenalism*, which only acknowledges the physical causing the mental, but not the reverse: mind is a 'by-product' of the physical. Due to former remarks (see (1°) and (2°)), also this approach has to be rejected.

Precisely because all these approaches of the mind-body problem refer to naive grounds, they are unable to bring a relevant solution. To start with, the unprovability of something does not

imply its impossibility.[62] This is preeminently the case in the domain of ethics: my promise is unprovable for its truth is situated in my intention that nevertheless can be truthful and meaningful.[63] As soon as we consider the ethical domain as being more fundamental than the ontic and the epistemic one, the simplifications mentioned are being avoided.

The fact that it is thinkable that everything could exist without any consciousness has nothing to do with its sense. Supposing that everything that exists would be without consciousness, its sense would be lacking. Yet just because its sense is being *given* to it, the meaningful reality cannot be another one than the reality we accept by accepting responsibility for it - and we are obliged to do so, on the strength of the factuality of our consciousness. We can deny this factuality towards third persons, for it is improvable; yet never we can deny it towards ourselves, and in here lays the forcing power of ethics, transcending the knowable and the provable. In this sense, our soul is both the producer and the product of the ethical.

## Immortal soul

Now, how can we make ourselves understood
the immortality of the soul? First of all must be
noticed that in localising the human existence as
an ending interval on an unending time-axe,
would be a wrong representation of the state of
affairs. For such a representation implies the
existence of an objective time, whilst we already
know that time does not exist apart from a being
that is aware of it - a being that must have a
memory at least. But also phenomenologists
who adhere to a philosophy of finiteness collide
with a contradiction, for they do consider the
*Lebenswelt* to be objective, by representing it as
being ending on the objective time-axe of
physics nevertheless conquered by themselves.
In doing so, *nolens volens* they propose an
objective *Lebenswelt*. As the concept of an
'energetic-material substrate' is the *deus ex
machina* in realism, the concept of an
'(objective) *Lebenswelt'* is so in phenomenology
of this kind. Augustinus escapes from this
accusation: to him time though is an experienced
time, yet the end of the human being does not
imply the end of times, for time can go on
existing within the consciousness of the subject
God. As well as a piece of art, our soul has the

character of a gift;[64] as well as a piece of art, our soul thus participates in immortality.

## The irreducible subject

The subject is not reducible to an interval or a *Gestalt* in an 'objective' whole or on a screen. How can we make ourselves understood the irreducibility of the subject? For instance, we must accept the existence of self-murderers, for suicide nevertheless is a problem, whilst at the same time the self-murderer by definition *cannot* exist: spontaneously we identify him with his act, which means: with the one who has the *intention* to suicide. And it is also because of this intention that the bereaved ones must suffer. By now, this suffering is being wanted by the bereaved ones, namely as a consequence of his acknowledgement of the fellow-man being a free subject. Here we deal with a manifestation of the transcendent soul in the priority of the acknowledgement, of the intention or, shortly, of the *act* on the objectivated subject.

## Ethical identification

Moreover, the soul is not a prisoner of the body: each one can identify himself with others, and choose for that kind of actions that are good for those others, for their bodies and their souls. The thesis, testifying to malevolence, that each behaviour ultimately has egoistic motives, is, in addition, contradictory: it takes it for granted that one cannot do anything else but considering the fellow-man as a middle. Yet, *A* loving *B*, it makes no sense to suppose that factually they love themselves by the means of the mutual other, for if that were true, they would never sacrify themselves to their mutual 'middle to please themselves'. For the sacrificing of one's self implies the disappearance of one's self. By now, exactly the self-sacrifice is characteristic for Love.

## The 'objective evil'

By definition, unhappiness is what no one wants. Though it can be the case, and the unhappy one is responsible for it, because he neglected the objective order which obliges him to make the choice between different possible

acts: the one who does not accept the law that eating sweets causes tooth decay, probably will have to conquer the tooth pains he refuses. Yet it becomes really problematic in the case in which an unhappy accident matters for which no one in principle is responsible. This is the problem of the 'objective evil': in the case of, for instance, a nuclear disaster, or a catastrophe, not directly subjective activities can be said to be responsible for. As a consequence arises the question: is the human being responsible for actions (or: neglects) which he could not foresee the results of? In other terms: is the human being responsible for token risks? This problem becomes still more urgent in the case in which the actor and the victim are different individuals.

Our answer is, that, at least, it is being made possible for us to *accept* responsibility for past actions. For only the acceptance of our imperfection makes corrections possible by which we are able to improve our condition. So the objective guilt can be seen as an *invitation* to accept responsibility voluntary, which gives us at once the chance to the further appropriation by ourselves of our existence. For there cannot be talk of an 'objective evil' as long as one does not face an 'objective good' simultaneously.

Accepting the responsibility for a past action which caused unforeseen accidents, we in fact lift up this happening to the level of acts: in doing so, we modify the past - not the facts, but the whole happening whereof these facts are mere components. And this happening overbends our past, our present and our future; our ethical activity is capable to change the meaning (/the sense) of happenings and so to change their essence. The *Sein* ultimately is being determined by the *Sollen*. It now will be clear that the 'objective evil' is a fundamental condition for it.

## The meaning of suffering

Why Jesus whilst his stay in desert, did not follow Lucifer's advice to change stones into bread? For in doing so he had been able to feed all hungry men, and there would not have been suffering in the world.[65] Levinas refers to Rabbi Akiba's answer: "*He did not do so in order to beware us of condemnation*". And he comments: "*One cannot express in a stronger way how impossible it might be to God to take the duties and the responsibilities of man on his own shoulders*".**[66]** Moreover and as we did demonstrate, the absence of suffering would turn

into the impossibility of the existence itself, because the suffering is the condition for consciousness.

### Ethics, the life-breath of the soul

The imperfect state of the world (- i.e.: the suffering of the fellow-man) gives to the human being the chance to accept the responsibility for his existence - in other terms: to guaranty his existence on bail of himself. For now this implies a continuous activity with a striving character: the main point of this activity is laying in the striving itself, which is a belief, a thrust which rises up above the world of the so-called factual, as the life of our bodies conquers death by its continuously breathing. The *striving* (for perfection) conquers the *fact* (of imperfection) as the respiration (of life) conquers the dying (of the material body). In this way the (timeless) good submits the natural self-indulgence (which though is being condemned to death) in the ethical acting which, as a matter of fact, transcends the temporary.

## The freedom of the will

Ethics are possible on the condition that we have the freedom of the will at our disposal. The one who contradicts the existence of it, will argue that 'freedom' in fact is the result of external conditioning. But this opponent must know that also his judgement, as has been formulated here, must be considered as a result of conditioning and so it cannot have any truth-value.

Further on, it has no sense to speak about freedom apart from the subject: the question whether the world-on-itself (which means: apart from whichever perceiver) is being determined, is as senseless as is the question whether the world apart from any perceiver were visible. There is no visibility without the seeing, as there is no freedom or lack of freedom without man.

On its turn, the concept of 'subject' is only relevant in the light of the act of acknowledgement. The acknowledgement of the fellow-man contains my acknowledgement of his freedom. And this implies at once my responsibility concerning the freedom of the fellow-man, for unless I consider myself as being responsible, I do not acknowledge.

## 2.4. Reality and delusion

Let us summarise our world-view. The source ànd the aim of all striving activity is the manifestation of Love and the acknowledgement of the fellow-man. On itself, this is a rather abstract presupposition, because Love is not there until it concretises or manifests itself: it has to witness about itself. The middle to do so is the World: we must acknowledge the world as a function of our acknowledgement of the fellow-man. The acknowledgement of the world contains a complex of valuations. First of all, there are the *extorted valuations*: pain obliges us to acknowledge specific laws. In this way we get knowledge of the world, and we can consider this knowledge as a whole of *obtained valuations*. Knowledge anticipates pain; the acknowledgement of specific laws prevents pain. At the end, and here we come into the domain of ethics, there are also the *freely chosen valuations*: here it concerns valuations which are not conditioned. One cannot say about valuation that they have a non-conditioned character unless they exist *in spite of all suffering*. In concrete, we cannot realise our

acknowledgement of the fellow-man unless we prove the authenticity of this act, and we do so by acting and acknowledging despite knowledge and pain. In this context, the book of *Job* offers us an example: true love demands *everything* from us. This 'everything' is the world, in which the physical man is being attached by his pain, and to renounce the world for the sake of the fellow-man means: being prepared to suffer for his sake. We believe this to be the essence of Christianity and, at once, the only and at the same time exhausting sense of the world and of the existence. To sum up: Love needs the world to manifest itself; this world exists by the force of suffering. Love demands that we should transcend the suffering that founds the world; Love wants us to transcend or to sacrify the world for its sake. Thus the world is the sacrifice to Love.

In this paragraph we will take a nearer look at the world. Without the laws that constitute it, there would be nothing but chaos. In fact, reality is the faithful memory of all acts and happenings; it is the careful guardian of all tracks. We should be unable to model clay which should be moving by itself. So, if reality was not a faithful memory, we should not be able to act. The essence of reality is nothing else but *justice*

or *faith*. Even if the murderer should forget that he did murder, or if the saint should forget about his life, reality keeps this in memory and takes this in account: the tracks of all actions are being fixed in an imperishable way as reality.

## Perception is perception of sense

One of our important entrances to reality is perception. Yet also perception itself belongs to reality. So does the perceiver. Believing that we are seeing a chair, factually we only see reflected light. Yet we cannot see light itself. Hence, we are also unable to perceive particles that belong to the same order of size as the 'particles' of light. What we factually see, is nothing else than a specific *pattern* of variations of light, and this pattern, this form, reveals to us specific information, a meaning. So we cannot perceive without any signification. Being aware of something already implies a perception of that thing. Our *reality* is nothing else but its *significance* to us: each perception is a *recognition* of specific meanings.

Our physical constitution obliges us to the acknowledgement of *specific* meanings. The distinguishing between what is harmful and

what is not, is a first form of acknowledgement of signification. Anticipating pain, we acquire the more complex valuations which we describe by the term 'knowledge': the object of our knowledge is not only harmful or not, but it is also conductive to pain or not, or even it is removing from the pain-pole to the pole of delight and, in that way, 'creative' in a specific sense. At a first level, our natural needs are responsible for the creation and for the orientation of our adjudication of significance; later on, new and higher significance can be added or discovered.

## Idea and thing

Let us first examine the relation between a thing and our idea of that thing. In the case in which the thing has been constructed by ourselves, for instance a car, we can see that the car rusts away after a period of time. Though it is not the car itself that rusts away. The car is an idea, and in order to give any form to that idea, we have adapted a part of matter - matter which responds to specific laws - to that idea; in other terms: we have *constructed* it. Now, we have been able to execute this construction-process, exactly because the employed matter is responding to

specific laws. This very laws make that iron rusts. So, our construction did not concern the making of something new: the iron just remained iron and it remained submitted to the law that iron rusts. Not the car is rusting, but the iron which we employed to construct it, is. The same laws responsible for the rusting of the car are at the same time the conditions for its construction. So something cannot exist independent from our consciousness.[67]

Yet this does not imply that the perceived object would be situated within consciousness. For the *origin* of perception is independent from consciousness: the origin is being situated in life itself and it is demonstrable that the living organism by itself necessarily develops to consciousness. We participate in life, yet in doing so we even are dependent from it.

## Life necessarily leads to consciousness

An organism reacts on a sense-awareness and it is also aware of this reaction. The initial sense-awareness and also the reaction on it are involuntary, for they are necessary for the evaluation of the efficiency of this reaction. Now we can distinguish between, firstly, the

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mere sense-awareness (for instance: the awareness of light-spots), secondly, the awareness of the (involuntary) reaction of the flight and, thirdly, the evaluation of this reaction. We can do so because, as they go away from the 'initial' awareness, reactions are related to more awarenesses all the time. In doing so, all these different awarenesses seem to be *mutually linked*, namely by their initial movement: the striving for preservation. **By the means of an example we will first explain that the activity of awareness itself is goal-intended (the intended goal is being imposed by the organism), whilst, according as it concerns awarenesses of a higher meta-level (awarenesses of awarenesses etcetera), this heteronomy is being kept away, precisely by the complexity of the awareness in question.**

Let us suppose that a person *P* intends to become mighty, willing to make *Q* one of his servants. *Q* is being instrumentalised by *P*. *Q*'s actions make growing the might of *P*, whilst the only intention of *Q* is to protect himself. Yet *P* made turn out things in that way that *Q* cannot reach his goal unless by supporting *P*. What is a middle-action to *Q* is a goal-action to *P*. *P* having might over *Q*, *Q*'s action will serve the goal of *P*, *apart from whatever Q might be*

*intending to*. It is the will of *P*, together with his might over *P*, which makes the personal goal of *Q* to be an *objective goal-action* for *P*: whatever *Q* wants, he cannot prohibit that his own intention will at the same time serve the goal of *P*.

In exactly the same way, the striving for preservation that is inherent to the living organism, makes that particular happenings, such as (sense-)perceptions, however they have no goal on their own, *cannot* do anything else but serving the goal of preservation, and so they do. Now, precisely for this reason one can say that they stand *in function of* that goal, and one can say so without one has to demand that they should themselves put this goal into their actions, in other terms: that they should act in freedom. So they *are being acted* in a goal-intended way, for their activities have to submit themselves to an extern will, in exchange for their preservation.

Nature has might over us because the organism we are submitted to, strives for self-preservation: our 'personal' strivings are being dominated by this striving that submits us.

We now repeat that meta-awarenesses distinguish themselves qualitatively from mere

awarenesses by the fact that they are not only aware of the 'being aware', but they are also aware of the *relations* between the different awarenesses and meta-awarenesses. Now the subject of an awareness is this awareness that is situated above the other ones and that synthesises them all. Being conscious of an awareness means nothing else but being aware of this awareness. Thus, what is conscious of the awareness, is nothing else but the awareness of the awareness itself. Now the will for self-preservation is what polarises and *synthesises* the awarenesses: so the will for self-preservation pushes the awarenesses forwards (to higher meta-levels) in order to be satisfied. The satisfaction consists of the maintenance of realised awarenesses, which implies that they are being expanded (- infinitely?)

Let us now return to our example with the persons *P* and *Q*. *P* is able to instrumentalise *Q* in that way, that *Q*'s actions serve the goal of *P*. Now this does not exclude that *Q* is conscious of that fact. And if *Q* is intelligent enough, he can also *understand* that the '*side-effects*' of his actions are factually the *necessary condition for his own existence*. Let us now suppose that there would exist only one *P*, then it is clear that it is of *Q*'s interest to take care of these side-effects

of his actions, and more specifically he will not only *endure* them, but also *want* them. In other words: *Q* can get the insight that the wanting of this 'side-effect' is identical with the wanting of his self-preservation. Because of this insight, *Q* can identify himself totally with the 'side-effects' of his actions, so that they become his own goals. As soon as this happens, the will of *Q* is being united with the will of *P* and, *à la limite*, *Q* is being united with *P*.

Well, the *P* from our example is representing the natural self-preservation that is present in all living organisms. *Q* is representing the subject of awareness. As soon as the subject of awareness unites his will with the will that is present in what is motivating him, this subject becomes identical with the principle of life itself. In doing so, *heteronomy* has been replaced by *autonomy*. The *freedom* of action has been born. The subject has been born. The consciousness has been born - this is: what is able to *will*, but also to *refuse* to do what it has to do in order to exist. That what exists with its own agreement, what exists in freedom. Freedom *is* consciousness. Looking nearer to this all, we notice that the will for freedom is as inherent to the organism as is the will for self-preservation. In other words: **it is inherent to**

**the living organism that it leads to consciousness**.[68]

## Perception, acknowledgement and knowledge

Let us consider first the acknowledgement of acknowledgement, which we shall name the meta-acknowledgement, then we can logically deduce the following statements from it. The acknowledgement of intrinsic valorisation is justified; the misjudging of it is not. For *A* cannot accuse *B* acknowledging *C*, because *A* yet has to acknowledge *B* in order to be able to accuse *B* (of acknowledging *C*). So, in this case *A* does exactly what he is accusing *B* of.

The relevance of our *knowledge* of a thing is being determined by the specific *destitution* that lies on the origin of our knowledge. The hungry one knows the apple as food, the painter knows it as an image. The most perfect description of the world seems to be the one that is responding to our needs in an optimal way; yet because our needs differ dependent from the individual, many conceptions concerning the world and many 'truths' are possible. Though remains a need for coherence and consensus, being

satisfied in convocation. And here we come to the problem of might.

The current conception concerning the world constitutes rationality, which is being carried by convocation. This is the world conception concerning the mightiest among men. Because of this, it will be an economical world conception. The world conception concerning the poor has to be pleased with the statute of 'delusion'. No one will speak of delusion if everything is being reduced to its price-card, nevertheless people are often been token amiss if having a poetic world conception. Because convocation is a function of the satisfaction of our needs, it is being allowed to convoke delusion. Yet at the same time delusion is being allowed to convoke rationality, for also rationality is being 'coloured'.[69] Only as soon as we exterminate virtually the forced bogeys, such as the concept of money, we will be able to create our own semantics in order to break the hypnosis of the mighty. Then we can get the insight that a part of ourselves is being imprisoned for debt. The only way out is an engagement stemming the tide.

## Perception and love

Many a man considers love to be a function of one's own feelings: he reduces love to an 'aesthetic affection', a specific fulfilment of needs.[70] We notice that there cannot be talk of love in this case, for love distinguishes itself (from lovesickness, for instance) because in love one is being concerned with real persons. If one is only loving one's self by means of the other one, the self-sacrificing, which is the essence of love, becomes a contradiction and an impossibility. Love is active and engaged; it is purposeful; amorousness is only a passive undergoing, an addiction. Someone *is* amorous, whilst someone *practises* love. *Acting* is a more fundamental category than is *being*.

Amorousness is being ornamented by its attributes of beauty. Yet the transiency of these attributes refers to the deeper of love itself and converts us to the acknowledgement of the other person. For love has not been provoked by this attributes; just the reverse happens: one does not love the other one because of the other one's attributes. On the contrary, beauty is an attribute of love itself. Exactly lovesickness teaches us that the thing we lost was not nothing. This 'shortage' is real and inherent to man, different

from the need of an addicted for his drug. What is this specific human need for love or welfare?

We just can make one conclusion with certainty: in the act of loving, the lover gives to the beloved one the might to have at his disposal the welfare of the other, yet actually no one escapes from the law that happiness cannot be obtained but by this resign of might. Likely to love, might is not an individual matter but a matter of thrust. Love demonstrates us that a man cannot be a man apart from his togetherness with the others.

## Plato, Aristoteles, Thomas and perception

In his theory of ideas and in his ethics, Plato actually is fighting the tragedy of human heteronomy, the human misfortune to be the sport of fortune. Plato wants to get the human fortune to be in a man's own hands, he wants to be able to do the good things; and in order to be able to do so, he refuses to acknowledge the world of perceptions to be the true one: in order to be able to act righteous, reality has to be unchangeable or controllable. Such an understandable and thus meaningful reality is been erected by Plato by the means of his world

of forms (or: ideas). Yet there is a deep gap between the ideas and the world of senses: it is the gap between the factual and the desirable, the gap between *Sein* and *Sollen*, the origin of which is being depicted in the story of the original sin in the Holy Scripture.[71] This concerns a dissonance which cannot be removed and which is obliging us to an unceasing striving for harmony.

How does the horse that I perceive comes into my soul? - so does Aristotle ask himself. His answer is that the image of the horse yet potentially has to be present in the soul, in order to be visible. The intellect enlightens that image, as the sun enlightens the horse. And as we make part of the light, we also make part of the (divine) intellect.

Due to Augustinus, the imagination is being distinct from the reality by the fact that the latter gets an active, life-giving (and divine) attention from the soul in the body. This explanation does not always seem to be evident, but the same is true concerning the explanatory model of nowadays epistemology, in which a hypothetical monitor distinguishes between dream and reality. Augustinus' explanation does not even struggle with this problem, for to him the body is first of all an experience, and so the problem

how the soul could ever influence the body is out of question here.

Also Thomas questions by what means and how the soul knows the bodies, and his answer is that of Aristotle alike. We think that this question is not a question concerning the relation between the soul and the bodies, but it questions in the first place the problem of 'the knowing about knowing', wherein this meta-knowledge is being included implicitly in the questioning itself. Because the 'knowing about the knowing' is impossible on the ground of the definition of knowing itself (- the definition which says that the knowing subject and the object of knowing are mutually separated), the propound question is not relevant. It is not relevant, for it should dispose knowledge of its own signification. The same matters the question whether God is able to make a stone which He is not able to displace (- the so-called 'paradox of the stone'), and so does Leibniz's well-known question why there is something rather than nothing.[72]

## Reality concerning faith, justice and sense

The experiences that we consider to be real, are those that we have in common with others. So we doubt the fact if an earth-quake was real, until others affirm the fact. In the end, it is our believe in other men that *creates* the distinction between reality and dream. Though in here it does not concern the other men's sense-perception, for also in the case in which one should see appearing a man out of nothing, one will doubt his own eyes until others affirm that they did see this too.

The doubt concerning perception does not concern its unusual character, but rather it concerns the criterion of *justice*: he who appears from nothing, does do so unjustly; such a phantom breaks the rules which constitute reality. This is unacceptable, because this phantom transforms the whole of reality into one big illusion. Each time that we are perceiving something impossible, we immediately consider our perception to be *false*: it is false *because* it is impossible. So we require from reality that it is justly, and each time we do find injustice, we doubt the value of our perception. Knowledge is the activity distinguishing reality from delusion. So knowledge is essentially *jurisdiction*.

As one believes that (sense-)perception on itself can be a relevant verification principle, one is making an mistake. The empiricist only accepts the real existence of a thing on the condition that he is able to perceive it by his senses. As a matter of fact, at the same time he believes that his senses are real, and that they exist in the same reality wherein the perceived things are situated. To be able to lay claim on authenticity, in this matter the one lays claim on the other: the perceived lays claim on the senses, and the senses lay claim on their perceptibility within that domain of the perceived, in order to defend their right to authenticity. Hence we can conclude that things which are not being perceived by the senses have the same right to authenticity as have the perceived things, because the middles by which things that are not being perceived by the senses have the same value of confirmation in respect to these perceptions, as have the senses in respect to the things which are being perceived by the senses.

## The 'higher' perceptions found the 'lower' ones

The affirmation by others that the earth is trembling, is a *judgement*, and this judgement gives us more certainty than does the sense-

perception. To prove this: *A* and *B* are perceiving an earth-quake and they doubt the authenticity of their perception. Subsequently, both translate their perception into meaningful judgements that they mutually interchange. They ascertain that the meaning of their mutual judgements do correspond. Now suppose that *A* and *B* hear someone saying that it is raining. Both of them doubt if they really do hear something. They interchange their perceptions and they ascertain that their perceptions do correspond mutually. Now *A* as well as *B* can go on doubting the authenticity of their perceptions related to each others judgements: did *A* really hear *B* saying that he had heard someone saying that it is raining and *vice versa*? This doubt can go on until lots of persons are being involved in this case, and finally the doubting ones have to make a choice: they have to accept whether *all* of their perceptions are *true* or *all* of them are *false*. Taking the latter for granted, they fall in contradiction, for accepting all perceptions to be false, they though have to accept this very own judgement to be true, and thus also the distinction between reality and delusion would disappear. So they have to accept all judgements to be true.

Now we have more certainty about the concreteness of a perception than we have about the concreteness of a sense-awareness. To prove this: 'red' never can be a sense-awareness for one cannot become aware of red without having seen other colours. So 'red' is not a sense-awareness yet it is already the result of a comparison between different bits of sense-awareness. It is evident that there cannot be linked any consciousness of the object of perception to a pure sense-awareness. So sense-awareness cannot be anything else but an abstraction.[73] Because 'colour' is an abstraction of the sense-awareness of different colours, as paradoxical as it might be, the concept of 'red' already presupposes the concept of 'colour'.[74]

We also have more certainty about the higher perceptions than we have about the lower ones (- see above: the concept of 'red' presupposes the concept of 'colour'; the concept of 'light' presupposes the concept of the 'seeing'). In conclusion: the higher the significations that are being contained by the perceptions, the stronger is the certainty that these perceptions give us about the fact that they are real and not false. [75] *Sense* is the ultimate criterion for authenticity.

## Our world is our wages

Precisely because each perception is a perception of significations, it is possible that they who have might over signification, can make us seeing things that are not there, or make us blind for things that are happening indeed. However we can communicate our experiences, this verification criterion is irrelevant in the case that the whole collective is being cheated - by itself. Therefore, the world (of shades) we live in is necessary the result of our (good and evil) actions. Our lies separate us, whilst our true actions bring us closer to each other. Good and evil actions of other men manifest themselves with ourselves in joy or in sadness and, in doing so, pain and pleasure are the physical conductors. At the end, our image and our experience of reality, in short: our reality itself, is being determined by our actions, by which are meant our actions in so far as they are ethically. If we all should do the good, we eventually should part in the same worldview and we should be able to unit ourselves in the same reality. Ever since that very moment we should be able to distinguish exactly between reality and delusion.

## The sense of suffering

Also the suffering is being caused by actions: to suffer is to be aware of the evil. At the same time, in the suffering are being destroyed the consequences of the evil actions.[76] So, suffering has a value equal to the doing of the good, for it recovers the distinction between reality and delusion. Amongst others, Berkeley says that only God can assure this distinction. For that reason, God is near to the suffering ones; until everything will be perfected, He will be the pre-eminently Sufferer. Because suffering is what is being rejected by everyone, whilst the evil manifests itself in the suffering, in the suffering the evil will be rejected and so it will be destroyed authentically: if Job keeps faith in God despite of Lucifer's punishments, these punishments will lose their force by Job's patience: the evil loses its force by the suffering because the willingness to suffer testifies of the impotence of the evil.

## The living and the death

Truth is context-dependent: it makes no sense to say that the nowadays car goes faster than the

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horse from the middle-ages, as well as it makes no sense to say that the UFO from science-fiction goes faster than nowadays rackets. Moreover, truth is subject-dependent: the signification of a happening, albeit a past one, a present one or a future one, is being borrowed from the specific giving of signification by a subject, for instance in remorse, forgiveness or hope. In the end truth is also goal-dependent: the one who proclaims to do something *in function of* a goal, speaks the truth, even when that goal has not already been realised, and even if it should not have been realised in the future. Supposing that in future we should get a society in which injustice would be *impossible*, then only the one whose aim was *not* to attain justice should feel hindered in his freedom. Because freedom is consciousness, and because consciousness has its roots in the Being, only the just will be able to exist in the mentioned society; the unjust, on the contrary, will be unfree and unconscious and, as a consequence, they will be 'dead'.

Yet if the pursuing of a goal does not guarantee that it will be attained, in other words: if the realisation of a goal depends from a power *external to* the one who strives, then existence is not just. Suppose for now that the pursued goal

is justice itself, then there are two possibilities: either laws exist that guarantee the realisation of the pursued goal, or such laws do not exist. In the former case, justice is impossible because then injustice as well can be pursued: justice can only be guaranteed by the limitation of the human freedom, which is unrighteous. So the former case is being excluded. The latter case rests: pursuing justice, we cannot believe that laws exist which guarantee the realisation of justice. So we *must* believe that God is 'offering' us that final goal. Thus it is impossible to pursue justice without believing in God. Yet without this *pursuing* of justice, it is even impossible that justice should be there after it 'should have realised' itself.

## Soul and reality as an absolute creation

One first has to live before one can express himself *pro* or *contra* life. For that reason, existence is an *invitation* to exist. To accept existence means taking up responsibility for it. So reality is all of which one takes account by his actions. To accept reality implies the accepting of absolute duties. To exist means to be aware of this, and this awareness does not indicate a possession, yet a participation. Some

things, such as natural laws, intrude themselves upon one's consciousness; one cannot do anything except taking them in account. Social laws one has to take in account on penalty of specific sanctions. Ethical laws oblige one on the ground of one's consciousness: it concerns a duty one can force one's self to, for instance if one is making a promise.

The promise is the most simple law: I create it by myself, in full freedom, and the knowledge of the promise is the most simple science: only myself and the one to whom I did make this promise, know about it. Yet I cannot cheat this simple law of the promise without destroying simultaneously the mini-universe that it constitutes. The authenticity of the promise depends totally on the fact whether I will keep it or not. Only on that very moment the reality-value of the past is being determined. Breaking my promise, I put the other one into a delusion. The promise offers a facility of enrichment, yet the breaking of it will undermine gradually the credit of the facilities mentioned. Still further than Kant went, one can conclude that if everyone lies, not only the lying or the speaking of truth becomes impossible, but also the speaking itself, because language finds its only sense in the speaking of truth. More generally,

the evil results into the ultimate impossibility to act. The ethical action carries the action. The action carries the Being. For that reason the evil murders the Being. The good is being realised as it is being done, yet if it is not being done, then, together with the good, also the Being disappears.

## 2.5. Unlimited, impenetrable order

Let us summarise: the initial and the final point of our thinking is Love. But Love only exists from the moment it manifests itself in the acknowledgement of the fellow-man. This acknowledgement happens bu the means of the world: by acknowledging our world as a function of Love, we accept the gift of the Creator, and we answer it in the passing of it to others, which is the essence of Love itself. Our world is a complex of valuations: it causes suffering and in doing so, it awakes our consciousness, it gives us a specific knowledge, and it makes possible our freedom to choose. As soon as we testify to Love despite all suffering, by this suffering we conquer the evil, and we sacrifice the world to Love.

Our reality is fundamentally righteous; in other words: our reality is the faithful memory of all actions and happenings, which is the possibility condition for the relevant acting. Also via perception we get entrance to reality. In the first place we perceive significations, among which the lower ones are being carried by the higher ones. Truth-faithfulness concerning signification brings us closer to each other; lying, on the contrary, divides us. The realisation of justice will result into the full freedom of the just and the death of the unjust. For only if there is sense, the Being can be present, because the sense is the essence of the Being.

During our interaction with reality, we produce the world, wherein we give further form to the significations that are revealed to us. We do so by elaborating reality due to the plan of our ideas and our wishes which, on their turn, are extorted from us by the external. In this way, we get knowledge of the world by our creativity. So order is a product of our interaction with things: from that interaction of mind and reality, which is our labour, results an order, named: our world. The order in reality is the track of mind. By our labour we visualise this track in the world. The world is the spiritualised reality. As the world becomes perfected, the order becomes more

objective and more compelling. A child can consider a chair as if it were a tower or a little train, yet the chair becomes still more compelling a chair to the growing child. On the contrary, the misjudgement of the objective signification of things and of already given sense and order is being punished by an existence which is certainly not of optimal quality. This kind of misjudgement endangers the process of spiritualisation of reality.

Let us now consider order as an attribute of beauty, which on its turn is an attribute of love: the higher order of the law of ethics. The establishment of order demands a specific struggle. In hedonism (pathocentrism), in extreme liberalism and in monetary matters, we can unmask some opponents as disturbers of order.

## Beauty

Reality cannot be comprehended totally by reason: in many cases art is much more suitable to this. We think that this follows from the fact that reason is nothing but a specific form of art. As a matter of fact, reason is not the opponent of passion, for one can also be in passion for

reason, as Spinoza has shown. Together with the good and the true, the beauty is an ultimate value: by means of science and technology, one can construct a radio, but this has obviously no sense at all unless there exists also the music to play on it.

## Beautiful acting

However beauty is useless, it has a sense by itself. Equalising the good and 'the beautiful acting', we can conclude from this that the beautiful acting is identical with the sensefull acting. Now, the sense of the acting means its goal, its condition of 'being put of'. Acting in itself is intended to a goal, but it simultaneously starts from the intention to reach this goal, in other words: the acting wants to abolish this sense, this condition of 'being put of'. So the essence of goal-intended acting is situated in the strength of the intention: the intention is the essence of the beautiful acting; the intention is the essence of the Good. So deontic ethics are the only possible one. A 'consequentialistic ethic' is a *contradictio in terminis*.

# The essence of art

Aestheticism neglects the earnestness of reality and is therefore immoral. Let us now distinguish between natural beauty and artistic beauty. Is the latter only a shadow of the former, as Plotinos believes? First of all we have to take in account that the aesthetic experience is primordial on the aesthetic object. Yet on which condition can an object be said to be beautiful? Following Kant, this object is being determined by the 'common sense'. Yet the dispute of preference obliges us to deepen the criterion indicating the value of this common sense. Therefore we must examine the link between natural and artistic beauty. Something beautiful expresses something, and this has to be 'authentically', it has to be 'natural'. So the expressed has to transcend the expression itself. Now this is the case in relation to nature, for in there both are the same. Our experience of nature, on the contrary, is imperfect. Distinguishing between man and nature, we must realise that man-made beauty is an expression of an expressed thing that exceeds the expression itself. So the acknowledgement of artistic beauty means the self-affirmation of man.

Hegel's thesis, namely that everything which can be thought of, can also be expressed by words, as a matter of fact is not valuable: thought hides more than what can be expressed by words. An analysis of the works of Bach learns us that its complexity is that big, that it never had been possible to create it by rational means only. Bach used his intuition. Also in the problem of knowledge-extraction we are being convinced by the fact that things which have to be expressed, already existed long before the expression found its suited form.

### Sanctity and Love

Truth exists for the sake of the good: language derives its only sense from the speaking of the truth. On its turn, the good exists for the sake of beauty: evil does not know beauty, it is sour and bitter. During his striving for beauty, the image of the 'paradise lost', the intact earth, arises. Yet one may not confuse this nostalgia with a regression. As Leopold Flam notices: "*The animal is not naked yet also not dressed. (...) The naked body does not belong to reality, it has been found by the deliverance of dressing, of the 'veil' that hides the light of the sun. (...) - this nakedness is not bestial undressed"[77]*. In the

same way, there exists no newer and more pure man without the 'detour' via the world; there is no paradise apart from penance: suffering precedes consciousness and thus also (conscious) joy; it is its condition. The one who controls his dependency, has more power than the one who is not aware of it. The master cannot upbraid the slave with his unfreedom, for his own freedom depends on the obedience of the slave. Whenever the master speaks of a freedom that is also within the grasp of the slave, then he necessarily must intend some other freedom than the worldly one: in doing so, this free-thinker considers mind to be transcendent to the world. What has to be expressed and the expressed itself are two different matters. In other terms: what does not coincide with thought is not thoughtlessness.

Let us now return to our thesis that truth exists for the sake of the good, while the good exists for the sake of beauty. What then is carrying beauty? It is what finds its most suited expression in art: by definition the unspeakable. For the experience of beauty is not speakable any more: we can only express it by banal actions such as the applauding or the "oho"-screaming, the elevation of the arms, as if one would intend to leave one's own body in that

way and to unify one's self with everything which goes beyond the barriers of the body: this 'holy banality' is mostly near to the unspeakable.

This experience of the unspeakable is being named love: simultaneously it is action and happening, it delivers us from our possession and from our 'ego'. Because it is not from this world, it manifests itself only 'in spite of all the suffering'. In a worldly perspective, love seems to be a perversity, yet its spontaneous action pervades the world. Love shows itself in nature on the point where nature transforms from banality to sanctity.

Truth exists for the sake of the good, the good for the sake of beauty. Absolute beauty on its turn is being contained by tragedy, as it is being said by Socrates: we know that we cannot know, and that is the highest knowledge; it is an acceptance: the *acceptance* of ignorance. But simultaneously this implies the *love* for knowledge, for this is the meaning of the word *philo-sophy*. It is the *love* (for thought) which enables man (/the philosopher) to *believe* (*in* his thinking). In this context we must understand the following words: "*Is it possible that one should believe in supernatural things but not in supernatural beings?*"*[78]*, for this means that

the *existence* of nature is a supernatural thing. In his acts, Socrates testifies to this supernatural by subordinating it to his thought on the moment of his execution; he does not disdain action, for he prefers a specific *act* of thinking above all the rest.

Now what is the sense of the existence of Love? Sense is being given by the subject. This act of sense-giving results from the acceptance of a fate that transcends our knowledge. This 'higher thing' cannot be expressed in a rational way: we must address ourselves to metaphor.

## Metaphor

Being not understandable if considered literally, a proposition nevertheless forces its auditor to give sense to it, and this is only possible by transferring the context in such a way that the proposition *gets* sense: so metaphor is "*a cognitive instrument to visualise aspects of reality which it helps to constitute itself*", so says Barbara Leondar. Heracleitos uses metaphor to indicate the hidden harmony that is stronger than the visible one. For instance: God is to man as man is to the ape - in Fränkels statement that God can be considered as "*the*

*being compared to Whom the perfect man looks like a child or as an ugly and ridiculous ape"[79].* This concerns the classical perspective on metaphor.

Now it is our thesis that strictly logical propositions are specific cases of metaphor, which means that metaphors can be considered to be as unambiguous as the strictly logical propositions are. Our proof goes in this way.

Considering a table as a piece of furniture, means considering the set of all tables to be a subset of the set of all bits of furniture: each individual table makes part of the set of individual pieces of furniture - in other terms: each individual table is an individual piece of furniture because there is no distinction between a table and a piece of furniture *as soon as both are being considered in relation to their attribute of "being a piece of furniture"* (this means: their being an element of the set of all pieces of furniture).

To say that Juliet is a woman is to say that the singleton "Juliet" is a subset of the set of all women (analogous to the former reasoning).

To say that the sun is joy-giving is to say that the sun is an element of all joy-giving things.

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So what does it mean to say that Juliet is the sun?

"Juliet is the sun" means: "Juliet is a subset of the sun", whereby both are singletons, so that in this specific case they coincide.

Yet one has to consider that both do *coincide* on the *condition* that they are being considered *in relation to only two aspects:* the woman-ness and the sun-ness.

Further on, the proposition can only have sense on the condition that one accepts that the woman-ness as well as the sun-ness are being considered in relation to a common partial aspect, in other terms: on the condition that both the woman and the sun consider implicitly a specific (common) attribute, in this case: the joy-bringing attribute. In other terms: *the third set in which both participate* (namely: the set of happiness-producing things) has been concealed here.

Explicitly, the whole reasoning would go in this way:

Juliet is a joy-giving thing. The sun is a joy-giving thing. Considered in relation to the aspect of joy-fullness, both Juliet and the sun are identical.

The fact that the third set is not being made explicit in the metaphor, has its reason in the fact *that there is only* one *third set possible in relation to which both* (Juliet and the sun) *are identical.*

Conclusion: *the metaphor thus can be interpreted correctly only in one way and, as a consequence, it is as clear as a non-metaphorical proposition.*

Remark: as a consequence, one can compare metaphor to metonymy, which is a figure of speech "*wherein in stead of an object, an other object is being named on the base of the contact or the relation which is factious between both (for instance: I read Steinbeck, a book written by Steinbeck)"[80]*. Rather than as "*a metaphorical, figurative expression which relays on a comparison"*[81], metaphor has to be considered as a metonymy. In our example "the sun" stands in stead of "the joy-giving thing", and the contact between both does not directly concern a material thing, but a signification. As "I read Steinbeck" stands in stead of "I read a book written by Steinbeck", we can also say: "Juliet is the sun" in stead of: "Juliet is the joy given by the sun", in which Juliet, as well as the sun, are being considered in relation to their joy-giving aspect, and this holds that the comparison

("is... alike") can be replaced by the identification ("is").

Here ends this proof. Further on we can also consider metaphor as a constituting factor of reality, for it creates meaning, as well as the existence of our eyes creates the visibility of the world. Metaphor reveals real qualities that cannot be caught, for instance by a language that is abstained from metaphor (- for instance the pure logical reasoning).

## 2.6. Reason and faith

It is not the case that reason and faith are each other's opponents. As the example above makes understandable, the strictly rational is a specific subset of a broader thought, to which also has to be ascribed its validity. This broader thought and feeling is being linked to suffering and labour by the human acting. Thinking, feeling and acting are being contained by love, which also produces this forms of being. Only our oblivion about the origin and the sense of these forms of being makes it possible that we reflect them on themselves or that we apply them for aims which have nothing to do with love. In the end, the world cannot have another destination but

love, for it is born out of it. Just as soon as we *believe in someone*, we recover ourselves as beings in the possession of the liberty to realise this believe. In realising this, faith, reason, feeling and the whole scale of forms of being that belong to existence are at our disposal.

## *2.7. God*

God is neither an object, nor an object of knowledge. Levinas says that God can only be known as the Law, this means as a specific imperative.[82] We believe that God can only be known as a specific invitation to Love. In our positive answer to this appeal, we get knowledge of God and we come nearer to Him. Because the manifestation of Love implies necessarily the suffering for the sake of the other, God will be the nearest to us in the suffering itself. What is a paradox for knowledge, is a perceivable and evident reality for them who are engaged religiously. Let us notice that this also holds in relation to our 'knowledge' of the fellow-man: apart from the knowledge about specific material forms of appearance of man, and our interaction with them, we can only *communicate* with persons on the condition that we are willing to invite or to accept the invitation of the other

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one. In this perspective, the fellow-man indeed is the image of God.

# *Abstract*

This text is the result of a matter of deep concern to all of us regarding the unwarranted and misleading success of certain conceptions concerning reality inspired by physicalism. It was our purpose to criticize these conceptions and to propose an alternative view in order to be able to challenge the rash condemnation of Christianity. We presented some remarks on a model (by Etienne Vermeersch) of the conception concerning reality inspired by physicalism and of man, in which the metaphysical question concerning the ultimate ground of being has been restricted to the mere technical question concerning its ultimate building stones.

Rejecting the materialistic restriction of the ultimate ground of being to a mere construction, we introduced a conception concerning reality as a specific Creation to which we are invited to participate through Love. This conception concerning reality must allow us to deal with the 'mystery' of suffering and death, which, ever since human's original sin, we can understand as the necessary condition for love, joy and Eternal Life. Only the unique Christian concept of

suffering 'for the sake of', permits Love to manifest itself in an absolute way.

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## *Notes*

[1] J. Bauwens, 2003.

[2]H. de Vos, 1968: 63.

[3]Spinoza, 1974.

[4]H. Wang, 1996: 14: "*Gödel distinguishes* creation*, in the sense of making something out of nothing, from* construction *or* invention*, in the sense of making something out of something else"*.

[5]Augustinus 1999: II, §2.

[6]Etienne Vermeersch was professor at Gent University from 1960 until 1997. We selected his 'theory of forms' as a model to criticize physicalism, - a theory which leads to the rhetorical and argumentational panel of atheism in Flanders today. For a complete survey of his ideas, one can consult Vermeersch's doctoral dissertation: Vermeersch 1967. Other important texts by Vermeersch are mentioned in the course of this text.

[7]One can find the original text in: Vermeersch, 1967 (abbreviated: *EWM*): XIX-XXIII (this is the general introduction to the text mentioned)

and: 177-181 (this is the introduction to the second part of the text mentioned).

[8]A simple model of reality can be useful in order to build a theory of reality, but the fundamental difference between the created and the constructed thus results in a false image, for the constructed model unjustly represents reality as a construction.

[9]See: Turing, in: *Mind*, 59, nr. 236.

[10]One could rightly object that in this way we neither obtain certainty about the existence of other people: in our view the third person do not exist but by force of the act of recognition - which in fact is the central idea of our second chapter. The recognition of the machine as a subject must be rejected, for in the context of these specific metaphysics it should result in an internal contradiction. Adjudging subjectivity to human tools, that are objects, would result in an unbridled naive personification of all things and thus into a total cutting up of reality, neither the initial subject would be saved from (- each of the members of my body actually could claim its own subjectivity). As soon as man believes to be God, he destroys himself. Here the difference between reality and delusion (/dream /game) vanishes, as has been illustrated in the rage of

the so-called "electronic domestic animals", based on a specific perversion which reduces the intrinsic respecting to the mere satisfying of a specific need (- the intrinsic respecting of a being here is being 'declared' as and reduced to 'the need to give respect', and as a consequence, it factually does not matter whether the 'object' of this 'respecting' is fictitious or not). By the way: a similar perversion lies on the base of L. Feuerbach's atheistic explanation for the existence of religion: in it, God would be a mere human and ideal construction in order to satisfy our need for a Supreme Being. In doing so, the existential level is being reduced to the psychological one, and eventually this results in a contradiction, for the psychological derives its sense from the existential. So, it now must be clear that the 'recognition' of the machine as a subject can only make clear the sickly wish of man to be God himself. The intrinsic respect for a construction of his own hands, is a delusion as old as the worshipping of the golden calf. See also: *Jesaja, 29:16: "O, this perversion of you! Should one bracket the model-maker with the clay, so that the made could say about its maker: did he not make me? And the modelled clay about its model-maker: He has no sense?".*

[11]E. Vermeersch*, EWM*, 178-179.

[12]E. Vermeersch, *EWM*, 179.

[13]Let us add that, apart from our remarks, the failure of the criterion of falsification is a fact. See: de Swart, 1989: 429-431.

[14]E. Vermeersch, *EWM*: 180.

[15]E. Vermeersch, *EWM*: 181.

[16]See §1.6.

[17]Our arguments concerning circularity in micro-reductionism and against the thesis of human contingency are also been exposed in: J. Bauwens, 1994: §1.4.1.: 12-13 and: §1.4.4.: 17-18. These two arguments have been taken over later on, by W. Coolsaet, in: Coolsaet 1998: 78-80.

[18]Here one could ask if falsehood is identical to itself. The answer is negative, for falsehood is not true. What is not true, beautiful or good, ultimately has no force of existence, as we expose elsewhere. Let us give but this remark for now, that there can only be one truth, whilst many lies, and this implies that lie is not the compliment of truth; lie is undetermined, in other terms: without truth-value.

[19]See: W. Mielants, 1996: 4.

[20]See: E. Vermeersch, 1974: 73-82.

[21]L.E.J. Brouwer, 1907: 179, as has been cited in: H.C.M. de Swart, 1989: 18: "*Mathematics is a free creation independent from experience". ("De wiskunde is een vrije schepping, onafhankelijk van de ervaring").* Let us notice also that even A. Turing says: "*(...) if a machine is expected to be infallible, it cannot also be intelligent".* (See: R. Penrose, 1995 (1994): 129).

[22]Let us add to this that Carnap's verification principle is now mostly being replaced by the "principle of logic perfection" (as W. Mielants does name it), wherein the criterion for the truth-value of a theory refers rather to the logical consistency, the harmony and even the aesthetic qualities of the theory in question. (See: W. Mielants, 1996: 4.)

[23]For a survey of the problem, see: J.-P. Cléro, 1990.

[24]See: Elster, Jon, 1989.

[25]See our argumentation in: J. Bauwens, 1994: 100-104 and: J. Bauwens, 2003: §I.3.C.2.

[26]See: J. Bauwens, 2003: §I.3.C.2.(a).

[27]Once more, this is an application of Heidegger's thesis.

[28]See the expositions in: E. Vermeersch, 1993-94, W.A.23. Also all the other citations that will follow, concern this text.

[29]When after the collapse of a building someone proclaims it to be probable that there will not be survivors in the ruins, one yet must reject this and remain believing that this is not the case, because the absolute value of a human life does not allow any risk. In the case, one has to take what is sure above what is not, all against the rules of probability.

[30]E. Vermeersch, *EWM*, 204.

[31]E. Vermeersch, *EWM*, 207-8.

[32]R. Hendrickx, 1992: 70-71, discussing Lucas' arguments against mechanicism in: J.R. Lucas, *The Freedom of the Will*, 1970. Hendrickx notices that this is Lucas' only argument that holds.

[33]Notice that also concerning complexity, the awareness about it is inherent: no complexity without subjectivity. So the stated possibility is being excluded.

[34]What has been created and what has been made by humans essentially has to be distinguished. See also the *Introduction* of this text.

[35]A beautiful example of 'motivated' causality in nature is Fermats principle: "*the time which a ray of light needs to go from point A to point B has an extreme value*". (See: M. Alonso en E.J. Finn, 1978: 204 vv. In other terms: the light chooses the way of the minimal time-interval. This is what causes the refraction. It looks as if light 'knows' how it has to diffract in order to go forwards by maximal speed.

[36]See also our second chapter.

[37]The recognition of the machine as a human being veils the sick wish of man to be God by himself. The intrinsic valorisation of a creature of his own hands is a madness as old as the golden calf. A simultaneous blindness causes the illusion of being better of in order to reach the aim choosing a side-way.

[38]Kant does not give any importance to the existence of the 'Ding-an-sich'. But the physicalist does, for he accepts the *EMS* to be the ultimate building stones of reality. These *EMS*-an-sich are not knowable, they are just hypotheses. Because the physicalist does not

doubt their existence, he believes in them: he believes in a reality that is as yet unknowable. So he accepts the existence of a transcendent reality.

[39]See also: E. Vermeersch, 1973: 1-73.

[40]For the physicalist makes a principal distinction between man and nature, whilst thinking consequently he has to destroy this distinction.

[41]In still other words: 'determination' can be 'manipulation', but already an interpretation is a determination (/a definition), whilst interpretation is inherent to perception. The 'Ding an sich' is not the ontic base of the perceived thing. In the same way, sense-awareness is the base of perception: both are hypothetical constructions.

[42]Notice that, as Spinoza states, God is the inner, not the outer cause of all things (*Ethica*, Part I, These 18), what implies that none of both the attributes of God can be seen as being superfluous.

[43]Reality is necessary a reality which is being experienced in a certain way (by a subject). Even the existence of the 'reality-*an-sich*' is a subjective hypothesis.

[44]See: Aristoteles, 1967: 1-2.

[45]Let us consider $V$ as the declaration of $X$. The declaration of the declaration $V$ (this is: the act that renders $V$ problematic) is an activity which is more fundamental than the explanations of $X$ by $V$. Analogous to our first rule, it holds that some explanations have been rendered problematic and other have not. Rendering an explanation problematic, its sense is being questioned and, in doing so, the door to *mystery* has been opened.

[46]E. Vermeersch, 1991-'92.

[47]An object does not exist without the subject that recognises the object as it is. A form (attribute to an object) does not exist without the recognition (by the subject) of this form. There exists no beauty (attribute to the form) without the subject's recognition of beauty.

[48]See also: J. Bauwens 2003.

[49]The Lamb of God symbolises the lovefull, life-giving sacrifice of God to humanity, which is being celebrated in the Holy Eucharist.

[50]H. de Swart, 1989: 85.

[51]See also: *The Holy Bible*, *Matthaëus*, 5: 1-12.

[52]This means: in order to realise Love.

[53]See: Aristoteles, 1967: 1.

[54]By this is being meant: the problem that the ones who behave not conscientious have an incontestable 'advantage' compared to them who live in justice, at least concerning the gathering of worldly goods.

[55]An ethic is said to be consequentialistic if the criterion for the judgement of the ethical quality of an action is being determined by the consequences of this action, despite the intentions of the actor. In intentionalism, on the contrary, it are the intentions of the action which determine the criterion mentioned. Notice also that the good intention does not discharge the actor from his duty to take in account as good as it is possible the possible (not-intended) consequences of his act. For such a misjudgement of the value of knowledge would be in contradiction with the good intention, which includes the willingness to submit one's self to the given, real limitations.

[56]Totally different from the mistake, the deceit is being *wanted* by a subject.

[57]For instance: the thief does not consider his act as an evil, because he neglects the value of

honesty; he believes his act to be apart from moral (and so, to be not moral at all); to him it is just 'stupid' to be honest. Though his action is objectively moral because ultimately the deceived one cannot agree with it.

[58]See also: E. Schillebeeckx, 1977: 614-664 (het lijden in de wereldgodsdiensten), and: 641-642 (de betekenis van het 'lijden ter wille van').

[59]See: J. Shaffer, 1968: 1-42.

[60]See our former chapter.

[61]In this case, I acknowledge the one whom I am reproving, yet I deprove him because he acknowledges; so I recommend the neglecting, while I am acknowledging at the same time (namely: my reproving presupposes the acknowledgement of the one whom I do deprove). On the contrary, if I reproach *A* with his neglecting of *B*, I am not in contradiction, for in both cases I recommend, first implicitly and then explicitly, the acknowledgement.

[62]This truth is being illustrated by the well-known theorem by Kurt Gödel.

[63]A totally other case is the contract, which is no promise, for the contract communicates what has been promised to the publicity, which has the might to prevent or to punish any breach of

contract. In the latter case, there is talk of 'revenge'. So the contract does not 'promise' anything, but immediately strikes a bargain or 'pays', and this transaction is not to be situated in the domain of ethics.

[64]See also: §2.1.

[65]In his novel *The brothers Karamazov*, F. Dostojevski performs the grand-inquisitor reproaching this with Jesus Christ, who is being crucified for the second time for this reason.

[66]E. Levinas, 1982 (1969): 45.

[67]In other words: the thing is essentially nothing else but (the answer to) its idea.

[68]See also: J. Bauwens, 2003: §I.4.7.

[69]Our values constitute our concept of the world. When the monetary value has the priority, also beauty will be submitted to it in a specific sense, in other terms: it will only be obtainable by a buy. Such a conception about the world seems to be 'reasonable' but in fact it is only a product of a specific hierarchy of values.

[70]G. Sircello, 1989: 158-162 and: 170-171.

[71]In freedom Adam breaks through God's prohibition and he discovers that evil consists in

nothing else but the disobedience itself. The act (to obey or to disobey) definitively has deprived Adam of his freedom. He now is unable to believe in the existence of the good and the evil, unless he stands surety for it: now Adam must do the same thing that God did do on the moment He gave His prohibition to man: he has to replace God, who's faith he did put to shame, in himself and by himself. Until Gods mercy will have delivered him from this, this fundamental discordance will be Adam's fortune.

[72]For a full survey and analysis, see: J. Bauwens, 2003, stelling 83.3, voetnoot 365, en: J. Bauwens, 1994, §1.15.6: 370-371.

[73]For instance, if I believe to perceive a 'colour', I have already made abstraction of, for instance, the specific colour 'red'.

[74]See also: J. Bauwens, 2003: §1.4.5-6.

[75]This proof is to extended for this text. See: J. Bauwens, 2003, §II.3.E.

[76]For the suffering is the goal of the evil, whilst the goal is being lift up as soon as it is being reached.

[77]L. Flam, 1965: 105-106.

[78]Plato, *Apologie van Socrates,* in: X. De Win 1978: part I, 239 (§15,c).

[79]H. de Ley, 1993: 178-205. (See also: B. Leondar, *Metaphor and Infant Cognition*, in: *Poetics,* 4 (1975), 273-287, and: H. Fränkel, *Eine Heraklitische Denkform* (1938), in: H.F., *Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens*, München 1968, 253-283).

[80]Definition following Van Dale, 1975.

[81]Ibidem.

[82]E. Levinas, 1982 (1969), 42. (Original text: *L'Homme à éduquer d' après la sagesse juive*, in: *Tioumliline* 1 (1957), 25-39; entitled: *Une religion d' adultes,* in *Difficile Liberté* (n. 100), 217-220: "*De attributen van God zijn niet in de aantonende maar in de gebiedende wijs gegeven". ("Gods attributes are not given in demonstrative yet in imperative mode")*.

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MUZIEK: - *Over Muziek. Essay.* Jan Bauwens, 2005.

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♫ **CD 1:** Tracks 1-4: *Pianoconcerto nr. 2* (16:35) --- Tracks 5-9: *Pianoconcerto nr. 3* (15:35) --- Track 10: *Pianoconcerto nr. 5* (20:18)./♫ **CD 2:** Track 1: *Pianoconcerto nr. 6* ("September") (21:08) --- Track 2: *Pianoconcerto nr. 7* ("Apocalyptische dans") (15:43) --- Track 3: *Pianoconcerto nr. 8* (7:56) --- Track 4: *Tsunami* (Symfonisch werk) (7:47) --- Track 5: *De Zee* (Symfonisch werk) (5:32)./♫ **CD 3:** Track 1: *Orgelconcerto nr. 1* (9:08) --- Tracks 2-4: *Klarinetconcerto nr. 1* (31:00) --- Track 2: *dl. 1* - (12:45) --- Track 3: *dl. 2* - (8:53). Track 4: *dl. 3* - (9:14) --- Track 5: *Gitaarconcerto nr. 1* (8:47) --- Track 6: *Fluitconcerto nr. 1* (4:16) --- Track 7: *Orgelconcerto nr. 2* (8:28)./♫ **CD 4:** Tracks 1 t/m 10: *Te Deum laudamus* ("Hymne van Sint-Ambrosius") (40:00) --- Track 11: *Kyrie Eleison* (8:16) --- Track 12: *Ave Maria* (2:14) --- Track 13: *Gebed voor het Vaderland* (6:06) --- Track 14: *De Zaligsprekingen* (volgens Mattheüs) (8:53)./♫ **CD 5:** Track 1: *Goldbach Variatonen* (voor piano solo) (12:16) --- Track 2: *Herodes' slachting* (Orkestwerk) (7:16) --- Track 3: *Pianoconcerto nr. 10* (8:25) --- Track 4: *Titan* (orkestwerk) (7:05) --- Track 5: *Hoornconcerto* (13:57) --- Track 6: *Harmonie* (5:13) --- Track 7: *Kleine nieuwjaarssymfonie* (7:28)./♫ **CD 6**: *Adagio* Elf gedichten uit de gelijknamige bundel van Felix Timmermans op toon gezet: Track 1: *De blaadren... (4:02)* --- Track 2: *De profundis...(3:28)* --- Track 3: *De*

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herfst...*(4:45)* --- Track 4: ***Door de neevlen...****(4:26)* --- Track 5: ***Met rood en blauw...****(4:48)* --- Track 6: ***God rolt de zonnen...****(4:58)* --- Track 7: ***De Geest waait...****(2:54)* --- Track 8: ***'k Zou van mijn woorden...****(10:19)* --- Track 9: ***Maria zingt...****(4:11)* --- Track 10: ***Ik weet het niet...*** *(2:34)* --- Track 11: ***De kern van alle dingen...****(7:02)* --- Track 12: ***Winter*** *(2:40)* --- Track 13: ***Dans*** *(7:46)* --- *Track 14:* ***Donkere nacht*** *(3:48)*./♫ **CD 7:** Kamermuziek**:** Track 1: ***Wals voor piano en strijkers 170505*** (1:37) **---** Track 2: ***Strijkorkest 101204b*** (5:14) --- Track 3: ***Voorzichtige dans*** (2:26) --- Track 4: ***Algebra*** (4:47) --- Track 5: ***Bomen langs de rivier*** (2:46) --- Track 6: ***Half oogst,*** *pianokwintet* (9:35) --- Track 7: ***Strijkkwartet 210804*** (4:48) --- Track 8: ***Lente*** (2:45) --- Track 9: ***Meilied*** (4:49) --- Track 10: ***Strijkkwartet 211104*** (1:00) --- Track 11: ***Sic transit gloria mundi*** (3:11) --- Track 12: ***Strijkkwartet 190804*** (3:12) --- Track 13: ***Strijkkwartet 200804*** (1:19) --- Track 14: ***Strijkkwartet 220404*** (2:59) --- Track 15: ***Wals voor piano en strijkers 170505*** (1:37) --- Track 16: ***De profundis*** (3:28)./♫ **CD 8:** Track 1: ***Tsunami****, voor symfonisch orkest (7:47)* --- Track 2: ***Concerto voor hoorn (13:57)*** --- Track 3: ***Fluitconcerto (4:16)*** --- Track 4: ***Orgelconcerto n° 2 221204 (8:28)*** --- Track 5: ***Celloconcerto 221104 bewerkt (3:54)*** --- Track 6: ***Pianoconcerto n° 10 (8:21)*** --- Track 7: ***Winter (2:40)*** --- Track 8: ***Goldbach Variationen (12:16)*** --- Track 9: ***Titan (7:05)*./♫ **CD 9**: Track 1: ***Junisymfonie: dl. 1*** *(4:40)* --- Track 2: ***dl. 2 (4:45)*** --- Track 3: ***dl. 3 (7:13)*** --- Track 4: ***Vioolconcerto n° 1: dl. 1 (7:04)*** --- Track 5: ***dl. 2 (3:48)*** --- Track 6: ***dl. 3 (4:12)*** --- Track 7: ***dl. 4 (2:35)*** --- Track 8: ***dl. 5 (4:21)*** --- Track 9: ***dl. 6 (1:35)*** --- Track 10: ***Wals voor piano en strijkers (1:37)*./♫ **CD 10:** Track 1: ***Opstanding,*** *symfonie:* ***dl. 1*** (9:21) --- Track 2: ***dl. 2***

(6:01) --- Track 3: *dl. 3* (5:27) --- Track 4: *dl. 4* (2:51) --- Track 5: *dl. 5* (2:52) --- Track 6: ***Samenspel met cello solo*** (6:10) --- Track 7: ***Hobosymfonie*** 060505 (7:25) --- Track 8: ***Strijkkwintet 240205*** (9:29) --- Track 9: ***Klein symfonisch gedicht*** (5:11) --- Track 10: ***Ode aan Goldbach*** (3:42)./♫ **CD 11**: Track 1: ***Pianoconcerto n° 11: dl. 1*** (9:45) --- Track 2: ***dl. 2*** (4:52) --- Track 3: ***dl. 3*** (5:06) --- Track 4: ***dl. 4*** (1:35) --- Track 5: ***Klarinetconcerto n° 2 voor beginners*** (7:01) **---** Track 6: ***Donkere nacht*** (3:48) **---** Track 7: ***Hobofantasie 060505*** (1:14) --- Track 8: ***Vazen*** (2:50) --- Track 9: ***In de tuin*** (7:25) --- Track 10: ***Paleiswachten*** (5:49) --- Track 11: ***Jazzfantasie*** (3:43)**.**/♫ **CD 12:** Track 1: ***Juan de la Cruz' Canciones,*** *voor koor en orkest* (54:43)./♫ **CD 13**: Track 1: ***Augustussymfonie*** *voor symfonisch orkest* (21:42)./♫ **CD 14**: Track 1: ***Requiem,*** *voor groot koor en orkest***: dl. 1** (9:28) --- Track 2: ***dl. 2*** (8:12) --- Track 3: ***dl. 3*** (14:03) --- Track 4: ***dl. 4*** (7:02) --- Track 5: ***dl. 5*** (2:30) --- Track 6: ***dl. 6*** (5:32) --- Track 7: ***dl. 7*** (2:35). /♫ **CD 15:** Track 1-16: ***Zestien oefeningen voor piano en klarinet*** (48:10)./♫ **CD 16:** Track 1-8: ***Keldertrappen, voor piano solo met hier en daar begeleiding*** (37:20). **CD 17:** Track 1-6: *Sint-Franciscussymfonie;* Track 7: *Kleine fantasie voor Piano en Strijkers;* Track 8-11: *Augustussymfonie* (50:00).

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